

**The Sunday Day of Pentecost: Holy Trinity Church: June 5, 2022**

**John 14:8-17, 25-27: *“If you really know me, you will know my Father as well.***

***From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”***

**Preached**

**By**

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**In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN!**

**Philip put forth what seemed like a good request. “Show us the Father.” He added, “That will be enough for us” (John 14:8). Yes, that would be great. If we can just see the Father, we’ll be cool. We’ll have all the inspiration we need to keep plugging away. We’ll be set for life. We’ll be good.**

**This reminds me of the old Steve Martin movie, “The Jerk.” There’s a scene in which Navin (Steve Martin) is breaking up with his wife, Marie (Bernadette Peters). She tells him to leave, so he begins to walk out of the house. He announces to her that he doesn’t need her or any of the stuff they’ve**

accumulated as they've grown wealthy together. But as he exits, he says, "I don't need anything...except this," and he picks up an ashtray.

As he makes the long shuffle out of the large room and down the hallway to the front door, he begins to pick things up along the way. Each time he picks something up, he says things like, "I don't need anything except this ashtray...and this paddleball." "I don't need anything except this ashtray, this paddleball, and this remote control." By the time he walks out the front door, he has an ashtray, a paddleball, a remote control, a box of matches, a lamp, and a chair. That's all he needs.

It's a classic, funny scene. It's one of those scenes that sticks with you over the years — long after you've forgotten the rest of the movie. It's also a scene that can remind us of our penchant for wanting more. We've got this, this, and this. If only we had one more thing, we'd be good.

Years ago, a very young cousin of mine made an astounding (and to us, a humorous) observation. The family had just installed a swimming pool in their backyard. In a very serious tone he announced, "Now if we just had a TV satellite dish, we'd be the perfect family." Yes, that was all they needed.

Jesus was preparing his disciples for his departure. He was only hours away from his passion and death. He had poured his life into them for the past three

**and a half years. He had announced to them he was going to the Father and would prepare a place for them. They weren't grasping what he was trying to tell them.**

**Thomas told him they couldn't follow because they didn't know where he was going. Jesus replied by giving him that famous answer from John 14:6-7. "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."**

**It was at that moment Philip made his request to see the Father. Jesus must have been exasperated. He essentially shot back, "How can you ask that? If you've seen me, you've seen the Father!" His statements in reply to Philip help formed the cornerstone of our understanding of the Holy Trinity. He and the Father are one, and they would send the Spirit.**

**It was one of those moments of incredulity. After spending all that time with them, after teaching them everything they needed to know, and after he is announcing his departure, they still had no clue! There were mere hours left in his life. There was little or no time to beat it into their heads. It must have felt like the first laceration of the scourge he was soon to experience or the first spike through his wrist.**

**They needed one more thing. They needed to see the Father. They needed reassurance. They needed guidance. They needed...**

**As it turned out, they had everything they needed — at least for the time being. Jesus had imparted every bit of knowledge that would be necessary for them to make the next leg of their earthly journey. Their new pilgrimage had begun, and they were about to turn a corner. The rest of their trek would be without the physical presence of our Lord.**

**They thought they knew their need. They articulated it clearly, and I'm sure they were hoping Jesus would supply them with the answer they were seeking. Philip was, undoubtedly, speaking for the rest of them when he informed Jesus of their need to see the Father. In their confusion, they were grasping at straws.**

**We're not told if they understood him when he asked, "Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me?" (John 14:10). He implored them to believe that it was true; if for no other reason than on the works he had done. He added that, if they believed, they would do even greater works than the ones he had done. I'm sure that sounded as unbelievable as anything he had said up to that point.**

**He told them so many things in these waning moments; it must have been impossible to comprehend any of them. But the most important thing he told them was this: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever — the Spirit of truth.” I doubt they understood that at the time either. It was, in fact, the answer to their real need. They thought they needed to see the Father. What they needed, however, was to be indwelled by God’s Holy Spirit — the Spirit of truth.**

**How could they remember all these things? He seemed to be dumping heaps of knowledge on them without a chance to absorb what he was saying. They were mere men. How could they remember everything, let alone grasp it all? The task was beyond their abilities — particularly at a bewildering time such as this.**

**Jesus tried to reassure them by telling them he would not leave them as orphans — parentless in a hostile world. He told them he would come to them, and though the world would no longer see him, they would see him. These words made him more of an enigma than ever.**

**His final thoughts in this dialog provide us with his plan. His strategy included sending them an “Advocate.” That Advocate was to be the Holy Spirit. They would remember things that otherwise would have been more easily forgotten.**

He said, “But the Advocate, 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” (John 14:26). John could not have recorded all the words found in his gospel had the Advocate not been sent. It would have been humanly impossible.

On the day of Pentecost almost two thousand years ago, 120 disciples were gathered in a room. They were praying and waiting. They were cowering in their fear that the Roman army would find them. They were, after all, the followers of Jesus who the Romans had crucified only days before. That same Jesus, raised from the grave, had told them they would “receive power when the Holy Spirit” would come upon them (Acts 1:8). His word was true.

Pentecost is a high Jewish holy day. It is a season of the harvest, the day of first fruits. Jewish pilgrims from all over the known world would travel to Jerusalem to celebrate God’s blessings with one another. That year, however, Pentecost would take on a new meaning. It was the day the Father sent the Advocate — the Spirit of truth. It was the day the disciples had inadvertently asked for when they felt the need to see the Father.

When the Holy Spirit descended upon those in that upper room, everything changed. They finally discovered what it meant to see the Father. They began

to realize what Jesus meant when he told them that he and the Father are one. They began to understand that they would do greater things than Jesus because the power of God had come upon them.

There were tongues of fire, sounds of rushing wind, and miracles of unknown languages being spoken and understood. They rushed out into the streets with a message infused with new life. Peter, who had denied Jesus only a few weeks prior, stood before the thronging crowds to preach a simple message of salvation through Christ. Empowered by the Spirit, his words rang true for three thousand souls who were added to the number of believers that day.

With this newly imparted power, the fledgling church was off and running. In some miraculous way, the Holy Spirit had shown them the Father.

For many reasons, the Holy Spirit of God has become a controversial subject for many in the Christian world. There are myriads of questions surrounding the advent of personal Pentecost in the lives of many believers. Ask these questions of anyone, and they'll give you a different set of answers than the person before or after. The one question that no Christian disputes, however, is this: Is the Holy Spirit important in the life of the church? The resounding answer is the Holy Spirit is not only important, but the Holy Spirit is indispensable. Without that descendant power, the church could not exist for

**over 2, 000 years ago. Without that power, the church could not be a witness in this world. Without her witness, the church is nothing.**

**On the day Philip asked his infamous question, Jesus began to wrap up that part of the conversation with these words. “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” (John 14:27). He does not give as the world gives. He gives the Holy Spirit, the best gift of all.**

**Because of the Holy Spirit now resides within the church never to depart, we have that peace which passes all understanding. We can heed the words of Christ when He admonishes us not to be afraid. Our hearts don’t have to be troubled because we have the assurance of salvation and the authority to live lives worthy of the high calling of Jesus Christ. Jesus ascended on high and gave good gifts to his children. We are those children, and we are his witnesses. We have seen the Father. He is in Jesus and Jesus is in him. They have sent the Holy Spirit to reveal the triune God to our hearts. May we always walk in the grace, truth, and power of that same Spirit. May today be a fresh Pentecost for each of you. AMEN!**