

## Pentecost Sunday, June 5, 2022

**Readings:** Genesis 11: 1-9, Acts 2: 1-21, John 14: 23-31

### ***The Holy Spirit Gives Peace***

Following the flood, Noah's descendants failed to spread out and fill the earth as God had spoken. Rather, they exalted themselves; with *"one language and the same words"* (Gen. 11:1) they spoke proudly and arrogantly. The Lord humbled them by confusing *"the language of all the earth,"* dividing and dispersing the people (Gen. 11:9). That dispersal was reversed on Pentecost Day (the fiftieth day of Easter), when God caused the one Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to be preached in a multitude of languages. *"At this sound the multitude came together"* (Acts 2:6), for the preaching of Christ is the primary work of the Holy Spirit, whereby He gathers people from all nations into one Church. The Holy Spirit teaches and brings to our remembrance the words of Jesus, which are the words of the Father who sent Him. These words bestow forgiveness and peace to those who keep and hold on to them in love for Jesus. *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."* (John 14:27).

### **Sermon Transcript:**

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Now on this day of Pentecost, we are usually focused upon that actual day when the disciples were in the room. Seems like that's what they were doing most of the time, hiding out in the room. I mean, really after Jesus dies, what do they do? Jesus has to go into a locked room and find them and let them know that they can be at peace. And of course, if you remember each time He shows up in that locked room, even on that first day, what does He do? He, first of all, tells them, "Do not be afraid." Second, "My peace I give to you." And then the third is He gives them the Holy Spirit. He breathes on them and He gives them the Holy Spirit. So the disciples had already received the Holy Spirit on the day of Jesus' resurrection when Jesus breathed on them. They became alive, alive in the knowledge that Christ had died to forgive their sins. You are to hearken back and think back all the way in Genesis, when Jesus or God forms the human beings, and we're made out of the clay. We're made out of the dust of the ground. But we're just body. We have bones and blood and sinew and muscles, but no life. But we become alive when God breathes into us. And suddenly, humanity is alive. We are the only creation, the only creation in the entire universe, that came alive by the active giving of the Spirit of God to us. The rest of the animals in the entire cosmos, the angels and all other beings were simply created by God's Word, "Let there be." And there was.

But for us, He took the time to mold us and to create us and to breathe into us His life. We were meant to be spiritual beings. We were meant to be filled with a Spirit of God, but we broke that. And we lost that when Adam and Eve ate the fruit and we became creatures that had lost the image of God, had lost the Spirit of God. And so, we were sinners. And without the presence of the Holy Spirit, that is where we remain, lost and condemned because of our sin and rebellion. And yet, God could not leave us alone to our own devices. And so, He promised in the very beginning that He would send One who would crush the head of Satan. Not only would He crush the head of Satan, but He would also give us again His Spirit. And He would breathe in us the Holy Spirit. Now, we who are alive in the church are filled with the presence of God. We have been given God with us.

And the Spirit, how do we then receive that Spirit? Well, in essence really in the same way the disciples received the Spirit, through the Word of God. He speaks and they receive. We also hear the Word of God. He speaks and we receive His Spirit. Only for us, it's in baptism. For us, as we read last week in Ezekiel, it's about taking away the spirit of stone, the heart of stone, and putting in a heart of flesh where we will be filled with the Spirit. He will put His Spirit within us. Well, that's our baptisms. That's the Word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit, upon which we became alive in Christ.

And so this special day, this day of Pentecost was not the initial reception of the Holy Spirit, lest you think that you, since you have not been able to preach to 3,000 people and everybody here in their own language, that you are not filled with the Holy Spirit. That is not true. Just like the disciples, Jesus spoke to you and breathed into you the Holy Spirit. This was an extra special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Doesn't happen that often, occasionally for a particular purpose, and for especially this purpose, this was the Spirit giving the disciples, the ability to preach.

And so, they preached. Not just preaching, but also proclaiming in multiple languages. Now, I don't know if Peter spoke in Greek and John spoke in Aramaic and they chose different languages, whether each one was speaking in a different language or if it was the people who heard the different languages. It's not very clear. All it says is that they heard. It seems like the disciples were speaking and whatever language they were speaking, everybody heard it in their own tongue. This is more often than not what happens when we talk about speaking in tongue, a miraculous opportunity, where there are a group of people who speak a language that we do not speak. And God through the power of the Holy Spirit gives the ability to proclaim in the language that we do not know.

And that's what happened here. The Spirit came with a special, extra portion of His Spirit, an extra, not even... Well, let me rephrase that. It's not even an extra portion of the Holy Spirit as if you got a smaller version of the Holy Spirit and the disciples got a better version of the Holy Spirit. No, that's wrong. We all get the whole of God. the whole of the Holy Spirit. We have the presence of God in full measure, pressed down, packed down and overflowing. And occasionally it overflows with an extra manifestation as it does here. It could happen to you, or it could not, but it could. The Spirit works in the background and the Spirit has always been working to form and to complete this world. Even in Genesis, we have the Father overlooking creation, and through His Word, creating all things. And it says that the Spirit is hovering over the waters at the very beginning of Genesis. And the Spirit continues to hover over all of us, being with us, completing the Word, bringing to fruition the will of God.

See, when Jesus is preparing the disciples for Him to leave, in this case for Him to be crucified, but also again, when Jesus speaks of prophecy and fulfillment, it's the immediate, but it's also the end as well. It's two events. That which is happening at this time and that which will happen at the end. And He says I'm leaving you now, but also I will leave you in the Ascension. And I'm coming back now, i.e., rising from the dead and I'm coming back later, after the Ascension, when He comes again in all of His glory. So we hear both of those, I am leaving you, but I am coming back. And He says, "I give my Spirit to you that you may remember all that I have said to you." See, this is why we can read the Word of God with confidence and know that we can understand His will because the Spirit is working through His Word.

We can discern the spirits to decide whether this is an angel of light or Satan coming to deceive us. We can discern the words of a preacher and determine whether or not this is truly from God or whether it is deception. And that is because the Holy Spirit fills us and gives us an understanding of the Word of God. And so we can trust God to guide us and direct us through His Word. Now that doesn't mean to you, oh, I'm just going to divine whether or not this is truly the Word of God or not, this preacher or whatever. No, I can't do it on my own. It is through His Word. In other words, I need to be steeped in the Bible. I need to be reading the Scriptures on a daily basis because through that is the Word coming to me with the power of the Holy Spirit. And as I continue to read, I continue to understand. And because I understand the Word of God, I have peace.

If you hear a message from someone, from a preacher, from me, from anybody else, and it leads you to a feeling of discomfort or disquiet or despair or hopelessness or fear or anxiety, it's not from God. Guaranteed it is not from God. Now, temporarily, you may be convicted of sin, but only temporarily. For the Word of God brings peace, that peace, which surpasses all understanding. The Word of God brings us peace, that in spite of the chaos of the world around us, we are secure in His Word. We are secure in His promises because we have God with us in the Holy Spirit, present at all points of our life. So let not your hearts be troubled. Neither let them be afraid because God is with us through His Word and the power of the Holy Spirit. And the Father is

there watching over. We will learn more about the Trinity next week, and we'll talk about the Father and the Son, but now let the Holy Spirit work in you through His words to let you know that there is nothing that can separate you from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. Neither height nor depths or things above nor things below, nor anything in this world can separate you from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

He claimed you as His child in baptism. He does not let go of His claim easily. You have to fight to get away from Him, because He won't leave you or abandon you. So whatever you are facing in this world, whatever trials and tribulations, whatever this world's tribulations and trials are, do not let your hearts be troubled. Neither let them be afraid, for we have the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding and is there in all circumstances. May you rest secure in that peace unto life everlasting. Amen.