

Who is on the Pitcher's Mound?

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(Scripture references are from New King James Version)

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Galations 4:4-6

INTRODUCTION:

1. Any baseball fan understands the title of this message
2. Let me give you my COUNTRY BUMPKIN analysis of two Key Players on a baseball team
 - a. The Catcher: He makes it a point to know **all he can know** about each man who comes to the batter's box. The Catcher has mostly hand signals to call for a certain throw or pitch to this batter.
 - b. The Pitcher: His job is to strike the batter out... He needs to know exactly what the Catcher wants. Also, be able to make any kind of throw known to the game. Now it makes no difference what the Catcher calls for, the Pitcher has to deliver.
3. Now you will soon know what this sermon title has to do with a very timely and important sermon the Lord gave me.
 - a. Very pertinent to this period in time
 - b. Most pertinent to you as a Christian
 - c. Very important to every Christian church in existence
 - d. Should be of interest to every Sunday School Teacher, every Preacher, every Bible Professor, and Presidents of our Baptist Colleges, Universities and Seminaries
4. These are the three (3) periods we will look at:
 - a. The Old Testament
 - b. The Gospel Period or Life of Jesus
 - c. The Period since Jesus... or the Church Age
5. Our ball game goes from Genesis to Revelation – But, DON'T GET NERVOUS, (I can finish this in 30 minutes).

I. NOW OBSERVE A FEW OLD TESTAMENT EVENTS

1. The Flood of Noah's Day Genesis 6
 - a. Because of a very violent and evil world
 - b. God announced a World-Covering Catastrophe – The world and most living creatures, including mankind, would be destroyed (only what was in Noah's boat would survive).
 - c. God declared – "My Spirit will not always strive with man... yet his days will be 120 years."
 - d. The Judgment fell. Imagine the scene, (New Orleans in 2005 was minute compared to what Noah saw).
2. Joseph and the saving of Egypt – Later his own people, the Hebrews
 - a. He interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh. Saved Egypt from a famine
 - b. Became Prime Minister of that great Nation
 - c. Brought the Hebrews to Egypt
3. Moses and the Miraculous Deliverance of his people

- a. Took God 80 years to get Moses ready to deliver his people
 - b. Took God and Moses 40 years to get the freed slaves from Egypt to Canaan
4. Other God-centered event in the Old Testament
- a. The saving of Jonah and the *great revival* in Ninevah
 - 1) From lowest peasant to the powerful king
 - 2) Every Ninevite turned from his sin to God
 - b. The Saving of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego
 - 1) Daniel from a *den of lions* – hungry lions
 - 2) Three Hebrew princes in a *fiery furnace*
 - 3) STORY IN A NUTSHELL... They wouldn't **budge**, they wouldn't **bow**, they wouldn't **burn**
 - 4) Saved by the FOURTH man in the fire. The FOURTH is "Like the Son of God".

NOW... THE \$64 QUESTION. In the Old Testament, who was on the Pitcher's Mound?

If you answered – Elohim, Jehovah, or God, **YOU MADE AN "A"**

II. OUR SECOND LOOK-JESUS IN THE GOSPELS OR "THE LIFE OF JESUS"

1. Jesus fulfilled many prophecies when He came
 - a. Moses quoting God – Genesis 3:15 To SATAN ... " And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."
 - b. Balaan's Fourth Prophecy before King Balak, who had hired him to curse Israel – Numbers 24:17 "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel..."
 - c. Isaiah 9:6 "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."
 - d. Micah prophesied in 5:2 "But, you, Bethlehem, Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose going forth are from old, from everlasting."
2. His conception and His birth
 - a. Isaiah said " A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."
 - b. When astonished Mary asked the Annunciation Angel... "HOW?" He said, " The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God."
3. His Baptism – Anointing – Approval

- a. John baptized Jesus
- b. The Dove and Holy Spirit descended
- c. The approving words of the Father
4. His Temptation/Testing in the wilderness
5. Jesus returned victorious over Satan, and FULL of the Holy Spirit "IN WHOSE POWER..."
 - a. Jesus *taught and preached*
 - b. He transformed lives
 - c. He fed the multitudes – 5,000 one time, 4,000 another
 - d. Jesus walked on water – called Peter to do the same
 - e. He cleansed lepers, healed diseases, and raised the dead
 - f. Jesus *took our sins* upon Himself, and bore them to the cross...
"While HE was on the cross, I was on His mind"
I owed a debt I could not pay. He paid a debt He did not owe."

I needed someone to take my sins away." **AND JESUS DID.**
 He took **YOUR** sins, too.

6. He atoned for sin, conquered death, and left the grave EMPTY
7. After 40 wonderful days with His followers, Jesus ascended to the Father, shared His Throne, interceded for us
8. From this Throne He returns soon, to win the *battle of the ages*, take HIS throne and reign
 Handel says... "*FOREVER AND FOREVER*"
"KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS"

NOW... AGAIN, THE \$64 QUESTION. In the Gospel Period... The life of Jesus,
 Who was on the Pitcher's Mound?

If you answered, JESUS, you made another "A"

III. NOW WE ENTER THE LAST PERIOD... THE CHURCH AGE

1. As Luke closes his Gospel and opens Acts, JESUS GIVES THE FINAL WORDS
 - a. Luke 24:49 "behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."
 - b. (Now, this was moments before His ascension) Acts 1:8 "but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
2. Then Jesus ascends to Heaven before their astonished gaze
3. The Church begins a prayer meeting Acts 1:12-14
 - a. In an upper room

- b. "as these continued in a prayerful unity, a special day arrived..." *THE DAY OF PENTECOST*
- 4. On the day of Pentecost, all HEAVEN broke loose
 - a. They heard from Heaven – Rushing mighty wind
 - b. They experienced heaven – "Cloven tongues of fire" FIRE... symbol of power, purifies, burns away the dross
- 5. Church members all FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT
 - a. They began to witness – what Christ wanted
 - b. Witnessed in the tongue or language of all present
 - i. V 7 "*they were all amazed and marveled...*"
 - ii. V 11 "We hear them speaking in our own tongues (languages) the *WONDERFUL WORKS* of God."
- 6. From Pentecost many, many were saved. Membership soon reached 5,000 according to scholars
 - a. "A wonderful revival-like atmosphere continued a long time. Church continued to grow."
 - b. "Many Priests were obedient to the Faith."
- 7. The Church needed some Deacons. Found 7 men; all still filled with the Holy Spirit
 - a. One named *Stephen* presented such a powerful *polemic* to the Jewish Sanhedrin in behalf of Jesus, that he was stoned to death.
 - b. Another named *Phillip* went cross-country preaching where ever he could. The Holy Spirit led Phillip to a chariot where an Ethiopian official needed some help with Isaiah 53. Phillip began at the same verse and continued on through the scriptures presenting Christ. Phillip ended up baptizing the fellow. This new Christian went back to Africa with the Gospel. Phillip took off following the Holy Spirit.
- 8. God sent Peter to a house full of Gentiles
 - a. Home of Cornelius, who had been instructed by an angel to send for Peter who was in Joppa
 - b. There Peter was prepared by a vision to go with the men Cornelius had sent. God prepared Peter to preach to a house full of Gentiles. Sure AGAINST HIS DRUTHERS
 - c. Peter obeyed. Went to Cornelius' house in Caesarea and preached Christ to Cornelius and his guests
 - d. As Peter preached, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the Word, and they were soon baptized. (*Note: The Holy Spirit is mentioned four times in this incident.*)
- 9. Saul of Tarsus, a zealous Jew seeking to destroy the name of Christ and His followers
 - a. Was nearing Damascus to arrest Christians
 - b. God hit Saul with a brilliant light. He ended up on the ground and blinded.
 - c. In Damascus, Ananias helped Saul and baptizes him.
 - d. Saul is *filled with the Holy Spirit* and becomes Paul

- e. Paul made three long missionary journeys – established a number of churches – wrote thirteen books of the New Testament
- 10. A few Spirit-filled men in the church at Antioch, were FASTING, PRAYING AND MINISTERING to the Lord
 - a. Acts 13:2 “And as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the HOLY SPIRIT said, “Separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”
 - b. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia...
- 11. Saul and Barnabas preached with such success in Antioch...
 - a. They were run out of the region, but LISTEN TO THIS...
 - b. “and the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.”
(These do go together)
- 12. Now believers, to tell the whole story of the early believers, the churches, and the HOLY SPIRIT, would be to read MOST of the New Testament

NOW...BACK TO THE \$64 QUESTION.... *Remember...that Jesus left the earth, ascended to Heaven and sent the Holy Spirit....to Believers or the Church on *THE DAY OF PENTECOST*.

NOW...BACK TO OUR QUESTION... “WHO IS ON THE PITCHER’S MOUND IN THE CHURCH AGE?” (From Pentecost forward)

If you answer any other than the HOLY SPIRIT, my friend... You are no way near to being a Bible Scholar.

SPECIAL NOTE: “At the end of six months of specific study and prayer...this is what God showed me.”

IV. PATIENCE, MY FRIEND, WE NEAR THE CONCLUSION ...

1. Now the Holy Spirit stayed on the Pitcher’s Mound through the last chapter of Revelation 22:17 “And the Spirit and the Bride say, “Come....””
2. There is no reason to believe that He has left the Pitcher’s Mound since then
3. We see the Holy Spirit in Revelation 1:4-11 (Note: v. 10 “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day and heard behind me a great voice...” It was Jesus telling John to write seven letters to seven churches, in Asia Minor. John obeyed... and EACH LETTER ended with... “He who has an ear, let him hear *WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES...*” (Italics mine)
4. Now listen to God, the Holy Spirit, close the book of Revelation, and the Bible
 - a. Rev 22:16-17 “I Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Morning Star. And the Spirit and the Bride say, “Come” and let him who hears say, “Come” and let

him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely."

V. FINALLY... THE CONCLUSION "We Know!"

1. God was on the **PITCHER'S MOUND** in the Old Testament
2. Jesus was on the **PITCHER'S MOUND** while He was on the earth
3. Now, we need to recall; Jesus, just **BEFORE** and **AFTER** His crucifixion, did and **IMPORTANT** thing...
 - a. BEFORE – Jesus taught His Disciples all they could grasp about the Holy Spirit – John 14:16- 16:14. This is basic – every Christian should know this.
 - b. AFTER – Jesus commanded – "...tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49
 - c. SEEMINGLY MOMENTS before His ascension, Jesus said, "you shall receive power **WHEN** the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
4. Since Jesus sent the Holy Spirit, **HE HAS BEEN ON THE PITCHER'S MOUND.** (I think this is pretty obvious)
5. There are several implications... Truths God wants us to get. Strong reminders
 - a. God expresses Himself as Three from Genesis through Revelation
 - i. God, the Creator... Father, Elohim, Jehovah, Yahweh
 - ii. Jesus, the Son... Anointed One, Messiah, Jeshua
 - iii. Holy Spirit... Paraclete, Helper, One like I
 - b. Now, Believers of all Christian persuasions. Would-be teachers, Leaders, Commoners... **WE'D BETTER GET THIS!**
6. **LISTENER OR READER:** You can check out everything I have said in the scriptures
7. I close with two simple but serious questions:
 - a. If we **NEGLECT, REJECT, OR IGNORE** the Holy Spirit... "Have we quit listening to God?"
 - b. **CLOSING QUESTION:** Also simple but serious – "How can we afford to ignore **THE ONE** who can do so much for us?" **IN FACT** – Without Him there are numerous significant things **WE ABSOLUTELY CAN NOT DO!!!**