

Events need to be interpreted correctly and adequately. Pentecost had a greater meaning than the visible signs of the coming of the Spirit or even the invisible results. Peter anticipated misunderstanding and interpreted the events of Pentecost as a demonstration that Jesus was made Lord and Christ (Acts 2:14, 33, 36). The outpouring of the Spirit meant that Jesus had kept His promise and therefore had been exalted as resurrected Lord and Christ. The reasons which argue for this understanding establish the importance of thinking more highly of the Giver of the Gift, than becoming preoccupied with the Gift.

***I. The development of the sermon argues that Pentecost should be understood as pointing to Jesus as Lord and Christ.***

1. Peter’s introduction (2:15–21) connected the observed event with the prophecy of Joel (Joel 2:28–32a). His quote stops in the middle of a verse with the promise, that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. The inclusion of the promise, the abrupt end of the quote, and the later citing of Joel 2:33c show that his main point in the sermon will be to call on the name of the Lord to be saved.
2. In the body of the sermon (2:22–36) Peter gives evidence that Jesus is the Lord and Christ in whom they should believe: attested by God (2:22), resurrected by God as foretold and witnessed (2:23–32), and exalted by the Father as demonstrated in the pouring out of the Spirit (2:33–35).
3. Peter concludes (2:36) that God had made Jesus whom they crucified both Lord and Christ. Since the sermon arising from Pentecost focused on the Giver rather than the Gift, so should we. Though we need to understand what happened at Pentecost, visibly and invisibly, we need to understand even more what that meant: Jesus is our Lord and Christ.

***II. The answer to the sermon argues that Pentecost should be understood as pointing to Jesus as Lord and Christ.***

1. The reply of Peter to the response of the crowd (2:38) called them to repent (from sin and especially to think different about the person of Jesus) and be baptized in the name of Jesus (emphasizing His person). The Spirit was a promised gift to those who submitted to Jesus as Lord and Christ.
2. Peter continued with a call to “be saved from this corrupt generation,” a salvation which is only in Jesus Christ. The Spirit is an added gift (cf. Romans 8:23; Ephesians 1:13–14).

Those who believe are saved by the blood of Jesus, God the Son, and not by the Gift who is given them. The gospel calls people to trust Jesus, not accept the Gift. The proper response to the gospel is to submit to the Giver, the Savior, Jesus Christ. Even submission to the Spirit is ultimately submission to Jesus.

***III. The lasting character of the Pentecost event argues for the interpretation that Jesus is Lord and Christ.***

1. The Spirit’s coming and its relation to the Father and Son points to the exalted Jesus. Jesus received the Spirit from the Father to give to His followers (Acts 2:33; John 14:26; 15:26). The Spirit’s work is to bear witness to Jesus and to glorify Jesus (John 15:26; 16:14).
2. The baptism with the Spirit, a Pentecost event, unites believers into one Body, the Church, which is intended to bring glory to God and to Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:21; 4:12; 5:27; 1 Corinthians 12:7).
3. The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23), another result of the Spirit’s coming, which is the character of God working itself out in the life of the believer, contributes to God’s work of conforming believers to the image of Christ so that Jesus Christ “might be the first-born among many brethren” (Romans 8:29).

Because the Gift Himself, the Spirit, points to the Giver, Jesus Christ, so should we.

Remember Pentecost in its full significance and not merely the events, both visible and invisible. Those events are true and important. But their significance is greater: Jesus is both Lord and Christ.

Pentecost marks the coming of the Spirit but especially calls people to turn to Jesus as Lord and Christ, seeking forgiveness on the basis of His sacrifice and submitting to His rule as Lord. We may thank Jesus for the gift of the Spirit, but we must also elevate the Giver above the Gift as God wants.