

**Alleluia! Christ is risen!**  
**"Big Bang Theory Theme" Barenaked ladies**

If you know this song, please sing along with me.

Our whole universe was in a hot dense state,  
Then nearly fourteen billion years ago expansion started.

Wait...

The Earth began to cool,  
The autotrophs began to drool,  
Neanderthals developed tools,  
We built a wall (we built the pyramids),  
Math, science, history, unraveling the mystery,  
That all started with the big bang (bang)!

So what do the Big Bang and Pentecost have in common?

Quite a lot, as I discovered on an astrophysics website.

The Big Bang theory of the beginnings of the cosmos suggests that there was a tiny, microscopic, assembly of matter held together very tightly by gravitational and electromagnetic forces.

For the sake of an analogy,

*Let's call this the Jesus singularity* – since in him, God took on human flesh and blood as a tiny baby.

*And let's call those forces of energy the Holy Spirit,  
by which Jesus was conceived in Mary's womb  
and through whom we come to know God.*

Then, scientifically, around 14 billion years ago, The Holy Spirit moved over the waters, heated things up and this tiny singularity exploded.

**And immediately began expanding and differentiating.**

*Let's call this the 12 disciples era,*

- *as Jesus revealed himself,*
- *taught in their synagogues and temples*
- *forgave sins*
- *and healed in their villages.*

Next, the impact of the Holy Spirit's light and heat created more expansion and the creation of galaxies, stars, planets, and the like.

*Let's call this Pentecost, as the risen and ascended Jesus gave his Spirit to the church.*

Finally, the differentiation of matter included animals, plants, people, and all living things.

*Let's call this the apostolic age of the church, as the Word of God in Jesus spread to more and more people.*

- *Peter first preached in Jerusalem, then went to those in Babylon, and finally preached to the church in Rome.*
- *James led the church in Jerusalem.*
- *Thomas went to India*
- *Paul became a missionary to Asia minor,*
- *and recruited more people to share the ministry, such as Barnabas, Timothy, Silas, and Philemon.*

*These then started churches in various places*

*– churches that followed the Lord Jesus by making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey all that Jesus commanded.*

...

And just as the universe is still expanding

*– so the church is still growing --*

**Growing in the power and energy of the Holy Spirit that unleashes the Gospel in the world.**

On that first Pentecost, the Gospel announced the arrival of the promised deliverer of God's people Israel.

This news prompted the people to clean up their act and prepare to be delivered

- From their sins
- From the Roman oppressors
- From the corruption of officials that cheated them

- From religious lies and fake news
- From the need to prove themselves worthy of God's love
- From false hope and unattainable ambitions
- From the inevitability of aging bodies and eternal death

We are not so different from those 1<sup>st</sup> century folks, are we?

We have the same needs and challenges

The same hopes and dreams

The same fears and fate

The threats are different

- instead of the Roman emperor, we have ISIS and nuclear weapons to oppress us with fear.

We have corruption and moral degradation among our highest authorities, religious and secular.

We, too, strive to prove to God and others that we are good people,

**forgetting that we cannot get beyond the grave on our record, however exemplary.**

We face the impact of time and toil on our bodies, knowing that no number of creams and procedures can prevent our death,

but giving in to the illusion that they can.

What else do we need to be delivered from?

Addictions?

Mental illness?

Poverty?

Racism?

Sexism?

Intolerance and prejudice?

The false security of “stuff”?

Greed?

Now close your eyes and listen:

- God who created the mountains, oceans, stars and galaxies also created you and delights in you
- **The Father sent his Son as a baby because he loves you.**
- Jesus heals the sick and makes the lame to walk
- **Jesus does not let the scars of your mind and heart have the last word.**
- God The Father and the God the Holy Spirit have raised Jesus the Son from the dead!
- **We are delivered from the ravages of Aging, wrinkles, painful joints, dementia and Alzheimer’s disease**
- We are delivered from the fear of violence and war, nuclear radiation and terrorism.

- **We are delivered from the certainty of damnation by our own sinful actions and unloving attitudes toward ourselves and others.**
- **YOU ARE DELIVERED**

And who is this deliverer?

It is **Jesus of Nazareth**, who was hung to die on a cross but who was raised from the dead on the third day  
and **lives to make all things new.**

It is Jesus, who alone has vanquished our enemies and  
**desires only one thing:**  
**that we seek our welfare in his victory.**

...

It is Jesus, who – having ascended to the seat of authority over the cosmos

- pours out his Holy Spirit – **his life**
- his conquering courage
- his unstoppable hope – **into us.**

**And that Spirit of the risen Lord Jesus sets our hearts on fire with love,**

*So that we are filled with God's power and energy that unleash the Gospel on the world!*

...

Yesterday, at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, one of my favorite passages from the Song of Solomon was read:

*Set me as a seal upon your heart,  
as a seal upon your arm;  
for love is strong as death,  
passion fierce as the grave.  
Its flashes are flashes of fire,  
a raging flame.  
7 Many waters cannot quench love,  
neither can floods drown it.  
If one offered for love  
all the wealth of one's house,  
it would be utterly scorned.*

This is how God loves us.

God does not bribe us with wealth and riches for us to return his love,

**God gives us himself** – fully and utterly completely –  
God is vulnerable to us in Jesus.

**And Pentecost is the heated, fiery passion of God for us:**

The passion of God's relentless love that sets us on fire  
That cannot be put out  
That cannot be drowned out  
And that cannot be stopped **even by the grave.**

The Holy Spirit of Jesus – our Deliverer

– seeks to tattoo the eternal love of God onto our hearts

--and seal it upon our souls,

– to **brand** us, **sear** us with love that is so freeing,

so unbelievably joyous,

such Good News

**that our life is irrevocably changed by it**

**for we have never felt more alive.**

...

Jesus is risen from the dead

– and with his eternal love for us,

**by the power of the Holy Spirit,**

**he pulls us through the grave with him into eternal life.**

Because he is passionately in love with his people;

He wants nothing to come between you and him.

Nothing that will get in the way of him loving you **fully and completely.**

After drowning you and all your sin in the waters of baptism,

**Jesus raises you to new life and sets your heart on fire with the Holy Spirit.**

Each day, he lights the match of his word  
to remind you of what he has delivered you from  
so that you can share his life and unquenchable love.

The universe is still expanding  
– the church is still expanding  
– **heated by the love of Jesus on fire in our hearts.**

So what will you do about this flaming passion?

How will you live the freedom of deliverance Jesus has  
given you today?

Where will the Holy Spirit send you to be the bearer of  
the Gospel of Jesus to someone else who needs  
deliverance?

Pay attention to what God is up to in your life this week.  
Post a story to our Facebook page or write it down and  
bring it next week.

For in the power of the Holy Spirit, every day is a Big Bang!

Amen An extra for you:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mM4RjgRyieQ>