

Sermon for Pentecost Sunday Year B

The Text: John 15:26,27; 16:4b-15

The power of the resurrection is the same power that is at work in our lives to trust in the glorious hope that we have in Jesus. What gives us this power?

Today, Pentecost Sunday, we recall how the Spirit came upon the disciples in an amazing way in Acts 2. The disciples saw what looked like tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

The amazing thing about that day was when they spoke, all the people of different nations could understand them in their own language. What enabled this amazing event to happen? The power of the Holy Spirit.

Nothing can operate without some sort of power source. Without power, the lights go out along with everything tapped into the power source.

The church also has a power source, a heavenly power source. Jesus told his disciples to stay in Jerusalem and wait for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon them. They had seen Jesus, they knew he was the Messiah, they had great news to tell. Yet Jesus wanted them to wait.

When you think about it, why did Jesus choose these men as his disciples? Why not men who were well learned in the traditions of the church? Why not men who could speak fluently in public and with courage?

Because...he simply chose them, even though there was nothing about them that warranted Jesus to do this. He simply chose them out of sheer grace.

Compared to the description in Acts of the Spirit descending like tongues of fire, today's reading from John seems to lack the excitement and amazement of Pentecost. There's a good reason for this. When John explains the work of the Spirit, it is part of Jesus' farewell to his disciples before his arrest and crucifixion.

His disciples have been stunned into silence. In their shock and grief, they simply do not know what to say. Jesus assures them: "Very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you."

When Peter got up to speak on Pentecost day he was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, and people's hearts were convicted as Peter told them about what God had done through Jesus. Peter confronted them

with the message, of the one they knew as Jesus of Nazareth who performed many miracles, wonders, and signs was sent by God. Peter went on to say: “This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead.”

In vs 36-37 Peter continues: “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.’ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’”

3000 people were baptized that day, all through the power of the Holy Spirit. The people were convicted by the power of the Spirit that Christ has won the victory over sin, death and the power of the devil, and they were turned from unbelief to believing in Jesus, receiving through faith his righteousness as their very own.

Throughout the book of Acts, the crowd are amazed at the courage of unschooled, ordinary men who spoke up boldly. We are told it is because they are filled with the Spirit.

Do you know you have the Spirit within you? In 1 Corinthians 12:7 it reads, *‘now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good’*.

All of us have been given power that comes from God, power from the heavenly realms, for no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is our power source. One of the important things to do when going camping is connecting the solar panel, to keep the battery charged—otherwise it will go flat. If a battery is flat, it’s got nothing to give. It needs to be recharged.

As God’s church we need to connect into our power source, the Holy Spirit, so we can give spiritually for the common good of others.

So how are we connected to the Holy Spirit? How are we recharged? By receiving him through God’s word, through the sacrament of baptism, and by the Lord’s Supper. These are the ways God the Father continues to pour out the Holy Spirit through Jesus his Son.

Let us always make use of these means of the Spirit, so that he would refresh us with his power to be the church Jesus has gathered and sends us to be. Let us boldly stand up and proclaim Jesus, so others will hear the Good News and be convicted of sin and unbelief and turn their lives to Jesus. As the Holy Spirit comes to us through God’s word may he always turn us from unbelief to faith and demonstrate his power in us for the common good of others. Amen.