

May 24, 2026  
Pentecost Sunday

“We Call on the Name of the Lord”

Acts 2:1-21

I’ve mentioned before how one of the more frequent questions I get from people is about if I think we are living in the End Times or not. The simple answer is “Yes. Yes we are.”

You can’t come to any other conclusion if you believe the words Peter proclaims on the day of Pentecost. Two thousand years ago the Holy Spirit was manifested in the sound of a rushing wind and tongues of flame upon the believers gathered together in one place in Jerusalem, perhaps even in one of the hallways of the temple. They then, filled with the Holy Spirit, publicly began proclaiming Jesus as the resurrected Christ in many different languages. The crowd understandably is intrigued and Peter explains, *“This is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: ‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...’”*

Peter in quoting the prophet Joel says that day, two thousand years in our past, was the inauguration of the last days, the end times. So if as your leaving church today you see blood and fire and vapor of smoke, the sun turning to darkness and the moon to blood, it really shouldn’t freak you out. The End times we are in may end any time now. Does that worry you?

This is where the rubber meets the road in a big way for the Christian. You see, when folks ask me about the End Times it’s usually with no small amount of trepidation and fear in their voice. We have all that bizarre and sometimes ugly symbolism in the Book of Revelation and we have Jesus speaking about the trials and evils coming upon the earth before His return and it makes us nervous. That’s understandable. We’re not all that enthusiastic about suffering and persecution.

But what does it truly mean to be in the end times? It means Jesus is coming back! Any time now! Jesus is coming back and that’s a very, very good thing! Peter and the other believers were not proclaiming fear that day. They were proclaiming salvation. They were proclaiming Christ crucified and risen and coming again soon! They were proclaiming the Christ who saves His people from their sins and in the final judgment brings them to His glory in perfect life everlasting. As the story of these apostles unfolds in Holy Scripture it is a picture of a church forsaking the things of the world as it looks hopefully toward the coming of Christ any day now.

So I want you to clear your mind and honestly ask yourself; What is my gut reaction when I consider the Christ’s return, the Last Day, coming soon, as in maybe tomorrow?

I hope that reaction is joy and longing as in “Oh, wouldn’t that be fantastic!” But for a lot of believers, I think our immediate gut reaction is, “It’s the end of the world!” Our fallen nature feels this way. Remember last week how I talked about us belonging to Christ but being tempted to return to the world? Well, that sinful nature clinging to us loves the world and it prompts us to see the return of Christ as a loss of the world, not as the gaining of paradise. If you catch yourself feeling this way it is a huge red flag that you be loving the world too much.

Contrast that with the believers on the day of Pentecost. It’s ten days after Jesus’ ascension and they are all gathered together. The Greek suggests they are of the same mind, so I take that to mean they are faithfully waiting for whatever comes next. But then the Holy Spirit is poured out upon them and notice the change that takes place.

Everybody gets caught up in the speaking in tongues. But really, that’s just a miraculous tool the Spirit provides to further the real action that takes place now—the proclamation of the

Savior! And what is the message? Repent! Believe! Be baptized! Be saved! Do it now because Jesus is Lord and He is coming back to gather His flock. There is no fear of the world being lost; only love of the Savior who returns!

Move forward in time. In Jerusalem this mindset continues. They begin this somewhat communal congregation where folks aren't gathering the wealth of the world but instead giving it up for the support of the church. Then the persecution begins and again, believers aren't clinging to their life in the world, they're giving up their lives rather than turn against the risen and returning Savior. They trust they possess the eternal life only He can give so the end of this time, this life, not a loss.

This has not stopped in 2000 years. That same Holy Spirit poured out in power that Pentecost day has dwelled in all who have joyfully received the Gospel truth proclaimed by them and passed down through the ages. All of these faithful believers have lived in the End Times, prepared for Jesus' return any day now. We stand with them in faith.

If you read through the entirety of Peter's Pentecost sermon it wraps up with these words: *"And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this crooked generation.'"* I just want to remind you that it is only the crooked generation that fears the end of the world. Those who know Christ look forward to it.

That truth may trouble some hearts here, because that fallen nature sticking to us still has a voice and it is constantly telling us we should love the creation more than the Creator. Love of God is a challenge to every sinner, even those who believe what God has done for us in Christ.

Thankfully, Joel's prophecy is pretty clear what the proper response to this problem is. God's word through the prophet promises the Holy Spirit being poured out on all flesh, speaks of signs and wonders upon the earth but then gives a simple promise: *"And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

Folks, the gift of the Holy Spirit is not about speaking in tongues, prophesying eloquently, healing through laying on hands or any of those first-century spiritual gifts of the church. The gift of the Holy Spirit isn't about having a iron-clad steadfast faith that never doubts and eradicates all sin from ones life. The gift of the Holy Spirit doesn't free you from temptations of the world and laser-focus your love completely at Jesus.

The Holy Spirit reveals the Gospel truth that Jesus has defeated sin, death, Satan and all of your enemies and that He alone is your Lord. The Holy Spirit enables you to call on His name in saving faith, not perfect faith; saving faith that receives His gifts guaranteed in Word and Sacrament. The Holy Spirit has led you to call upon the name of the Lord to be saved.

So do it. It's great to be here in the house of God formally doing it together. We have the words to use given to us and naturally and joyfully together call on the name of the Lord in repentance, praise, petition, thanksgiving, intercession, and so many other ways. It is right and good so to do.

Be sure you're doing it every other day also, all day long. Do it especially when you catch yourself loving the world too much because we all have a problem with that, but it's a sin Jesus loves to forgive. And maybe make a habit of calling on His name to say, "Come, Lord Jesus," reminding yourself that He will one day soon, and it's not the end of the world; it's the beginning of paradise.

Amen.