

THE  
DICHOTOMY  
OF  
*Invitation*  
AND

*Command*



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# THE DICHOTOMY OF INVITATION & COMMAND

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## Definitions

- Invitation: an appeal from one who cares, opening a welcome and an opportunity for a voluntary response. It honors the will of the invited while revealing the heart of the inviter.
- Command: an authoritative directive issued by one in power that requires obedience. A command carries weight, urgency, and the expectation of compliance.

Text to anchor the message: Revelation 22:17 — “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

## Introduction

The closing verses of Scripture give us a single, simple word: “Come.” On the surface it sounds gentle and pastoral — a loving invitation to the thirsty. Yet coming from the Spirit and the Bride, it bears the weight of heaven’s authority. In the life of the believer there are always two sides to God’s speaking to us: He calls us by grace, and He commands us by authority. As Apostolic Pentecostals we stand in the tension — we preach the open door of grace and we proclaim the necessity of obedience that follows true repentance.

## The Invitation: Grace Extended

When God invites, He reaches out in love. Consider Isaiah 55:1 and Matthew 11:28 — God pleads with the weary, the thirsty, the burdened. The Spirit’s “Come” says, “There is help. There is forgiveness. There is new life.” The invitation respects the human will: “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17). It is an offer — salvation is not coerced; it is received by faith.

This is the gospel dimension of our message. We cry, “Come!” to the lost: come to repentance (Acts 2:38), come to Christ (John 7:37), come and be filled with the Holy Ghost and fire with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:4, 3). The invitation comforts and restores; it shows God’s heart for sinners. It invites sinners into a relationship where hearts are changed and lives are made new.

## The Command: Authority and Obligation

But the same Word that invites also commands. God is not merely a distant friend; He is Lord. Scripture calls for response that is decisive and obedient. Repentance, baptism in Jesus’ name, and receiving the Holy Ghost and fire with the evidence of speaking in tongues are not optional extras in Apostolic Pentecostal conviction — they are the commanded

pattern seen in Acts (see Acts 2:38; 10:47–48). Jesus said to His disciples, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel...” (Mark 16:15) — an imperative that demands action.

The command side of God’s “Come” contains urgency and holiness. It calls for holiness of life, separation from sin, and a walk worthy of the calling. The Bride’s voice is not merely persuasive; it is expectant: those who come must be changed, baptized, filled with the Holy Ghost and fire, and obedient to the Lord’s will.

### The Dichotomy Reconciled: Invitation with Authority

These are not contradictory but complementary. The Spirit’s invitation is the expression of God’s mercy; the Bride’s command is the expression of God’s righteousness. The Spirit invites because He knows the price paid for our transgressions; the Bride commands because she knows the cost of half-hearted discipleship. The gospel is offered freely, yet when received, it obligates a life of submission and obedience.

Consider the example of Peter on the Day of Pentecost. He issues a command — “Repent” — but he offers the promise that accompanies the call —

“and be baptized... and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 2:38). The Pentecostal experience adds the fullness pictured in Acts 2:3–4: tongues as of fire and being filled with the Holy Ghost and fire. That is invitation wrapped in command: come now, repent now, be baptized now; receive the Holy Ghost and fire now — the promise is present for all who obey.

### Apostolic Pentecostal Emphasis — The Bride, The Spirit, and Jesus’ Name

Revelation’s phrase “the Spirit and the Bride say, Come” is rich in ministry roles. The Holy Spirit testifies of the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, drawing hearts to the Savior. The Bride represents the redeemed body of Christ — the church — called to echo that summons. As Apostolic Pentecostals we affirm that the Bride’s call points people to Jesus’ name. Acts 2:38 outlines the response: repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and receive the Holy Ghost — filled with the Holy Ghost and fire with the evidence of speaking in tongues. We hold firmly to the Jesus-name baptism and the “Jesus only” clarity of the gospel: Jesus is the center, the name in which we are baptized, and the Lord who saves and fills with the Spirit and fire. The Bride, as the body, is commissioned to call sinners to that scriptural pattern.

## Practical Applications — How We Respond

1. Hear the invitation and do not harden your heart. If you are thirsting, come now. Don't delay. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2).
2. Take the command seriously. Salvation changes conduct. If you come, be prepared to obey: repent of sin, be baptized in Jesus' name, and seek to be filled with the Holy Ghost and fire, with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:17).
3. Live both sides — preach grace, demand holiness. As the Bride, the church must extend Christ's welcome to the lost and call the saved to deeper surrender. Pastors and saints must balance compassion with a life-shaping standard.
4. Urgency in witness. The Spirit and the Bride say "Come." We must echo that call in our communities, homes, and streets with both love and firmness. Souls are at stake.
5. Persevere in the call. Coming is not a one-time act; it is a lifelong posture of drawing near to God, being continually filled with the Holy Ghost and fire, and obeying His Word.

## Conclusion — A Final Appeal

The Spirit and the Bride say “Come.” It is an open door and a sovereign command. If you are hearing that voice today, respond. Receive the invitation to abundant life; accept the command to die to self and live for Christ. Let us, as a Pentecostal people, continue to sing the call and sound the trumpet: Come. Repent. Be baptized in the name of Jesus. Receive the Holy Ghost — be filled with the Holy Ghost and fire with the evidence of speaking in tongues. Walk in holiness. Heaven is both pleading and proclaiming — will you answer?

### Closing Scripture and Invitation

Revelation 22:17 — “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come.” If you feel that drawing today, obey it now. Pray, repent, be baptized in Jesus’ name, and seek the baptism — to be filled with the Holy Ghost and fire with the evidence of speaking in tongues — and let the life-changing power of God be evident in you.