

ALDERSGATE UMC OF BUTTE, MT
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June 5, 2022
Pentecost Sunday
Pastor Matthias Krier

Message

Drunk in the Spirit

Pastor Matthias



How many of you have had mountain-top experiences that are hard to put into words? When we try to put these experiences into words, it is extremely challenging to explain what exactly transpired. Some of my mountain-top experiences literally took place on mountain tops in Colorado. When I was a few years younger, I hiked up several four-teeners which are mountains over 14,000 feet in elevation. It is difficult to put into words what I experienced at the top of each mountain.

What is also hard to put into words are my experiences on a number of retreats and mission trips I have gone on in the past 45 years. I will list a few: Koinonia which is the equivalent to “Walk to Emmaus”. Five Day Academies for Spiritual Formation; Nine Day Centering Prayer Retreat at Snowmass Monastery; canoe trips to the boundary waters; a number of prayer retreats and youth retreats to name just a few.

In both the Book of Acts and in the Gospel of John, the authors are trying to convey the mystical experiences of the Holy Spirit. What exactly happened may never be fully known, but what we do know is that folks who had this experience were being accused of being drunk on wine and it was only 9:00 in the morning.

The beauty of reading and rereading scripture from our lectionary each year is that different things will stand out depending on what is going on in our lives. In other words, we all have growing edges where we need to grow and the Spirit nudges us to grow in new and profound ways. As long as we are drawing breath, *ruach*:



not only will the very breath of God be breathing through us, the Spirit will nudge us to grow. This passage has a great deal to offer us in ways to grow on our spiritual journey. Just becoming aware of our breathing can help us to be more conscious of what is happening in our body. We know what happens when we have trouble breathing for one reason or another. We can pass out if we are not able to breathe.

If you are not accustomed to doing this, take a few moments throughout your day and just be conscious of breathing, *ruach*, the very breath of God, is breathing through you and giving you life! Verse one of the old hymn: “Breathe on Me, Breath of God” is this:

Breathe on me breath of God, fill me with life anew

That I may love what thou dost love and do what thou wouldst do

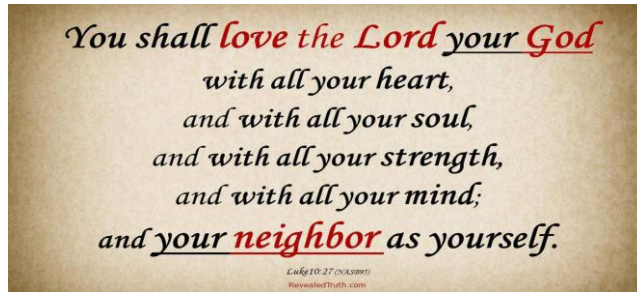
One of the reasons that this lectionary passage is one of my favorites is that it contains a verse I use daily to try and stay grounded and centered in a world that is chaotic and a bit crazy at times. I realize that verse 27 is a not just a favorite of mine, it is no doubt a favorite of many:



This verse has seen me through many challenging times and continues to do so. There is something about this verse that calms me, soothes me and helps me to let go of fear. This is a verse I committed to memory decades ago and as you know when you commit a verse to memory, it is always there when you need it.

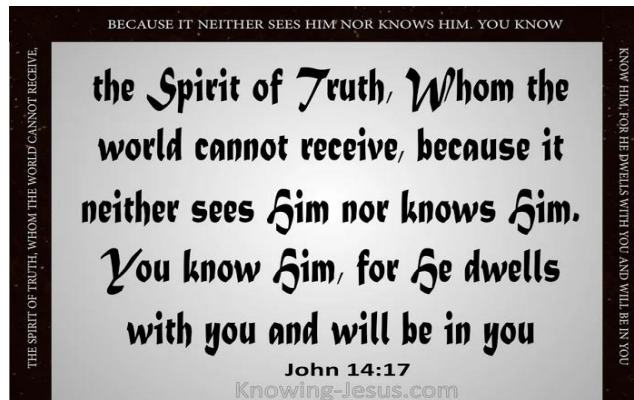
But in my meditation on this passage from John this past week, it was not this verse that spoke the loudest. What spoke the loudest had to do with something that is sorely lacking amongst Christians and that is living in *harmony* with one another. And why is this so difficult for Christians to live in harmony with one another? One would think that as Christians we would simply try harder to live in peace and harmony to live more godly, more Christlike, but it doesn't feel like that or look like that in many ways.

We can begin this witness with Yeshua who gave us the two Greatest Commandments and gave us the essence of what to believe and how to live, with these words from the Gospel of Luke:



We say we do or at least striving to do so, but are we really? Are we growing in love or not? If you are humble enough you can ask your spouse or a sibling or a son or a daughter or a dear friend and then be humble enough to receive the honest answer. Ask a loved one and yourself: “Am I growing in LOVE or not?” Yes or No? The folks I have the hardest time loving are the folks I don’t like very much. Could be a relative or a neighbor or someone in authority over you, but keep in mind sheer determination to love cannot and will not make it happen, but by the grace of God, it can be so.

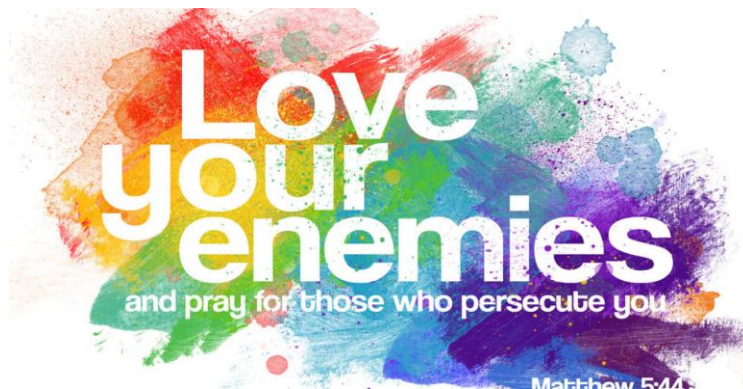
By the grace of God, something else is possible for the followers of Jesus that appears in John 14:17:



The theme of Truth is the subject for next Sunday, but let it suffice for today to say that if we are professing Christians or professing followers of Yeshua, we ought to desire with our inmost being to know the Truth in every way possible and yet that does oftentimes seems not to be the case. There is no question that seeking the whole truth and nothing but the truth so help you God causes us to challenge what it is that we believe along with moving outside our comfort zone. Oftentimes people simply want to believe what supports their point of view. What happened to being objective

in seeking the whole truth. Enough for today as we will delve in more deeply to this next Sunday.

As followers of Jesus, we make a commitment to love as Yeshua loved. It is easy to love those who love us! It is not so easy to love those who are on the opposite side of the political spectrum. I invite you to imagine someone you have a difficult time loving who they are ... this person may sit on the opposite of you theologically or politically or maybe it is both. Imagine this person or persons if it happens to be a whole group of folks right now and ask for the grace to love them unconditionally with no strings attached. Just love them, period! You do not have to agree with them or even like them, but there is absolutely no wiggle room in what Yeshua is asking us to do here in the gospel of Matthew: not only are we to love our neighbor, we are to do what seems impossible. And what exactly is this impossible we are asked to do?



Love your enemies; do good to those who hate you.

Bless those who curse you and pray for those who spitefully use you.

Jesus

Just as the disciples moved past being students of Jesus, they were anointed and appointed to be apostles, sent out to bring the good news to transform the world. By the grace of God, Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit makes this all possible.

In a few moments we will sing these words in preparation for the Sacrament of Holy Communion:

*Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.
Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me.
Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.*

It is easy to get discouraged and even depressed in this day and age so as we prepare for the Sacrament of Holy Communion, may we be mindful of the breath of God breathing through us and the Spirit of the Living God falling afresh on us! Let us sing through *Spirit of the Living God* 2 times.

Hymn of Preparation # 393 UMH Spirit of the Living God (2X)