**Sermon- Pentecost- 2020**

**Title: “The Spirit at Work”**

**Texts: Num.11:24-30, Ps 25:1-5, Acts 2:1-21, John 7:37-39**

**Prayer**

**Salutation**

**Bridge**

**Pentecost. Fifty days since the Passover. Ten days since the Ascension. And the disciples as we have heard these past few weeks in our sermons, have been in Jerusalem since they saw or ran away from the crucifixion. Sometimes hiding, sometimes boldly proclaiming the Word of God.**

**But let us back up a bit. Why are they still there? Two reasons: First, for the devout Jew, especially those that lived far away, that is what you did; you stayed after the Passover and waited for the completion of the Feast of Weeks or the spring harvest. Secondly, because Jesus told them to wait there, as it said in Acts 1 last week. They stayed out of obedience, because Jesus had told them the Spirit would come, and soon!**

**Just to give you a little background info about this feast of Weeks, listen to how it was since the time of Moses. The local farmers would bring in the grain harvest, led by the priest in a mighty procession singing the psalms and playing the flute, up to the city and the Temple Mount. This was called, “The Great Hallel”, summed up at the end of the procession by Ps 136 and the repetitive words, “Give thanks to the God of heaven, for His steadfast love endures forever.”**

**The next part of the ceremony is significant, especially for us as we consider the texts for today. The priest would now lead the people in making their offering in the Hebrew language. But not everyone spoke Hebrew. How do you make an offering if you can’t speak the language? It caused much confusion, especially for the visitors each year. Sound familiar? Just Wait!**

**Old Testament**

**So, let’s back up just a bit farther then, all the way back to the time of Moses. It’s a precursor to the outpouring we see and have experienced ourselves, here, and on Pentecost, that day of the promised outpouring in Jerusalem. Listen to this part of the Numbers text once more, “Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to him and took some of the Spirit that was on Him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it.” This precursor outpouring was an example of the Spirit at work and it brought confusion in the camp. Remember this! I’ll come back to it!**

**Acts**

**In Acts, by staying in Jerusalem, the devout disciples were following the law as stated in Deut. 16:16, “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God at the place that He shall choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, at the Feast of Weeks, and at the Feast of Booths. They shall not appear before the Lord empty handed.” Then while there the Word says, “They were all together in one place. Then suddenly, there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” Again, the Spirit was at work in God’s people. Now, listen to this: “And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.” Remember what happened when the priest would lead the people to the temple in the procession of the Feast of Weeks? If you couldn’t speak Hebrew you were totally lost and confused? God has now provided a way for all men to hear and understand His Word! To break the barrier of the Jews and make accessible the God of the Universe to all, everyone, even the Gentiles. It is the Holy Spirit at work. And beginning through these 120 disciples, which now have received what Christ had promised them. However, some were confused by all of this!**

**Like all good Lutherans they asked in verse 12, “What does this mean?” Don’t laugh! It’s a serious question. We sinful beings are not capable of the things of God on our own! But Peter, fisherman now theologian by the Holy Spirit, explained it all: “But this is what was uttered through the Prophet Joel: “’ And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days will I pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” It is clear that now there are no barriers. ALL, everyone, may come to the Lord, repent, and be Baptized and receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. That’s what Peter advised them that day, and what he still says to all today by the Word of God. But wait! There’s more and we’ll circle back around now to the OT lesson via Christ’s Word in the Gospel.**

**Gospel**

**Jesus said, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, “Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”’ Think about that phrase, “rivers of living water”. Jesus is the “living water” everyone needs, but He’s talking about the Holy Spirit. He wanted everyone to drink of it by faith. To believe in Him, call upon Him and be saved. Therefore, by the power of the Spirit, after the Holy Spirit enters out lives, we shall be “fountains of water” to all around us! But without the work of the Spirit in our lives we are as dried-up, riverbeds! This is third article time! The question is always: What does this mean? “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He daily and richly forgives all sins to me and all believers, and will at the Last Day raise up me and all believers in Christ to eternal life. This is most certainly true.” Thank God for the work of the Holy Spirit! Through Him we become as rivers of flowing water! And now let’s circle back to the Numbers text and see what Moses said.**

**Application**

**The text continued where I left off about two other men not in the camp with Moses and the 70 elders that the Holy Spirit had fallen upon. And it brought confusion. These two other guys, men like you, whom the Holy Spirit also rested upon. Listen, “Now two men in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the Spirit rested on them. They were among the registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp. And a young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.” And Joshua, son of Nun, the assistant of Moses from his youth, said, “My lord Moses, stop them.” But Moses said to them, “Are you jealous for my sake? Would all that the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would put His Spirit on them!” What Moses longed to happen, Joel said would happen, and Peter proclaimed is happening! You are all Eldads and Medads. Men you are the priests of your homes! The barrier has been broken by Christ! There are now no restrictions to sharing the faith. Everyone can! There are no barriers of language or nationality, sex or race. All who come in repentance of their sin may be saved by Christ, who through His perfect life, death on the cross, taking our sins upon Him and being our scapegoat, then rose that we may rise from that death to life eternal.**

**What does this STILL mean? That is the question for today. Like I alluded to before, the Holy Spirit is still poured out. The same promise of the pouring out of the Spirit is in the waters of Baptism. And in our lives the Spirit still works faith, strengthens faith, and empowers us to walk as people of faith, where living waters pour out and extend to all people. The Spirit still convicts through the Law but shines the light on the Gospel, so that it may be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. And we still prophesy of the wonders of Christ to the world! The third article is still most certainly true.**

**To us the day of Pentecost is not one of confusion like they experienced all gathered that day, fifty days after the Passover. No, it is one of complete understanding by the power of the Holy Spirit who works and dwells in us all. Thank you, Holy Spirit! In Jesus’ name, Amen.**