



May 27, 2007

The Gift

Well, today is Pentecost we heard about it last week as Jesus promised His disciples that He would give them the Holy Spirit so they were supposed to go back to Jerusalem and wait there until the Spirit came on them so that they could be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the very ends of the earth. When we look at the Pentecost story it really is a remarkable story. The disciples did just what Jesus said they went back to Jerusalem and they devoted themselves to prayer, they devoted themselves to considering what Jesus had said to His teachings, they went about replacing Judas as a disciple and they waited, waited for the fulfillment of what Jesus said. And on that Pentecost Sunday, the first day of the week, the Holy Spirit came on them. He appeared as tongues of fire on their heads, there was the sound of a large rushing wind inside the building that they were in and they began to speak in different languages and they began to prophesied, which means to proclaim God's word. And Peter launched then into a sermon a powerful sermon that recounted God's action in the world, recounted how Jesus came, recounted how Jesus had been killed by the Jewish people along with the Romans, how He had risen and how this was a fulfillment of what Jesus had said. 3,000 people were baptized.

When we look at Acts 1:4 and 8, we see very clearly what Jesus said, "Do not leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift my Father promised which you have heard me speak about. You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth." Speaking of Jesus, Peter in his sermon said, "Jesus was exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you know see and hear." Summing up, power was promised power has been received. That's why we can speak and you can understand us in every tongue represented here.

There were other promises of the Holy Spirit too. Paul writes to the people of Corinth, I Corinthians 12:3, "This is the same Spirit who works faith no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit." The Holy Spirit is the one that is promised and its promised that He will create faith in our hearts. Jesus himself told us a little bit more about the Holy Spirit in our Gospel this morning John 14:16 Jesus says, "And I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever." A counselor is an individual who stands by you. Yes, it's the same term as a lawyer; he goes with you to court he represents you. Now, why would a counselor be needed? Romans 8:26 tells us that, "In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness, how? We do not know what we ought to pray for but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express." What a wonderful promise. When we in our human mortality do not know what to pray for turn it over to the Holy Spirit he'll pray for us. He will intercede to God the Father on our behalf. But there's even more to why we need a counselor to stand by us.

Jesus told us in Luke 12:11-12, "When you are brought before synagogues rulers and authorities do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say." Wow, don't worry if you're arrested for your faith the Holy Spirit will give you words to say. How can He do that? Well, Jesus again told us that in our Gospel this morning, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." it is the Holy Spirit who will bring back to our remembrance that which we have been taught. Now I do have to say here, if you haven't read the bible He's not going to give you the words, he's going to remind us of what Jesus had said; he'll bring it to our remembrance is how it is written in the Revised Standard Version. He'll bring it to our remembrance that which we have learned.

Paul tell us a little bit more about the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:11, "All these are the work of one in the same Spirit and he gives them spiritual gifts to each one just as he determines." The Holy Spirit gives gifts, gifts of the spirit. What are those gifts of the Spirit? Wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous power, the ability to distinguish between spirits, spirits of truth and spirits of falsehood, tongues and prophesy. Again let me explain here prophesy in the Bible means to proclaim Gods word it may involve a prophesy in

terms of a future tense, “thus says the Lord repent or else”, we see that several times in the Old Testament. But in the New Testament we see that the apostles prophesied on Pentecost Sunday. They proclaimed Gods word and it is the Holy Spirit who gives them. Why does he give them? 1 Corinthians 12:7, “Now to each one the manifestation of the spirit is given for the common good.” These gifts are given to us by the Holy Spirit for the common good they are to be shared. They are to be used for the good of everybody. Now of all those gifts is there one that we should really look for or that we should desire?

1 Corinthians 14:1 following that great love chapter of the Bible, where it says, “Faith, hope, love abide these three but the greatest of these is love.” Love is the greatest thing that we can have the greatest spiritual gift that we are to desire, follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts especially the gift of prophesy. There’s only one gift we are told to eagerly desire, prophesy, the ability to proclaim God’s word. Some people would tell you oh no it’s speaking in tongues but that’s not biblical. Paul doesn’t say the Bible does not say anywhere eagerly desire eagerly seek the gift of speaking tongues it eagerly desire prophesy.

And again it all goes back to God’s word; you can’t proclaim you cant prophesied unless you have God’s word. It’s exactly what Peter did on Pentecost Sunday he recounted exactly what Gods word said and related it to Jesus. Its exactly what the Gideon’s are doing they are getting Gods’ word into the hands of people so that people can prophesied they can proclaim Gods word they can believe and spread the gospel news and that is exactly what we as Christians, as a church it is exactly what we are to do and it is exactly what we are to support. May the Lord bless us and bless the Gideon’s as together we proclaim and prophesied using Gods word and bring the Gospel message to all those who are in the darkness.

In our Savior’s name, Amen.