

He Will Guide you

Faith Resurrected: Part 8 “He Will Guide You”

Rev. Cameron D St.Michael – May 23, 2021

Pentecost

Readings: Acts 2:1-21; Romans 8:22-27; John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15

Reflection: Psalm 104:24-35

Greeting: Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.

Prayer: Almighty God, through your only Son you overcame death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life. Grant that we who celebrate our Lord’s resurrection, by the renewing of your Spirit, arise from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reflection: Psalm 104:24-35

O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. Yonder is the sea, great and wide, creeping things innumerable are there, living things both small and great. There go the ships, and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it. These all look to you to give them their food in due season; when you give to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. When you hide your face, they are dismayed; when you take away their breath, they die and return to their dust. When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground. May the glory of the LORD endure forever; may the LORD rejoice in his works— who looks on the earth and it trembles, who touches the mountains and they smoke. I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being. May my meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice in the LORD. Let sinners be consumed from the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul. Praise the LORD! (Psalm 104:24-35 NRSV)*

We read the words of Psalm 104 and we hear of God’s gracious spirit. We see God’s glory in all creation. We are called to praise the Lord always. What do you praise God for today? How do you accept the Holy Spirit in to guide you? Do you sing God’s praises? Do you sing them for others to hear? How do we share in the joy of our Risen Savior?

Prayer: O God, when all things come to their end, you bring us into the city of resurrection of your Son. Shelter every nation and tongue with your Spirit, and feed us all with joy unending; hear our prayers and have mercy, through Christ our Lord. Amen. Alleluia.

Now let the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

Sermon:

Our scripture readings for today come from the New Revised Standard Version Bible. Our first reading is from Acts chapter 2, verses 1 through 21.

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others sneered and said, "They are filled with new wine." But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning. No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: 'In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon 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 upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show portents in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and smoky mist. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the coming of the Lord's great and glorious day. Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' (Acts 2:1-21 NRSV)*

Our next reading is from Romans chapter 8, verses 22 through 27.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (Romans 8:22-27 NRSV)*

Our last reading is from John chapter 15, verses 26 through 27 and chapter 16, verses 4b through 15.

“When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify because you have been with me from the beginning. “I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you. But now I am going to him who sent me; yet none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your hearts. Nevertheless I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will prove the world wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: about sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see me no longer; about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been condemned. “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, because he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. (John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15 NRSV)*

This is the word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

We finish our Easter series entitled “Faith Resurrected” with our Pentecost message “He Will Guide You.” Every message in this series has used a phrase from the Gospel reading for that week. Today we look at the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Pentecost marks the end of our Easter season, and with it we look at being guided by the Holy Spirit. All of our readings for today are focused on accepting that guidance. I want to start with our familiar reading from Acts because we hear it every year on Pentecost, that the Spirit rests on Christ's followers. They're filled the Holy Spirit. They speak and people understand. And it confuses people, it astonishes people. We get the explanation that the Spirit is there and that it had been foretold that it would come, and that it's open to everyone. So that all who call on the name of the Lord can be saved. And we see the Spirit give boldness to a people that had been nervous, even hiding. In Romans, we hear about hope. That the Spirit helps us in our weakness, and it gives us hope. That even if we can't see it, even more so we hope for it because we can't see it. That the Spirit helps us when we're weak. That the spirit comes in to guide us when we aren't sure what to do. In our Gospel account we have Jesus talking about the Spirit coming after he goes. That the Spirit will help us to know the truth. The spirit will help us to see the world. That the Spirit will guide us along the path that Christ has set us on. And we get the phrase that gave us the title for today's message: he will guide you.

Reading all these different things about the Spirit, I began to reflect on something that sometimes gets lost in all of the talk about the Spirit with all of the grand public things that we get in Acts and all the ways that we talk about going out. And that's that there's an inward acceptance that we have to have for the Spirit. That with all the Spirit does, it requires us to

accept the spirit, to have faith. And it is that inward faith I really wanted to look at. Because that's what draws us to the Holy Spirit. The desire for guidance. And part of that is letting go. Because in order to be guided, you have to be willing to admit that you don't know where you need to go. I couldn't help but think of the old example of having to stop and ask for directions. That so many of us are willing to be stubborn and get lost and have no idea where we are before we are willing to stop and ask for directions, to be guided. And I feel this is doubly true with the Holy Spirit. Often, we want the Spirit to be there to comfort us, to guide us, and to lead us where we already think we're going. We just want the Spirit to be there to confirm that we're headed in the right direction, not to lead us in directions we didn't know we're supposed to be going. But in our readings, we get lots of unexpected. In the letter to the Romans, we hope for what we do not see. That's in hope that we seek guidance. It is in hope that we sit, and we wait. And that the Spirit guides us in our weakness. When we don't know what to do, we hand ourselves over to the Spirit so that he can tell us. Then in Acts, when all the followers had been sitting together not sure what was going to happen, especially unsure after Christ's death and resurrection, feeling like they were lost, that it is then the Holy Spirit came. And even when others doubted, Peter held fast the idea that the Holy Spirit was there to guide and to lead. And it all comes back to this idea that Christ has told us the Spirit would come and that the spirit would help us. That when Christ was no longer in the world the Spirit would be there so that they would still have God's presence right there.

One of the most interesting things is that Christ says that there are still things that we need to learn. That it will be the Spirit that teaches us those things. That he will guide us. Now to me all of this says that the Spirit is there so that we can open ourselves up to new truths. That we can understand the things that have been hidden from us. But part of that means figuring out how to open ourselves up to those things. That if we walk into it thinking that the Holy Spirit is just going to confirm what we already know, we're going to miss an awful lot of things. Like walking into a classroom and expecting the teacher to tell us all the things we already know are true, we hold ourselves back from hearing the things that we didn't yet know. And it requires a great faith to accept those new things. It means that we have to find a way to open ourselves up to that voice. We do this in many ways. We do it by gathering together. We gather together so that we may share experiences in the Holy Spirit. That we may share experiences of God's love. That we may share experiences of Christ in our lives. We do it in prayer. That we humble ourselves before God, admitting how little we know and how little we understand, and how much we need guidance. How much we need help. It requires us to do something that is so often unnatural, in that we have to admit we don't know. We have to admit we don't understand. We have to admit we need help. We have to admit we could be wrong. And we have to call on the Holy Spirit to be our guide in those things that we do not know. Especially in the things that we only think we know. Because if we listen to what Christ taught us, it's that he didn't have time to say everything we needed to know. That there's always more about God to discover. And that it's not for us to figure it out and box God in and decide God's message on our own, but to be open to the Holy Spirit to guide us and lead us to open up new

truth in Christ that we hadn't fathomed. That we have faith that the Spirit will always take us to where we need to be. Even if we have no idea where that is. That when we pray we empty ourselves of all preconceived ideas. That we empty ourselves of the knowledge that we think we already have, and let the Spirit fill us with God's truth. A truth based in love. In turn that makes us more open, more willing to go where we are led.

So, my message for you on this day is to find a way to open yourself up once again to the Holy Spirit. That every time we sit down to let the Spirit guide us and lead us, that we do so in hope, and in love, and faith that Christ is with us. That we are never abandoned to have to figure things out on our own. We are never lost and have to solve everything ourselves with our limited human wisdom. That we humble ourselves in the knowledge that we don't know everything. Because it is in that humility that we find grace. It is in our lack of understanding that we find knowledge. It is in our lack of direction that we see the path. It is in that feeling that we are lost that we discover that we are found. A faith put to the test. A faith in things unseen. A faith in a Savior who died so that we may live. A faith in a Savior who rose from the dead that we may have life eternal. A faith in the Holy Spirit that will guide us on God's path. If we but empty ourselves to let that Spirit in to make us whole. So, welcome the Spirit. Greet him with open arms. Welcome what's new. Welcome what's different. Welcome what's unexpected. Be open so that we may invite God in. That we may learn to love more completely. That we may learn to walk the paths more righteously. That we may learn to love others more completely. That we may have a joy that makes us whole in Christ. That we may always be willing to seek direction, because we know the one who guides us is right and good. So that we may walk in the path that is made in love by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer of Confession and Pardon: We are reluctant, O Author of Love, to set aside our hurt, our anger, our disappointment. Heal us with your tender touch, that we might be cleansed of all unclean thoughts, all schemes of revenge, all hope of vindictive retribution. Open our eyes to the power of love, shown to us in the unselfish sacrifice of your Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Offering: If you are so moved to make an offering, you may send it to the church treasurer, or you may send it to the PO Box listed below. We are still the church, and the church still needs your support to keep doing all the important work that we do.

Lord's Prayer

Dismissal with Blessing: May we go forth reflecting God's love in our lives as we go forth in the peace of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Current Series – Faith Resurrected

Our series is *Faith Resurrected*, and each week's title is taken from the words of Christ as we explore what it means to serve a Risen Savior.

April 11th – *Come to Believe* - Acts 4:32-35; 1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:19-31

April 18th – *You are Witnesses* – Acts 4:32-35; 1 John 1:1-2:2; John 20:19-31

April 25th – *Listen to My Voice* – Acts 4:5-12; 1 John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18

May 2nd – *Abide in Me* – Acts 8:26-40; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

May 9th – *I Chose You* – Acts 10:44-48; 1 John 5:1-6; John 15:9-17

May 16th – *Be Sanctified* – Acts 1:15-17, 21-26; 1 John 5:9-13; John 17:6-19

May 23rd – *He Will Guide You* – Acts 2:1-21; Romans 8:22-27; John 15:26-27, 16:4b-15

Prayer List

Rev Charliam Renner	Bishop Frank Beard	Our Conference	Our Healthcare Workers
Patti Corder and the Greenup Ambulance Crew		Angie Veach	Eric Veach
Cathy Devall	Brock McMorris	Ed & Verna Titus	Henry Catey
Jake Kiser	Cindy Cisney	Nancy Hoke	Don Wells
Tricia Adkins	Ronnie & Elaine Carlen	Don Stewart	Michael & Makenzie Reynolds
Ronnie Winstead	Annie McMorris	Dwight Parsons	Trinity Powers
Lauren Stewart	Charlie Henderson	Rosalee Chancellor	Phyllis Gable
Sage Martin	Dalton McFarland	Family of Davey Yaw	Family of Wilma Clark
Terri Kemper	Darrell Quick	Family of Hugh Eubank	Shelley Murphy
Family of Doris Devall	Family of Doris Devall	Family of Macel Buss	Family of Winona Saathoff
Jeff Davidson	Richard Durham	Kathy Hanks	Nora Werner & Family
Wayne Carrell	Gary & Mary Winterrowd	Leo Smith	Bonnie Hite
Donna Graham	Kevin Drum	Greg Williams	Eloise Buffenmeyer
Martha Roberts	Charlie & Charlotte Baxter	Paul Schulte	Kim Hennes
Family of Gene Mayhood			

Rev Camron D St. Michael

<https://stmichael.pw>

cdstmichael@outlook.com

(316)530-3182 (call or text)

PO Box 54, Charleston IL, 61920

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