Verses: Joel 2:28-29 and Acts 2:36-40 Occasion: Worship Location: First Presbyterian Church of Lake Mary Date: May 30, 2021 Pastor: Joe Raymond

**Song:**

**O beautiful for spacious skies,**

**For amber waves of grain,**

**For purple mountain majesties**

**Above the fruited plain!**

**America! America! God shed His grace on thee,**

**And crown thy good with brotherhood From sea to shining sea!**

**Today’s sermon title is “Pentecost 2021 part 2”**

**The scripture readings are from Joel 2:28-29 and Acts 2:36-40**

(Homework: Acts 2)

**Joel 2:28-29**

**28 Then afterward**

 **I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;**

**your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,**

 **your old men shall dream dreams,**

 **and your young men shall see visions.**

**29 Even on the male and female slaves,**

 **in those days, I will pour out my spirit.**

**Acts 2:36-40**

**36 Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.”37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” 38 Peter said to them, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.” 40 And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”**

**This is the word of the Lord! Thanks be to God.**

**Let us pray**

Heavenly Father, please quiet our minds

and open our hearts to your truth.

And please

 **Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart**

 **be acceptable to you,**

 **O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Psalm 19:14**  Amen

**Sermon**

Imagine a person who has sought and been hired for a new job.

This person has a conscious decision to make.

* They could choose to ignore the fact of their new employment
	+ sleep late
	+ go fishing whenever
	+ never report to their job

OR

* They could choose to behave according to the expectations of their new employer.
	+ Get training
	+ Follow guidance
	+ Work well

What should this person decide?

The obvious, simple answer is that it would be absurd to ignore the requirements of the new employer and keep on living as if there was no accountability.

We can easily see that.

I have begun our time with this light exercise because today’s concepts present a challenge that we might think is too heavy and unrealistic, yet the correct choice is as clear and simple as the one presented here.

We will return to this later.

Last week we celebrated Pentecost Sunday.

On Pentecost, Jewish people celebrated God’s provision for the first harvest of their wheat crop and expressed faith that He would continue to multiply their crop until the final harvest. Pentecost foreshadowed the day of the first harvest of Christians, when 3000 came to faith in Jesus, were baptized, and received the Holy Spirit.

Last week, we answered 2 of 3 questions about the Pentecost Day that followed Jesus’s resurrection.

1. What promise and purpose were fulfilled that day?
2. What happened?

The third question we will answer today.

1. Was there any lasting impact?

The short answer is: YES-for on that day, the church was born.

\*Remember, the church is not a building.

It is a body of believers that typically meets in a building for convenience.

Let us examine the lasting impact in 2 parts:

* Impact in the first century
* Impact continuing to this day

We will start with the first century.

1. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit was sent, not to visit these first believers, but rather, to indwell them. The disciples were changed forever from a fearful band to a small but mighty spiritual army.
2. Peter, thus indwelt and now unafraid, stood, assumed leadership, and commanded the amazed crowd to listen.
3. The Holy Spirit used the now-willing Peter to make an eloquent speech, ascribing all glory to God, quoting prophecy from memory, and explaining its meaning.
4. Further, he confronted the crowd with their sin, saying,

**Jesus of Nazareth…. you crucified…by the hands of those outside the law…**and he called them to repent. (Acts 2:22-23)

The Holy Spirit convicted the hearts of those who listened, and the impact of this was that 3000 people did repent, were baptized, and also received the Holy Spirit.

Brothers and Sisters, do you see that even here, in the first hours of day #1 of the church, we see the power that the Holy Spirit supplied as He actively

* Taught
* Empowered
* Reminded
* Guided into all truth
* Declared future events
* Glorified Jesus

We will see this empowerment displayed throughout our study of the book of Acts.

It is a divine adventure story.

Let us turn our attention now to the years following day #1.

Did the events of Pentecost continue to impact the world?

Yes, for as Peter assured the crowd in verse 39:

All who would repent and be baptized in Jesus’s name for the forgiveness of their sins would receive the Holy Spirit.

He told them this promise was intended:

* For them
* For their children
* For all who were ...**far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.”**

How would people throughout the subsequent generations hear of this promise?

As we know, beginning this day with the apostles, the gospel spread predominantly in person. But that was not all.

No! God made it possible for people who lived later to learn by having His truth recorded in writing!

Church, do you realize the value of scripture for Christian instruction? We not only have the words and works of the Old Testament writers, but we also have the words and works of the apostles as they were used by the Holy Spirit to preach and teach wherever He led them. The Holy Spirit continues to use these today to train believers to walk in righteousness.

To illustrate, let us consider the last verse of Peter’s first sermon to the new church.

 **40 …he**, [Peter], e**xhorted them, saying, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”**

Consider: Why did the Holy Spirit lead Peter to finish his speech this way?

Peter was insisting that our only hope is to turn to Christ for salvation, and as we do, we must be dedicated to turning away from worldly corruptions in values, passions, conversations, and pastimes.

When we realize what Peter is pleading for people to do, we might think it is too much to ask. It seems a heavy request because people are reluctant to leave former ways behind. This is the challenge that I spoke about as we began today. But the obvious choice in the matter really is as simple as was my earlier illustrative story.

Romans 6:**23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

However, people have a tendency to want to ignore reality.

This is why Peter’s exhortation was and still is necessary.

It is interesting to note that Peter did not “sugar-coat” the necessary change as we might be prone to do. For example, we might seemingly “sugar-coat” in an attempt to persuade non-believers to “accept Jesus as their personal savior,” assuring them (rightly so!) that Jesus calls them “just as they are.”

But friends, if we say that to people, we must be deliberately careful to explain that this is not a casual acceptance like one would accept a free sample at a mall, then walk away unimpacted by what they received. We must be careful not to imply that sinners come to Jesus “just as they are” and then remain “just as they were.”

Accepting God’s gift of eternal life requires not casual dabbling, but rather complete incorporation into our lives, a total turning to Him, and away from sin, realizing that Jesus’s freely-offered gift of salvation, was not free for Him to purchase for us.

Pentecost was Day #1for the church. Every believer has a Day #1. On that day, believers accept a new master and the reality of Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 **... your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God… you are not your own… 20 For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body**.

Remember, we are not required to do this alone!

Jesus’s promise to His first disciples applies to all His future disciples:

The Holy Spirit will indwell all who come to Him, empowering them to do God’s will.

Friends, this is challenging but glorious news that needs to be shared. Please remember, this good news came to you on its way out to someone else, using you as a messenger.

If you have not yet received Jesus’s salvation and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, please call or come see me as soon as possible, so we can have that life and death conversation.

Let us pray,

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for loving us and sending Your Holy Spirit to empower us to live our lives for Your glory, for we know we cannot do this on our own. Please give us wisdom and strength to follow You closely, so we can do Your will.

Amen

# INVITATION TO THE LORD’S TABLE

# Friends, this is the joyful feast of the people of God! They will come from east and west, and from north and south, and sit at table in the kingdom of God.

# According to Luke,

# When our risen Lord was at the table with his disciples, he took the bread, and blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him.

# This is the Lord’s Table.

# Our Savior invites those who trust him to share the feast which he has prepared.

# GREAT THANKSGIVING

# Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

# It is right to give our thanks and praise. It is truly right and our greatest joy to give you thanks and praise, eternal God, our creator.

# You have given us life and second birth in your Spirit. Once we were no people, but now we are your people. You claimed Israel as your chosen nation and raised up the church as a witness to the resurrection, breathing into it your life and power.

# BREAKING OF THE BREAD

# The Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread, and after giving thanks to God, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take, eat.

# This is my body, given for you.

# Do this in remembrance of me.

# In the same way he took the cup, saying:

# This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.

# Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.

# Every time you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the saving death of the risen Lord, until he comes.

# PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

# Gracious God, may we who have received this sacrament live in the unity of your Holy Spirit, that we may show forth your gifts to all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ.

# Amen.

And now:

**May the God of Hope**

**Fill you with all joy and peace in believing**

**So that you may abound in hope**

**By the power of the Holy Spirit**

**Go in PEACE**