

# **Contend for Pentecostal Power!**



by Christopher Alam

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## Part 1

**Desire Him! Seek Him!**

Jesus said, “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Acts 1:8

The whole purpose of Pentecost is that we would receive power; Holy Ghost power. The Greek word translated as “power” here is “Dynamis”, which basically means power, ability, and strength. This is the same word used in Mark 5:30 when Jesus said that “virtue” (or power) flowed from Him and healed the woman with the issue of blood.

So in Acts 1:8 Jesus was telling the disciples, “Do you remember the power that flowed from me and healed the woman with the issue of blood? Well when the Holy Ghost shall come upon you, you shall receive the very same power in you!”

What a wonderful promise for the believer!

But the question is, “Power for what?” Jesus said that this power is given to us so that we may be His

witnesses all over the earth. Pentecostal power is given to us so that we may proclaim the Gospel of Jesus to the lost. When the Gospel of Jesus is preached in the power and the anointing of the Holy Spirit, signs, wonders, and miracles inevitably follow. This is God's order of things. This is the way it is supposed to be; the Gospel preached with power. Nothing less than that should be acceptable to the child of God!

**“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost.”**

I Thessalonians 1:5

I am writing this because we are living in days when large segments of the church have lost sight of these things.

There are, of course, those who do not at all believe that the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are for today. Then there are those who call themselves “Pentecostal”, who pay lip-service to these things but do not strive or contend to lay hold of Pentecostal power. For them, even speaking in other tongues is unimportant. Some Pastors think that it is “effective programs and strategies” that would attract people to their churches, and so they are always looking for new ways and methods to bring people in.

All this is done with good intentions, but as a result they compromise and ignore the Holy Spirit and His power. They come to a point where they do not even see Pentecostal power as something to seek

or to contend for anymore!

They ignore the Holy Spirit because they have stopped counting Him as an important factor in their lives or in the lives of their churches. Some even think that any manifestation of the Holy Spirit is an embarrassment and would turn unbelievers away from God!

It is a dangerous place to be when we no longer miss the power of the Holy Spirit. When we have adapted to His absence, and we are perfectly comfortable without Him!

I do not know about you, but let me just say this boldly. I do not enjoy a non-Pentecostal atmosphere in church, an atmosphere devoid of the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. It does not matter how nice the people are, how eloquent the speakers are, or how great the music is. I have been in the Fire of the Holy Ghost for so long that I cannot live without it anymore!

The Prophet Isaiah was not content with the absence of the manifested presence of God. Look at what He said:

“And I will wait upon the LORD, that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him. Behold, I and the children whom the LORD hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the LORD of hosts, which dwelleth in mount Zion.” Isaiah 8:17-18

Then Isaiah lamented about the people of his day,

**“And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.”** Isaiah 64:7

Yet in this age of unbelief and dead religion, I see a stirring. In many places that I go to, I see people hungering after the power of God. I remember a service we held in Africa with a huge mass of humanity packing the field. Multitudes received Jesus that night. Then the power of the Holy Ghost fell upon the crowd; the lame walked, the blind saw, amazing miracles took place and finally, over 30,000 people received the baptism with the Holy Ghost – and with Fire!

As Pentecostal flames came down and the praises of God in other tongues ascended to the throne of God from the gathered multitude, an American pastor who was with me leaned to my ear and whispered, “Chris, this is a true seeker-friendly meeting! These people are seeking Jesus, seeking Holy Ghost power! They are meeting Him in His fullness!”

People seeking Jesus, not programs! His power, not eloquence! His fullness, not the wisdom of man! Hallelujah!

Even here in America, many people and ministers are tired of the status quo and want more of God’s presence and power. I too, am seeking more of Pentecostal Fire!

Do you seek the power of God? Here my friends, is the key!

The key to Pentecostal power is a Man called Jesus. He is the Son of God. Can I share with you the “open secret of Pentecost”?

It is this - The Holy Ghost came to glorify Jesus!

Jesus said, “He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.” John 16:14

If you, my friend, desire the Holy Ghost, His power and His gifts, then seek Jesus! Draw close to Him, yield unto Him fully, be filled by Him, and possess Him by faith, pressing forwards for yet more of Him every day.

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”

Philippians 3:10

# Contend for Pentecostal Power!

## Part 2

**The best place to be is in a place of dissatisfaction!**

The best place for a Christian to be is in a place of dissatisfaction. This is because God always meets us when we are hungry, thirsty, needy, and desiring for more.

“That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” Philippians 3:10-11

The Apostle Paul had seen mighty miracles, raised up the dead, been to the third heaven, planted many churches, and had written half of the New Testament. He had also suffered much rejection, betrayal, pain, and persecution.

He did not allow his successes to make him feel that he had “arrived”, neither did he allow the difficulties and discouragement that he went through to make him bitter. Through it all, he kept his eyes upon Jesus.

Paul kept his heart at a place of insatiable hunger for the presence, the power, and the glory of God. He longed for Jesus to the point that he stated that he was even willing to suffer and die like his master, if that was the price he had to pay in order to be like Him!

If we read about the great accomplishments of Paul, we can see why it would be easy for him to be puffed up in pride and be pleased with himself. But he wasn't. He stayed at a place of hunger and thirst for Jesus.

It is not spiritual hunger or longing for its own sake that brings the presence or power of God, but it is spiritual hunger and longing for Jesus that brings Pentecostal power.

There is a great desire for spiritual manifestations in our day, and spiritually hungry people have been ready and willing to jump on the very first bandwagon that comes their way with the promise of a spiritual experience.

As a result, in the last few years we have seen several waves of "renewals" that have come through the church. These have included renewals of laughter, shaking, animal noises, "gold dandruff" in people's hair and "teeth being filled with gold fillings".

All this is fascinating, but unfortunately, there has been little solid or lasting fruit from this. The reason is that people are eagerly looking for manifestations, but are not hungering for the person of the Lord



Jesus Christ. They do get certain manifestations, but the focus and the excitement are upon and about the manifestations themselves and not primarily on the person of Jesus Christ.

The emphasis is on “encounters with the spirit” rather than meeting the Lord Jesus Christ face-to-face. This is the fundamental problem with all these “moves”. So, once the “wave” has passed, people are left as empty as they were before it all started. Beloved, there is no such thing as a “Christ-less Pentecost”. There is no Holy Ghost power without a burning hunger for the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Pentecost always follows Calvary. Jesus said about the Holy Spirit in John 16:14, “He shall glorify me”.

In other words, the Holy Spirit came to glorify Jesus, not Himself, the gifts, or the wonderful experiences He brings. Just Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Manifestations should point not to themselves or to the experience of them, but to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“He is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” Colossians 1:17-19

God’s divine order is this: JESUS FIRST – everything else follows. We are talking about “contending for Pentecostal power”; but really, before seeking the

power we should be seeking Him, because He is the one from whom flows the power that we seek!

John the Baptist testified in Luke 3:16, **“He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”**

Note that it is Jesus who baptizes us, Jesus who sends down Holy Ghost and Fire, Jesus who anoints us. This is an office that He has kept for Himself, to send down Pentecostal power upon us when we seek Him!

In the Old Testament, we see that every time the Fire of the Lord fell upon an altar, it always fell upon a blood-soaked altar. The Fire never fell upon a dry altar. It is because when the Lord sees the Blood He sends His Glory. That is why in our lives, in our witness, and our ministries we must truly put Jesus first. We must make much of, glorify, talk about, and lift up the Cross and the Blood of our Lord Jesus.

That is what brings down Pentecostal Fire!

Paul kept himself in that place of dissatisfaction. No matter how much of Jesus he experienced, it was never enough; he always longed for more. That became the desire and driving force in his life.

David the Psalmist cried out in Psalm 63:1-8,

**“O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see**

thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth hard after thee...”

The longing for God and for His presence burned in his soul, so much that he even felt it physically. He wanted to see the power and the glory of the Lord, therefore his soul followed hard after Him.

That is the kind of heart that the Spirit of God is drawn to. I remember many years ago, I was at a place of desperation seeking God. My heart ached so much for Jesus that it was almost painful. I went to a conference in Oslo, Norway where Reinhard Bonnke was speaking at a session for ministers. My heart was stirred to the very depths. After he was finished, I sat in my chair and wept in God’s presence as the others left the room chatting.

Finally, Reinhard and I were the only ones left in the room. He looked at me and said, “Christopher, come here.” I got up and walked to him, still weeping. He looked into my eyes, and I saw tears begin to form in his eyes. He tapped his chest and then on my chest and said, “Deep calls unto the deep,” and hugged me.

He began to whisper, “Jesus” and began to softly pray in other tongues. Suddenly, the Glory of God came and overwhelmed me, washing over me in wave after mighty wave. I went weak-kneed and could not stand; it was indescribable, one of the defining moments of my life that I will never forget. God touched me and took me to yet another level. Reinhard would probably not even remember that moment, but for me it was amazing, life-changing.

There is a reason why that I am telling this story. I have heard people complain that they went to Reinhard’s meetings and come back with no impartation. This is because of the shallowness of their expectations. They went to “feel” or “experience” something instead of going there hungry for Jesus, to see Him, or Him to touch their hearts to the depths.

“Deep calleth unto deep,” that is what it is all about my beloved! We have to shed the shallow, superficial approach that we have towards Christianity, towards walking with God and experience the depths of Jesus Christ. We have to walk away from “experience and feeling” oriented Christianity and come face to face with Jesus Himself.

For me personally, the greatest struggle in life is not about what to preach, or to have faith, or to believe God for finances. Believe me when I say that the very things that God gives us as blessings can turn into a curse if they quench our thirst for Him because we have so much that we don’t need Him any more!

The greatest battle in my life is to see the blessings of God in my life andw in our ministry, and still stay in the place where I always need Jesus. Where I can not live without him, and I am hungry for Him, His Presence, and His power. That is the greatest battle of all, to stay desperate and hungry and to need Him at all times. To stay at the place of dissatisfaction!

Beloved, if we seek His Face, we shall see His Hand. We shall see His Power! Let us therefore press on, ask Him to increase our hunger and thirst for Him until it becomes unbearable.

God will answer with Fire!

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## Part 3

Where do we go from here?

“And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.” Mark 16:17-18

The supernatural power of God is for every believer. Pentecostal power is the heritage of the church. Don't sell yourself short; do not be satisfied with mere brass instead of gold!

So, where do we go from here?

### **1. RETURN TO OUR FIRST LOVE.**

This is the first thing we have to do. To the church in Ephesus Jesus said, “Thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent....” Revelation 2:4-5

We have to remember the love we had for Jesus when we first met Him; remember when we were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with Fire. As a

church, we have to remember our Pentecostal Heritage (Pentecostal Heritage must be taken out of the 'Pentecostal Heritage Museum' and begin to burn in our hearts instead!). Then we have to realize how far we have fallen from where we once were. After that comes repentance (which means to 'change direction!') and start walking back to where we came from, where we truly belong.

You see, God loves the smell of Fire. There is nothing that smells as cold and as dead as a Pentecostal church where the Fires have gone out. We have to go back to our meeting place with God, and meet with Jesus all over again!

## **2. EMBRACE THE HEARTBEAT OF GOD.**

Everybody wants to experience God's promise that, "these Signs shall follow them that believe." But, they forget that these verses are preceded by "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel." They are then followed by, "And they went forth and preached everywhere."

Pentecostal power is given to us in the context of preaching the Gospel to every creature.

The preaching of the Gospel of Jesus to sinners is the very heartbeat of God. Yes, we should dig wells and send food to help those in need, but signs do not follow well-drilling rigs or containers of food. Signs follow people preaching the Gospel!

"Missions" is NOT primarily about sending out humanitarian aid; Missions is about people going

out to preach the Gospel to sinners and bringing them to Christ. Something is seriously wrong when we define “Missions” by how much we spend on humanitarian aid, but we have correspondingly very few souls won for Jesus with all the money being spent! We have to change the order of things and make the preaching of the Gospel the primary purpose of Missions, with all other things as secondary! This can only happen when we understand and embrace the purposes of God upon this earth.

Pentecostal power follows the preaching of the Gospel!

### **3. GOD ALWAYS ANSWERS BLOOD WITH FIRE.**

It was the last night of our recent crusade in Zambia. I asked the Lord what I should preach that night, and I heard Him say, ‘Preach about the Blood.’ Then He said something that I shall never forget, “I always answer blood with Fire!”

That night, I preached about the precious blood of our Lord Jesus. The Holy Ghost fell upon the gathered multitude and over 20,000 were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with Fire. As Pentecostal flames came down, the praises of God in other tongues rose to the heavens with a mighty roar. being healed, including many lame, blind, and deaf people who were made whole.

If we want to see Pentecostal power we have to throw the Oprah and Dr. Phil style of intellectual discourses and “life-coaching” out of our pulpits and start talking about Jesus, about His cross and



His blood. We must lift up and make much of His blood, His cross, and His resurrection power. Do this and watch what God will do!

He will answer with Pentecostal Fire!

#### **4. REDEFINE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORD “SUCCESS”.**

Ironically, many are “successful” but yet “dead” when it comes to Pentecost! There is great music, great programs, rousing sermons, but devoid of the presence of Jesus. No Holy Ghost power! The trouble is that this kind of success causes us to feel good about ourselves and gets our eyes off of pressing on towards the real thing – Pentecostal power!

Don't be proud of your so-called successes or accomplishments, but be broken, stay humbled and hungry before God. Brokenness is a rare commodity these days. Brokenness is not condemnation or the belittling of ones self, but brokenness is realizing that without Jesus Christ we are nothing. It is when we come to that point of nothingness that God meets us, fills us, and gives us His grace abundantly.

Everything that is based upon our abilities, our running of programs, etc is doomed to die. Some people are just too smart, just too capable for their own good. There are just too many good books and experts floating around these days that can come in and tell preachers what to do to be successful. Preachers then build their churches and ministries by the power of their own intelligence and abilities,

by the arm of their flesh. The evidence of this is that they often have all the outward trappings of success, but are totally empty of the power of the Holy Ghost!

Success isn't just about money, fame, or numbers, although money is important and behind each number there stands a human being that Christ died for. Success is about the character and the power of the Lord Jesus Christ being visible and manifested in and through our lives. The success index is about how much of Jesus and how little of our flesh men can see! Success is about pursuing God's calling, vision, and anointing upon our lives, and the fruit thereof being visible to all, for the Glory of God!

### **5. SEEK HIS FACE.**

Seek His face, and you shall see His hand. Seek Him with all your heart, and make walking with Him the main thing in your life. Live as if seeking His face and walking with Him is the most important thing in life!

Think of these verses, meditate on them...

**“One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.”** Psalm 27:4

The Psalmist also said, **“For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doo keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”** Psalm 84:10

In Philippians the Apostle Paul said, “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”  
Philippians 3:10-11

Give yourself totally to Jesus; die to self so that you may live. Prayer is a very important element here, but not prayer as an exercise, but passionate prayer that is the heart-cry of the man who seeks the face of God; who seeks His face, His power, and His favor. THAT kind of prayer brings down Fire!

Pentecostal power is not found in the self-life or in a materialistic lifestyle. Pentecostal power is found in the crucified life, in the life where one counts oneself dead, and is even willing to die to this world and to the things thereof so that Christ may be glorified.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, the greatest accolades are reserved for such men, “Of whom the world was not worthy.” It is through this dying with Christ that a man can count himself risen with Christ and seated in Christ at the right hand of God, with power!

## **6. BE A MAN OF FAITH!**

Develop faith, grow in faith, and be a man of faith. I shall discuss this key subject of faith in another teaching series. It is too large a subject to be merely a point here!

Let us close this subject with the words of a song written by General William Booth, the founder of The Salvation Army:

## **Send the Fire!**

by William Booth (1829-1912),  
Founder of the Salvation Army

Thou Christ of burning, cleansing flame,  
Send the fire!  
Thy blood bought gift today we claim,  
Send the fire today!  
Look down and see this waiting host,  
Give us the promised Holy Ghost;  
We want another Pentecost,  
Send the fire today, send the fire!

God of Elijah, hear our cry:  
Send the fire!  
To make us fit to live or die,  
Send the fire today!  
To burn up every trace of sin,  
To bring the light and glory in,  
The revolution now begin,  
Send the fire today, send the fire!

'Tis fire we want, for fire we plead,  
Send the fire!  
The fire will meet our every need,  
Send the fire today!  
For strength to ever do the right,  
For grace to conquer in the fight,  
For power to walk the world in white,  
Send the fire today, send the fire!

To make our weak hearts  
strong and brave,  
Send the fire!  
To live a dying world to save,  
Send the fire today!  
O see us on Thy altar lay  
Our lives, our all, this very day;  
To crown the offering now we pray,  
Send the fire today, send the fire!

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