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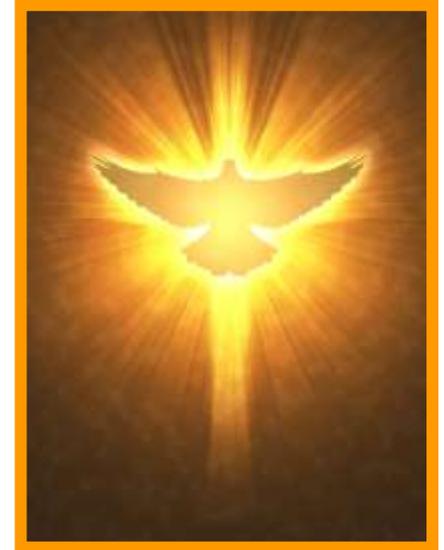
**My Sermon from Sunday May 23, 2021, 'The Day of Pentecost' ~ "Powered By The Holy Spirit"**



*Come Holy Spirit, come. Fill the hearts of your faithful. Set our hearts on fire! Amen.*

***"The Advocate." "The Spirit of Truth."  
"The Holy Spirit."*** Jesus continually refers to the Holy Spirit as the Advocate and the Spirit of Truth. What is an advocate? An

advocate is a person who supports us, who helps us. The Greek word is 'paraclete' and the Latin word is 'paracletus.' Isn't that a wonderful way to reflect upon the Holy Spirit? God is always with us to support us, to love us, and to help us. Jesus also refers to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth. Jesus says that the Spirit of Truth will ***"guide you into all the truth."*** The truth of God. The truth of our salvation. The truth of grace. The truth of hope.



Today on the **Day of Pentecost** we celebrate the birthday of the church. We celebrate how 50 days after **Easter Sunday**, and 10 days after the **Ascension**, the believers were all together in one place in Jerusalem. We are told in scripture that there were around 120 people. That wasn't very many was it? What happened to the thousands who were taught by Jesus and fed by the loaves and fishes? What about the hundreds who were healed?

On that glorious day, the believers were filled with the Holy Spirit. They were powered by the Holy Spirit. There were physical sensations associated with this in-filling of God's power. There was heat and there was sound. The sound of wind. All were filled with the Holy Spirit. No one was left out. All were able to communicate in other languages.

I thank those who are blessed with the ability to speak a different language and sent in their "Holy Spirit" responses to **Laurie Sandham** to put together for today's live-stream:

***Come Holy Spirit. Fill us with the fire of your love.***

All these believers were filled with the Spirit of God and they couldn't contain themselves and it was only 9:00 am! They poured out into the street and witnessed God's power to everyone who had come from all around the Mediterranean for the Jewish festival of **Pentecost**. Pentecost is a central feast of Judaism, known as the **Feast of Weeks**, or '**Shavuot**' in Hebrew. It is one of the three pilgrimage feasts of Israel during which each adult male was required to be present in Jerusalem.



What was the reaction from the pilgrims? They were amazed and confused all at the same time.

They were spoken to about God's power in their own language. No translators needed! Some bystanders sneered and said that they must have been drunk!

Then Peter, filled with the spirit, preaches to the crowd outside of the temple in Jerusalem. He quotes the prophet Joel. Peter talks about the power of dreams and the salvation offered by Jesus. He talks about the outpouring of God's Spirit.



Today, the **Day of Pentecost**, is the birthday of the church.

Not the birth of Jesus.

Not the crucifixion.

Not the resurrection.

**Today: The Day of Pentecost. Without the power of the Holy Spirit filling the hearts of the believers there would be no outpouring, no witnessing,**

**no preaching.** The redemption of the world that was to be carried on by the believers would have died and faded away.

What is the power source for a Christian? Let's first examine some other power sources. Electricity, batteries, gasoline, diesel fuel, natural gas, solar, wind, biomass and some other power sources. Their use is obvious to us. If we have no fuel to supply our outboard motors, they will not start and take us to that fishing hole. Same with our electric lawn mowers. If they are not plugged into the power source, they will not start. We can easily see when the power source is gone. We can't do what we wish to do whether it is going to work or tidying up our lawns. And many of us are always checking our power sources to see how much energy is left. I wear a 'fitbit' and it must be recharged through an electrical outlet. I know exactly how much power I have left. At the time of writing this sermon I am at 72%. I am always keeping an eye on the battery power left in my 'I-Phone.' We are getting conditioned to keeping an eye on how much power we have left.

Think about watches. Many people no longer wear a watch and instead rely on their phones or their fitbits. I still wear a watch. Now I am really dating myself but I remember the days when you had to wind up a watch in order to give it the power it needed to work. If it wasn't wound up it would stop working. I had to remember to wind up my watch at least once a week.

Switzerland was the country that dominated the world market for the wind-up movement of mechanical watches. Did you know that in 1968, the Swiss made 65 percent of all watches sold in the world? Then what happened? In the 1970s there was a huge shift to 'quartz movement' watches that did not have to be wound up. The Swiss invented it but many watch makers in Switzerland refused to use this new movement. Thousands of Swiss watch-makers lost their jobs because people in other countries were making watches with the quartz movement.

We were given a beautiful wind-up chime clock by Jouni's parents for our wedding. It is all carved wood with a lovely sound and it chimes every quarter hour. It has a mechanical movement and must be wound with a key ~ 3 different spots on the clock. And do we do this regularly? No. No matter how good our intentions are we quickly forget and the clock stops and then it takes a lot of time to reset the chimes so we let it sit quietly and beautifully on our wall.

It is very clear to us when this clock has lost its power. Or our vehicles have lost their power or our flashlights or our solar garden lights.

**The power source for a Christian is the Holy Spirit.**

I could not do my ministry at the ripe old age of 67 unless I was powered and filled by the Holy Spirit. I find this getting older is not easy. When I now go into *Shoppers* to buy face cream, I am directed to the old ladies section. It is called 'for mature skin.'

It is not so obvious when you and I as Christians have lost our power source ~ that being the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God keeps us powered up with hope and with faith and with strength and with energy and with agape love to be witnesses of God's redemptive power.

There is no level or indicator in our souls to show that our power source is draining, is full, or is completely drained. We often carry on and think we are OK. The Holy Spirit is invisible even though it manifests with physical symptoms of heat and wind.

Jesus told us that when we have the Spirit within us, out of our hearts *"shall flow rivers of living water"* (John 7:38). That sounds beautiful and inspirational, doesn't it? How do we know life-giving water is flowing out of us to other?

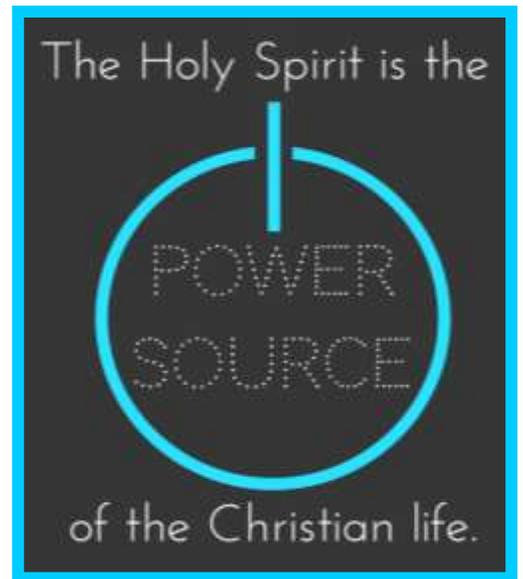
St. Paul expresses it in terms of some attributes. Paul writes that if we have the Holy Spirit within us, if we are powered by the Holy Spirit, our lives bear fruit and we find ourselves giving out **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.** (Galatians 5:22)

In his letter to Christians in Rome, Paul writes that it is the Holy Spirit that results in our *abounding in hope.* (Romans 15:13)

However, we don't always have the awareness that we are not living the above characteristics. Here is a little test that I have devised:

Which of the following words best describe your current emotional and spiritual state?

- **Anger**
- **Forgiveness**
- **Peace**
- **Quarrels**
- **Kindness**
- **Jealousy**
- **Generosity**
- **Envy**
- **Drunkenness**
- **Self-Control**



This is a private exercise. Now ask for an infilling of the Holy Spirit every day for the next week. Monitor your daily interactions. Go back to these words. Are more of them now the characteristics powered by the Holy Spirit?

I pray to be powered by the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth.

Thank you, Jesus, for this gift. This gift brings with it heat and wind and strength and power and love. The Holy Spirit wishes to live in you and you will be in the Holy Spirit.

We don't have to climb a mountain or save the entire world. It is in the ordinary grace notes of our lives when we simply do the ordinary while seeking God's grace. It is in these small and simple acts of kindness and love that our hearts are set on fire, it is these small and simple acts that set the hearts of others on fire, and we suddenly find that the whole of our life is kindled and powered by God.

There is no other way I wish to live.



I would like to close with a Holy Spirit Prayer written by **Jacqueline Russell**, from her book, *Women's Uncommon Prayers*, and emailed to me by parishioner **Carol Knox** (Thank you Carol!):

*Good morning Holy Spirit, I need you this day.  
Fill my mind, my soul, my thinking,  
and guide me as I pray.  
Precious Holy Spirit, I need you every day.  
Surround me with your being,  
And in my heart please stay. Amen.*

Amen.

*Archdeacon Deborah+*

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