**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

The Pentecost Effect – Miracles of God

 ***Seven Weeks After “The” Resurrection***

***49 Days since the Resurrection***

***40 Days Resurrection Ministry***

***9 Days After the Ascension***

***1 Day from Shavuot/ Pentecost***

***1987 years ago***

*May 31st*, 2020 A.D. in The Year of Our Lord

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(All Scripture is from the New American Standard Bible, unless otherwise noted.)

 I want to make an observation before we talk about Pentecost. In reviewing the events detailed in the Bible in the life of Jesus and the Apostles over the last eight weeks, beginning with the Cross, there are many miracles to be observed that cannot be explained by a materialistic or naturalistic worldview. These events chronicled in the Bible form the core teachings of Christianity and the Gospel Message.

I purposely write “God as Jesus” to make the point that the plurality of God/El-o-heem detailed in Genesis 1 is carried-out in the Gospel accounts. Jesus is not a separate God. The charge of polytheism is often made against Christianity. God is not limited in His presentation or interaction with His creation.

 Here is a Miraculous list:

1. **The Cross fulfilled prophecy** of Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22.
2. **The Empty tomb** (Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20).
3. **The Resurrection appearances of God as Jesus**

(Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, John 20,21, Acts 1).

1. **God as Jesus breathes His Spirit into the Apostles** (John 20).
2. **The Ascension (Mark** 16:19, Luke 24:51, Acts 1:2,9,10).

If any of these events had not happened, then there wouldn’t be any Christianity. There would not be a Gospel, meaning there isn’t any mechanism whereby people can be made righteous/approved to God. Specifically, there isn’t any payment for the debt of sin. Regardless if a person has never heard of the Cross, the Cross still payed the debt to God for their sins. True, a person still is called upon by God to humble themselves to Him. God holds everyone accountable (Romans 1:18, 10:18) because He has revealed Himself to all people from the beginning of the creation. This is where love comes in. Love is “THE” universal attribute of human nature because it comes from God. Love leaps through languages and cultural barriers. The lawyer asked Jesus how to gain eternal life (Luke 10:25-28, Matthew 22:35-40, Deuteronomy 6:5). The answer is in the two greatest commandments of God. Love God and your neighbor. "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:40). This is why the Cross is afforded to everyone (Romans 10:13). So, the whole law and the Prophets depend upon loving God and neighbor which is a direct application to Jesus fulfilling the Law at the Cross (Matthew 5:17). Once again, we go to John 3:16, God loved the world . . . eternal life.

Paul writes to Believers in Corinth and tells them the core of the Gospel.

**1 Corinthians 15:1-9**

1 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand,

 2 by which also you are saved,

if you hold fast the word which I preached to you,

 unless you believed in vain.

 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that **Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,** (Psalm 22, Isaiah 53)

 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

 5 and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

 6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;

 7 then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles;

 8 and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.

 9 For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

 We have reviewed recently the reasonableness of these miraculous events. One of the more compelling reasons is seen with the Apostles returning to Jesus. They came to His empty tomb, and they met Him in Jerusalem and Galilee. They saw His wounds. These men had good reason to hide from the Roman and Jewish authorities. They did not want to be crucified too. But their personal experience with the risen Lord changed their course in life. They could now see that the Cross was evidence to their own eternal lives. They could see that even if they lost their own temporal lives that they would be resurrected to a new life with the Lord. All the Apostles were martyred except John. Jesus tells the Apostles. . .

**John 14:1** "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. **2** "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

**3** "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also. **4** "And you know the way where I am going."

 **John 14:18** "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

**John 14:28** "You heard that I said to you, I go away, and I will come to you. If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

 Jesus had prepared the Apostles in advance with the knowledge that even though they will physically die, they will live.

**Romans 14:7** For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; **8** for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. **9** For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

**Miracles in Contrast**

In our 21st century, we are over two hundred years into the *Age of Reason and Materialism*. It is accurate to say that these are known as “Secularisms.” Both of these philosophies do not account for the miracles contained in the Gospels. Therefore, to their followers (Secularists), the miracles of the Gospels did not happen. Due to this rejection, Secularists offer their own beliefs concerning the origins and the condition of humanity and the creation.

The Secularists teach that in the beginning there was a primordial soup that contained elements, the building blocks of life (carbohydrates, lipids, proteins, and nucleic acids). Over time, this primordial soup was heated and struck by lightning or some electronic force. Through this process, the first ‘life’ organism was formed. This formation of life did not have any purpose. They teach that it was random, like a lightning strike. We are an accident of cosmic dust. In a short cosmic-time, our lives, as meaningless as they are, will not even be known, because our world will be sucked into a black hole in space or our own sun will turn into a super-nova and engulf the earth into its fire. No trace of our existence will be left. No scientist has been able to reproduce this formation of life.

From a Biblical view, the one thing the Secularists have right is that the Bible presents that the earth will, one day, be consumed by fire (2 Peter 3:12, Revelation 20:7-10, Hebrews 12:29, Isaiah 56:1).

So, it is reasonable to ask the question: Does the “primordial soup” idea have any more materialistic scientific evidence than the miracles in the Bible? Obviously not. From our life experiences and reading God’s Word, we see that “love” is the value in life behind the creation. From last week’s sermon, we see that God is Love (1 John 4:8), and He created us to experience His love. Our purpose is to be perfected in love (1 John 4:10). Always remember that Love is the conduit to eternal life. John 3:16 begins with “God so loved the world” and ends with “eternal life.”

Does the random, purposeless primordial soup idea promote life or the stability of life? No. Every psychologist and psychiatrist knows that the human condition must have love or a person will go insane. Take love from a human, and you will only have a purposeless “primoradial soup,” a biological mass that pursues life’s destruction. I observe that the secularist teaches that there is no purpose or direction in life. Morals and personal values are subjective only to self. With this secular mind-set love is relegated to the sideline of human expediency. God’s purpose and direction for love is omitted. People become an object to be used to gain materialistic achievements like money and to be politically exploited. Materialistic goals seek to achieve selfish gain.

Again, like stated last week, absence of love fills the prisons. Love not only is the origin of life, love is the sustainer of life. Love is the catalyst that makes us all grow spiritually.

 The same man who God directed to write the Gospel of John also wrote 1 John. We have quoted from chapter 4 often. It is important to see the chapter in its entire context and in relationship to the context of the whole Bible. This chapter provides answers to many questions.

**1 John 4:1** Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;

 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the *spirit* of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

 4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

 5 They are from the world; therefore they speak *as* from the world, and the world listens to them.

 6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

 7 Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

 9 By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.

 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

 11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

 12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

 13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. (John 20:22)

 14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world.

 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

 16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

 17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.

 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

 19 We love, because He first loved us.

 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

 21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.

**What Did God Do?**

The timing of the Incarnation is God’s Business. The Cross had to happen for the sins of the world to be paid by God. This takes the “**work** **for your salvation**” from the salvation equation and, also, separates God and His Cross from any other position regarding justifying a person to God.

 Once the Incarnation was in process, God specifically chose the timing of the Cross. Jesus purposely rode a donkey into Jerusalem the week of Passover. God’s actions cannot be confused. God was pointing to the Exodus Passover and the blood of the lamb placed on the doorpost. It is irrefutable not to make the application as the same. Humble yourself to God, His blood, and you will live. Granted, the Exodus Passover was aimed at the eldest son, but the call to humble yourself to God’s plan (or death will come) is clear. Humble yourself to God’s Cross, and you will gain not only life but eternal life.

This takes the focus from man-made systems. The Cross gutted the **mediator role** of the Jewish religious leaders between God and the people. By clear-cut extension, **the Cross removed the mediation role from all religious leaders through history.** People do not need a priesthood to mediate their relationship to God. Ministers are to point the way to God like John the Baptist pointed to God in the life of Jesus Christ.

 God chose the time of Passover for the Cross, and He chose the day the Jews observed receiving the Law to send His Holy Spirit Empowered Apostles into Jerusalem. This is called “Shavuot.” They were both spiritual days.

Regarding the Jewish calendar, seven weeks (49 days) after Passover (Hebrew *Sukkot* “Feast of Booths) is Pentecost (Shavuot) commemorating the giving of the Torah/Law (first five books of Hebrew Bible) to Moses at Mount Sinai (about 1450 BC).

Here is an online article explaining Shavuot.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shavuot>

 The Torah mandates the seven-week Counting of the Omer, beginning on the second day of Passover, to be immediately followed by Shavuot. Omer is the counting of the days since Passover.

(See Deuteronomy 4 and 5. These two monumental days in the life of the Hebrew people mark the Exodus and the giving of the Law.)

**Shavuot**  Yiddish Shovues (Hebrew: שָׁבוּעוֹת, lit. "Weeks"), is known as the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost (Koinē Greek: Πεντηκοστή) in English. It is a Jewish holiday that occurs on the sixth day of the Hebrew month of Sivan (it may fall between May 15 and June 14 on the Gregorian calendar).

Shavuot has a double significance, agricultural and spiritual. Agriculturally it marks the all-important wheat harvest in the Land of Israel (Exodus 34:22), and spiritually it commemorates the anniversary of the day when God gave the Torah to the nation of Israel assembled at Mount Sinai—although the association is not explicit in the Biblical text between the giving of the Torah (Matan Torah) and Shavuot.

The holiday is one of the Three Pilgrimage Festivals of the Bible. The word Shavuot means "weeks" and it marks the conclusion of the Counting of the Omer. Its date is directly linked to that of Passover; the Torah mandates the seven-week Counting of the Omer, beginning on the second day of Passover, to be immediately followed by Shavuot. This counting of days and weeks is understood to express anticipation and desire for the giving of the Torah. On Passover, the people of Israel were freed from their enslavement to Pharaoh; on Shavuot, they were given the Torah and became a nation committed to serving God. The yahrzeit of King David is traditionally observed on Shavuot. Hasidic Jews also observe the yahrzeit of the Baal Shem Tov.

Since Shavuot occurs 50 days after Passover, Hellenistic Jews gave it the name "Pentecost" (Koinē Greek: Πεντηκοστή, "fiftieth day").

**Sukkot to Shavuot – Passover to Pentecost**

 Passover reminded the people of when the death angel passed over every house (Hebrew and Egyptian) with the blood of a lamb placed on the doorpost, thus sparing the life of the eldest son (Exodus 12). *Shavuot* became known as Pentecost due to the fact it came fifty days after the first day of Passover. So, the first day of Passover plus seven weeks (49 days) equal 50 days. Pentecost is the Greek word for “fifty.” *Shavuot* means “weeks.” In a short period of time in Hebrew history, they received their freedom from Egypt, “*Sukkot*,” and the Law of God, “*Shavuot*.” They viewed the Law as a spiritual power over them. We see this as Paul, the Pharisee of Pharisees, wrote to the Jews in Rome.

**Romans 2:28** For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. 29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

(Deuteronomy 30:6; Ezekiel 36)

 Comparing the life ministry of God as Jesus to the two Hebrew days of Sukkot and Shavuot, we see a distinct application.

**Sukkot/Passover -** If they surrendered to the blood of the lamb, they would gain life and eternal life. The Death Angel would pass over them on judgement day. They would be spared an eternal life in the lake of fire separated from God (Luke 16, Revelation 20).

**Shavuot/Pentecost -** Jesus’ life teaching taught the Jews they could be free from the oppressive perverted application of the Law their religious leaders imposed over them by receiving His Spirit. Jesus called for the Jews and all people to be reborn of Spirit (John 3).

 Paul declares that the Law is Spiritual.

**Romans 7:14** For we know that the Law is spiritual,

 but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.

 This passage in Romans 7 details Paul’s loss when he tried his best to live life according to the Law. Paul, the Pharisee of Pharisees, confesses he fails to keep the law and sin abides in him. He knows the Law is spiritual, but, from his confession, we see that the Law is not a spiritual power strong enough to protect him or give him victory over death and sin that runs in his life. But, in Romans 8:1, we see God provides the solution to Paul, and all of us, in Jesus Christ.

 **Romans 8:1- 4**

 1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus

has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

 3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,

 4 so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us,

who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

 The reality of being a Christian is answered in one question. Does the Spirit of God reside in a person?

**Philippians 2:13** for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

**Hebrews 13:21** equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

**Galatians 2:20** "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

**AMEN**