

JUNE 8, 2019-PENTECOST - SERMON by JOHN TSCHUDY

SCRIPTURE LESSONS ACTS 2:1-11, ROMANS 8:14-17, JOHN 14:8-17

Today is Pentecost Sunday!! A Jewish Holiday celebrating the giving of the Law of God to Moses on Mt Sinai. Why do I bring this up? This is to explain why again the disciples had gathered together and why there are so many Jews gathered in Jerusalem. This is when God intervened to tell people how they were to live in this world and give them the law, carved in stone, by which they were to live according to God's Will. Now thousands of years later as the disciples are gathered in a locked room, with the windows shut God again intervenes directly in human history by literally blowing the doors and windows off the place where they were and filling them with the breath or the wind, or Spirit of God just as Jesus said would happen. The symbol of fire on Pentecost is a reminder of John the Baptist saying that the one coming after him would Baptize with fire. The "Advocate of God" come to earth to replace the law and guide people in the way of life God wants us to live. This is now the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after Passover when God has called all people to a way of living and provided us with the guidance to live a life that has the potential to bring us all to peace, should we choose to follow it in Christ's Name.

In our Romans Text Paul reminds us that the Holy Spirit that God gives to us is really the sign of God adopting us as children of God. It is our being freed to call on God for the help in living we might expect from our parents and reminding us we are called to live in the close personal relationship that God intended us to have. And as children of God we are also made heirs of God and we can inherit all that God has offered to us through Jesus Christ. Salvation, forgiveness, and the power to live our lives according to God's will, are now ours because of the Spirit of God given to us on Pentecost.

In our Gospel lesson Jesus tries to again explain to the disciple what his relationship to God is. It isn't that he and God are the same being as some want to make it. But the nature of God is in Jesus and the nature of Jesus coming from God is of course in God. Thus they are linked to each other and bound to each other in the oneness of the nature of God but two separate beings. It isn't necessary that we fully understand this relationship but what we must do is believe in them as the basis of our living our daily lives. It is this belief along with the power of the Holy Spirit at work within us that gives us the power to do what God calls us to do. What seems impossible becomes possible because we can draw on the power of God through Jesus Christ, to accomplish what God calls us to do.

Things that seem impossible become possible when we live our lives dedicated to serving God and loving all people the way God loves us. Jesus promises to us an "Advocate", to be our link between us and God to make things easier for us to reach out to God and Jesus for help even if we don't know exactly what to pray for depending on God's will. This is what we celebrate on Pentecost. The keeping of this promise of Jesus for the "Advocate" to be our link between people and God. Now it is up to us to put our faith in the Holy Spirit and through it to Jesus and then to God. Trying to live our daily lives according to God's way for us, guided by the Holy Spirit. It is by this we are offered salvation, and God's guidance to make this world a better place to live, in Christ's Name.

Inside each one of us is the Holy Spirit, given us by God. It is to that we all must turn to find the strength and courage to live our lives and make this world a better place to live for all people. It is to the power of the Holy Spirit that we must turn as individuals and as congregations to know which way do we go and what do we do next. The important question is not "What does it Cost?" Rather it is what is God calling us to do now and will we accept the challenge to follow God's lead?

We celebrate Pentecost or Christ sending the Holy Spirit into the world. By it the disciples were changed from frightened men to a powerful force that changed the world. That same power is now offered to us. Will we accept it and allow it to guide us into the future? Are we willing to put our faith in God through the Holy Spirit and live our lives as people, congregations, a nation or live by human terms, which may seem ok in the short term but fail us in the long term? This is the question of Pentecost. What will your answer be?