

and forever. So Jesus gives his life that we might have the foundation of trust, that we might be forgiven, that he might be in the position to send the Holy Spirit. So we can now begin sharing life with God in a healthy, loving, trusting relationship. So that as the Father's children we might be growing to maturity, reaching our full potential as people in Jesus.

If all the Holy Spirit was, was a power for us to be good so that God would like us, what was the point of Jesus' death and resurrection. Jesus has won the forgiveness of sins. Jesus has opened the door to the Father's heart. So Jesus doesn't send a power, but God comes in the person of the Holy Spirit to start

now sharing his life with those he loves. I love the Gospel reading for today; "Peace be with you! As the Father sent me, I am sending you." (John 20:21) Here's the icing on the cake; we get to share this wonderful relationship that Jesus has made possible for us to live with anyone we like.

We don't have anything to sell. We don't have any gimmick to get people to sign up. We do have a great brother who loves us to death. We do have a Father unlike any father; his love for us is bigger than the world. His patience is amazing and his wisdom reaches to the depth of our souls. And this isn't some abstract theory, we also have the Holy Spirit, God with us now. This

wonderful relationship is the life we live now.

As with any relationship we have our ups and downs. Sometimes I don't listen because I know better, or I get sucked into thinking other's know better. Which is when I say: 'Sorry, forgive me. I want to follow you Jesus. I want to hear and do you will'. And then I'm draw close to Jesus for he once again proves he is trustworthy.

Today we have the wonderful privilege of inviting the people we like to know God, in Jesus, daily living with him in the person of the Holy Spirit, not leaving God as some abstract, but living in a personal loving, trusting relationship, happily ever after.

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' Disciples, who grow disciples, who grow disciples, who grow disciples...

12 June 2011

PENTECOST

Acts 2:1-21



In our reading from Numbers we heard how God poured out his Spirit on the seventy elders of Israel. What was Moses response: "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his Spirit upon them all!" (Num. 11:29)

This passage tells me that there is something special about having the Spirit. It seems more than simply saying; 'God is always with us'. The Children of Israel had the pillar of cloud, with fire in it by night, as a reminder that God was with them. But this was different. This was far more personal; something special.

They prophesied. I wonder what that would have looked

like? Obviously the people saw a difference, because the two men who were still back in the camp stood out. They were not simply speaking from their own logic and reason, but they were speaking out God's logic and reason. They were being equipped to help Moses lead the Children of Israel, so that they as a nation might walk closely with their LORD, joyfully sharing life together. That as a nation they might not simply be a reflection of their own logic and reason, but in the way they ran their economy, how they cared for those in need, their family life, their sex life all became a reflection to the nations around them of the LORD's logic and reason.

Obviously if I can't hear from the LORD I can't follow him by doing my own thing. Israel couldn't be faithful to their LORD if they couldn't hear from him, and know what was on his mind. They couldn't be faithful to their LORD by imitating the people around them, or by trying to go back to what they did in the past when they lived in Egypt. How can you be the LORD's people if you're trying to live like and Egyptian! If you're trying to live like a consumer!

So the LORD pours out his Spirit on the seventy elders as an appetiser to what he was going to do at Pentecost. We have that well know prophesy from Joel; "In the Last Days,' God says, 'I will pour out my Spirit on every kind

of people; Your sons will prophesy, also your daughters; Your young men will see visions, your old men dream dreams, When the time comes, I'll pour out my Spirit.'" (Joel 2:28,29)

Sadly before this happened the word of the Lord dries up. Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets was 430-460yrs before the birth of Jesus.

I'm sure during that time people would have longed to hear from their LORD. Maybe they rationalised this silence as God did this in the past but now we have the written word we don't need this type of direction.

After all there were the Pharisees; men devoted to the reading and study of the scripture. Surely that would keep the nation on track! Sadly when Jesus came who did he seem to have the most struggle with? The Pharisees!

The day of Pentecost is a reminder that Jesus does want to speak into the lives of his people. That Jesus does want to lead his people, and not by remote control or by a set of rules that he wrote 2000yrs ago. No way, Jesus didn't give his life to now be kept from the people he

Jesus' goal is to create a healthy, loving relationship

loves. How crazy would that be. So on the day of Pentecost Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit, God in person, on his disciples. Jesus goal wasn't to create good people out of bad people. Jesus goal is to share his life with people in a loving, trusting relationship. Jesus goal is to share his life with us while remaining true to who he is, and having us live true to who we are.

Which might sound simple except for the fact that we all have sinned. We all want to be in control of our lives, doing what we believe is important, being independent of others, so we can call the shots. This describes what? To me it is a good description of idolatry, with me as the centre.

Jesus comes to create a healthy basis for our relationship based on his terms, not mine. Jesus job isn't to bless what I'm doing, that's just a subtle way of me calling the shots. And when Jesus doesn't do what I want, who do I blame? That sounds a bit like Adam; 'God it's your fault, if you hadn't put this woman here.' Adam blames God, when it was Adam who didn't listen, who lost trust, who tried to play God and is now totally regretting it, but he's trapped.

Jesus has come to break down the barrier between us and God so that we can once again share life together in a healthy, loving relationship. Once Jesus has laid the foundation; his life, his death, his resurrection, we are now forgiven and he is now in a position of power to send the Holy Spirit; God in person, with us now.

The Holy Spirit's job isn't to make me superhuman. Wanting to be superhuman is part of our sickness, not a reflection of health. Being humble is a reflection of health. Humble being finding your worth and purpose in Jesus loving grace, his forgiveness won for you, his mercy poured over you, his life now shared with you. Humility is discovering who I am in Jesus. This wonderful new creation; for in Jesus I am now the Father's

child, whom he loves, and is well pleased with. That means as any Father he is proud of his children; not because of what they have done but first and foremost because they're his children. And he wants to be part of their lives, he wants nothing more than to share his life with them,

The Holy Spirit is God living that relationship NOW

to actively share living with them. God doesn't want to be a picture on the wall that reminds us of a relative in a distant land who we might have occasional meetings with. God doesn't want to be simply the author of the best how-to-do-it book. Isn't that what the Pharisees turned God into; this is how to do it if we want to preserve our temple and our nation. But Jesus was after a personal

relationship, a living relationship with real people, based on his love, his grace, his mercy, his forgiveness. That's what Jesus poured out his life for; a living relationship with you. That's what Jesus is passionate about today; living his life with us today, in a personal relationship. That's why he sent the Holy Spirit; God in person, and not some superpower to make us superhuman.

Jesus doesn't want you superhuman, he wants us to be human. After all that's how the Father created you in the first place. In Jesus we are re-created once again in the God's image, so that we can live with him as true human beings, being true to who we are, allowing God to be true to who he is. That's Jesus' goal, to create a healthy, loving relationship for us to live in today, tomorrow