

Pentecost – May 28, 2023
Text: John 7:37-39
Theme: Fill Up with Jesus

Today we celebrate Pentecost once again. Pentecost, as described in our second reading from Acts, is the celebration of the day that the Holy Spirit came to be with us after Jesus ascended into heaven. Remember that the Holy Spirit was not created on Pentecost any more than Jesus was created on Christmas. The Holy Spirit is now and has always been part of the Holy Trinity. He is God as the Father is God and as Jesus is God. This we will confess explicitly next week on Holy Trinity Sunday. However, on this day, He began His special work with God's people as He came to dwell within us.

In our Gospel today, we see Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles, also known as Sukkot. This was a great feast 10 days after Rosh Hashanah in which the people remembered God rescuing them from Egypt and providing water from the Rock for them in the desert. They built booths and lived in them for 10 days remembering how our ancestors lived in booths in the desert for 40 years. Each day the priests would gather water from the pool of Siloam and pour it on the altar reminding the people that God provides all the water we need in this life. On the last and greatest day of the feast, Jesus announced:

“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.’” Note that He did not say living waters could flow out of our hearts or might flow out of our hearts or ought to flow out of our hearts but that he who comes to Jesus WILL have living waters flow out of his heart.

It is a very simple process. A parent who is a believer in Jesus will want to be certain her baby is a believer in Jesus. The only way you can be certain a baby has faith, since babies are notoriously bad at verbally professing their faith, is by baptizing them. Once that baby is baptized, Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will enter him and the living waters of faith will pour forth from his heart.

Everything we do to that baby from then on is to fight the world, sinful flesh and the devil all of whom would destroy the faith that God created. We have Sunday School not to get more saved but to combat the beating faith has taken during the week. At the moment of baptism, that baby had everything he needed for salvation. But then he watched TV, and played with the neighbor kids and entertained his own sinful flesh and saw and heard adults being sinful. All of that weakened his faith so we bring him back to church to hear the Word of God in Sunday School and in worship and he gets filled up with Jesus again.

This cycle continues on until we enter our eternal rest. That is why we are all here today, to fill up with Jesus and refresh our faith so that we can go out again and do combat with the world, our own sinful flesh and the devil himself. It is as simple as Jesus says. Fill up on Him and living waters will flow from you.

If you look at any aspect of your life and you are not satisfied, the answer is Jesus. Maybe you have a relationship that is struggling. Maybe your work is not satisfying. Maybe you struggle to understand your kids or your parents. The answer is Jesus. Only Jesus gives the living waters that will heal you, satisfy you and bring you joy. Nothing else works. The Devil would like you to think other things work. He of course will camouflage those things so that they won't be obviously from him. No Christian reads their horoscope and thinks "I'm gonna worship Satan today!" No Christian gossips, hurting another's reputation and says, "Look at me! I just worshipped Satan!" But that is exactly what we are doing. There are a million more things that we are tempted to do that seem so innocent but are not following Jesus. If you're not following Jesus, there is only one other option. Jesus makes it very clear that you are either following Him or Satan and there is no in between. So, we come back to His Word over and over again. We receive His body and blood over and over again. We dip our fingers

in the font and make the sign of the cross over and over again all in an effort not to obtain the living waters, we already have them, but to beat back the world, the devil and our own sinful flesh that would love to distract us from the living waters so that we forget them. Satan wants us to stay on a path that leads us away from Christ so that our faith that was placed in us by the Holy Spirit might weaken and die.

Never let that happen. It won't, and in fact in cannot unless you choose to walk away from Him. He is filling you up with living waters again today and you are supernaturally powerful as the Living God inhabits your body. Go forth and glorify Him.