

God is creating cell by cell, molecule by molecule. God is truly a great and marvellous God.

To the indescribable, uncontainable, all powerful, untameable, amazing God be all praise, honour and glory, now and forever.

SUNDAY JULY 28th 2019.

MESSAGE.

Once upon a time – when Teacher Training was done at Teachers' Colleges run by the state – one of the important principles drummed into student teachers was – Revision. Use time in each lesson to revise. Do revisions of work done, a couple of times per term. This was when there were 3 terms per year of somewhere between 13 – 17 weeks.

After Pentecost, Pastor Tim had a series of sermons on BLANK. But, the message that came out of that, was, "It's all about JESUS!"

Then the question, "Do I receive the Holy Spirit when I am baptised?" The question was not answered with a definite Yes or no, but with another question. Do we want a relationship with Jesus? If we do, the Spirit has to be involved. Without the Holy Spirit – no relationship with Jesus. To live in a relationship with Jesus, we need the Spirit – living and breathing within us. Pointing us to Jesus at all times.

The foundation of our Christian lives is Jesus. When we are baptised the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts to provide the mortar that connects us to Jesus and makes our faith stick. The Spirit is part of that foundation. Read the first few verses of Genesis, the Spirit has been in and with this world from the very beginning.

Having received God's great gift of the Holy Spirit in baptism, do we make full use of the wonderful power that we have been given? Free of charge, no conditions, just given. Just like our salvation in Jesus. The Holy Spirit stays with us all of our lives – except if we deliberately tell the Holy Spirit to get out of our lives and stay out; either by our words or by our actions. Otherwise the Holy Spirit remains with us. What a wonderful gift.

BUT, do we always make use of the Holy Spirit? Even in the early church we find a group of Christians who wanted to do their own thing. A group of Christians in the city of Galatia had come to faith in Jesus, but over a period of time, tried to grow by hard work and by observing religious laws and ceremonies. The apostle Paul had something to say about this in Galatians 3:1-4.

"Oh you foolish Galatians – who has cast a spell on you?" For the meaning of Christ's death was made clear to you as if you had seen a picture of HIS death on the cross. Let me ask you this one question: - "Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the Law of Moses?" Of course not! You received the Holy Spirit because you believed the message you heard about Christ. How foolish can you be? After starting your Christian lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect

by your own human effort? Have you experienced so much for nothing? Surely, it was not in vain was it?"

Are we allowing the Holy Spirit we received and placed in us to make full use of us? Or, are we caught up in our own wisdom and strength?

In the first reading for today, Hosea was told to go and marry a prostitute, and make her the mother of his children. Did Hosea hesitate? No!! The Spirit led him to do as God commanded. The Spirit compelled him to do as God said. If that happened today, I just wonder what we would do. Perhaps say NO! Nice Christians don't do that sort of thing. After all would we take her home to meet mum and dad? Sometimes in our lives, the Spirit may compel us to do things which may not be acceptable in polite society.

Perhaps a more modern day example of the Spirit prodding us and compelling us would be more acceptable, and perhaps more likely to happen to one/more of us.

A young mum was at home just finishing her housework. Kids were at school, no one home but her. She just sat down for a much needed cool drink, when she received a strong thought – go up the street about 600 metres and see the lady in **that** house. URGENT!!!! Leaving her drink, her house unlocked, door wide open she rushed up the street, crossing a busy double lane road in the process. When she got to the house the lady rushed out to meet her. "I am so glad to see you – I have been praying for nearly an hour that someone would come!" The lady in question suffered from severe agoraphobia, (an anxiety disorder in which you fear and avoid situations/places which may make you feel trapped and cause you to panic) had been unable to leave her house some days. Even going out into the yard at times was a trial for her. The young mum was able to stay with the lady for a while, talking to her and reassuring her, only leaving when the lady was calmed.

That was a strong prompting of the Spirit to help others. Would all of us take notice of that sort of prompting? As Christians we seem to get plenty of opportunity to help others in this world, and it is through our love shown to others, that the face of Christ is reflected to others.

We need to make use of the Spirit in our daily lives. After all, the Spirit lives in us. We need the Spirit to strengthen our faith. All we need to do is ask. I often see my faith like a small fragile candle, flickering, prone to almost going out. Is it in danger of going out!? Ask the Spirit to make our faith strong, compel us to do what we need to do for Jesus. After all, it is all about JESUS! Whatever we do should be to glorify Jesus.

We can ask the Spirit to make us love Jesus more than we do. There are so many things in this present world which can drag us away from Jesus. We need to know Him, talk to Him, and love Him. So, we need to ask the Spirit to make our love stronger and to love Jesus more.

While we are doing this, the devil is trying his hardest to sink us, make us despair and drown in unbelief. As a Christian it is normal to sometimes have some doubts. But, we need to express these doubts to Jesus and ask the Spirit to strengthen us and drive away our doubts. Perhaps we need to talk to another Christian about our fears and doubts.

The Spirit reminds us of our sin. Nobody likes being reminded of their sin. We prefer to keep our pride and dignity. But, if we are not ready to face our sin, and swallow our pride, we aren't ready to be taught, or ready for God to change our lives. When we really believe that inner transformation is God's work and not ours, we put to rest the passion to set others straight. If we want our relationship with Jesus to change, we have to be willing for God to change us. And that can involve some very uncomfortable moments as we ask Jesus and our fellow man to forgive us.

In Luke 10:10-13 we read,

"Don't bargain with God. Be direct. Ask for what you need. This is not a cat and mouse, hide-and-seek game we are in. If your little boy asks you for a serving of fish, do you scare him with a live snake on his plate? If your little girl asks you for an egg, do you trick her with a spider? As bad as you are, you wouldn't think of such a thing – you're at least decent to your own children. And don't you think the Father who conceived you in love will give you the Holy Spirit when you ask Him?"

We have a powerful Holy Spirit looking after us; we have a loving Saviour who died for us, and a Father who gives us an abundance of what we need. Use the Spirit to praise God, thank Him and work for Him where He wants us to work. The Spirit moves us to show the love that God first showed us; to others.

The next part has nothing to do with the message. But I wanted to share it with you. Just look at this picture. It is the "Whirlpool Galaxy." Scientists tell us that it is over 30 million light years away. When do you think creation finished? Hasn't!! God is still creating. Scientists tell us that the universe is still expanding. The further we go, the more science is backing up what we read in the Bible. And God is still creating here on earth. "And don't you think the Father who conceived you in love" we read just a few moments ago. Every little baby that is being formed right now,