

Pentecost Sermon 2022 MVLC “What’s absent is awareness”. 1547

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Aren’t the best Christians those who would be doing much harm if they weren’t doing much good?

What’s wrong with looking for a sign that the Holy Spirit is alive in you?

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“Whoever believes in me, [will have] rivers of living water will flow from within them.”

Just surrender to the truth – here it is: “you are a temple of the Holy Spirit” – he is in you.

In the Old Testament the temple was the place where all the work of God happened – the forgiveness of sins and hearing God’s word – this temple is now your body.

Surrender to the truth.

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It's a 3-part job isn't it?

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The promises of him living in us and using us to bless others requires a complete surrender – a promise requires a surrender to that promise.

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Do we ask is the Holy Spirit is in us – maybe when we hear someone speaking in tongues, or healing, or prophesying – do we ask what about me?

Paul is asking us today to surrender God’s Word, to Jesus’ promise:

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

“Whoever believes in me, [will have] rivers of living water will flow from within them.”

Just surrender to the truth – here it is: “you are a temple of the Holy Spirit” – he is in you.

In the Old Testament the temple was the place where all the work of God happened – the forgiveness of sins and hearing God’s word – this temple is now your body.

Surrender to the truth.

Signs are great – but surrender to the truth – the truth stands when there are no signs.

Remember this in your kids who are not here today – the truth stands when there are no signs.

This is the truth: in baptism and in belief the Holy Spirit is our gift of life – for life.

People stress and plead because they believe that they have to ‘do’ something to get the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a gift of faith and baptism – surrender! What’s missing is awareness.

Little do we realize that God is maintaining all of us – maintaining our world – maintaining us.

We live in the presence of God – what is missing is awareness.

Every breath we take means that God is choosing us now - for now.

Jesus’ prayer – Father I am in you, you are in me, let them be in us and we in them.

Jesus is in us – the Holy Spirit is in us – Jesus’ prayer is answered.

(John 7:38-39) “Whoever believes in me, rivers of living water will flow from within them.”

Rivers flowing out of you - What’s missing is awareness.

We don’t need to stress and plead; we need to surrender.

If there is a river flowing out of me – what can I do – who is thirsty.

One thing we learn from Pentecost is that our focus shouldn’t be on trying to get the Holy Spirit to come to us – That is a given – if you’re here today that is a given - our focus needs be on the person of the Spirit – who exactly is living in us?

That person in your body has a mission – a job.

John [16] explains that job:

⁸ When he comes, he will convince the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment...

It's a 3-part job isn't it?

1. To convince the world is wrong about sin – surely, we know what is right and what is wrong?
 - If I steal that old railway sign, from an old unused railway line, in the middle of the desert, it will be fine because nobody uses it anymore – that's what I convince myself – what about you?
 - If I speed out back of wherever no one will ever know.
 - If I claim a few things on my tax nobody will ever find out – will they.
 - If I take a few liberties from the chocolate factory where I work nobody will care.

We convince ourselves we are right regarding sin – we make our own judgment what of is OK and what is sort of Ok.

The Holy Spirit convinces us it's all wrong – it's all sin – if we listen to him.

2. It says the Holy Spirit will convince all people about righteousness. Now what do most people believe about righteousness? It's easy it's everywhere, we all do it: I'm Ok mate – I do my best – God will look on me with favour because I give, I do the right things most of the time. Go to a secular funeral these days and all you will hear is how good a person old Aunt Mavis was.

What a job – convince that group of mourners that good old aunt Mavis has no good in her what-so-ever – all have sinned and fall short of the Glory of God – the wages of sin is death.

The Holy Spirit's Job is in the business of truth.

3. The third part is to convince the world of judgment. Again, good old aunt Mavis is going to heaven cos she's such a good person – we tell people this – we comfort the grieving family with this stuff.

Even as we know the wages of sin is death – the judgment is death.

The Holy Spirit's job is not one I would want to do:

To convince people that there most minute misdemeanours are serious sins – worthy of death.

To convince people that Aunt Mavis has sinned and is not worthy to be in the presence of God.

To convince people that on judgment day, you, and me, and Aunt Mavis are bound to be judged guilty before God.

What a miserable Job – worse than parking inspector.

But that miserable job has one purpose – to bring joy, and peace, and hope - to bring all people to a loving and forgiving Jesus who died to forgive us of all our sins, to make us right in the presence of God, and to ensure us we have eternal life judged right and good.

*I would never have guessed that we need to know how far removed from God we are to realise that we need Jesus to make us right.

God's ways are not my ways.

Hey, this Holy Spirit with the incredible Job of leading people to Jesus lives where?

In us? Whose hands and feet and eyes and ears and mouth does his use? He privileges us by using ours.

We have job to do – it's not that horrible Job of convincing people of their sin and their lack of righteousness, and their lack of hope in heaven – that is the Holy Spirit's Job.

Our job is to let him do it – to welcome him to use our bodies as he wills – wherever he wills – but he'll do the job.

Paul found some “disciples of Jesus” and asked them if they had heard of the Holy Spirit.

They answered – Hah!? We never knew there was a Holy Spirit.

That answer is impossible today after that first Pentecost.

Today our answer to Paul would be: Yes Paul we have heard of the Holy Spirit, and he lives in us so that he can convince people of their sin and lead them to Jesus' love and forgiveness, and what 's more he uses our voice – our believing hearts, and what's even more, he's gives us many and varied gifts so that he can work through us most effectively.

It seems an answer to Jesus' prayer doesn't it: “Father let them be in us and we in them”?

You know in our churches, in our lives, there is often a lack of awareness that the Holy Spirit is alive and living in us – we simply forget – we replace his power with our own.

The promises of him living in us and using us to bless others requires a complete surrender – a promise requires a surrender to that promise.

Lord let us surrender to your promise of Jesus and his word living in us, to your promise of the Holy Spirit's power and wisdom living in us, to the privilege of being a temple - a home of your work and love, to being a place where streams of Living Water flow. Amen.