

Pentecost – 2022

"Because You Got It, You Get It"

Text: John 16:12-16

*"Thou holy Light, Guide Divine,
Oh, cause the Word of Life to shine!
Teach us to know our God aright
And call Him Father with delight.
From every error keep us free;
Let none but Christ our Master be
That we in living faith abide,
In Him, our Lord, with all our might confide. Hallelujah!" (TLH 224)*

Dear Fellow Christians:

Having broken numerous *existing* laws, including even the most basic law against murder, it is naïve and absurd to imagine that yet another law will prevent satanic school shootings. Surely all must see that. If it is murder for anyone to harm a pregnant woman in such a way that it causes the baby she is carrying to die, then it is murder if the woman herself, or her doctor, does the very same thing. Surely all must see that. If a mask really does protect the person wearing one, then it shouldn't matter if someone else does not. Surely all must see that. If science can be trusted to predict the weather in 20 years, then science can be trusted to tell us if a newborn baby is a boy or a girl. Surely all must see that.

Not necessarily. There is a certain blindness that accompanies unbelief, an inescapable fog of foolishness that disorients and twists rational thought. The Holy Spirit through the Psalmist Asaph wrote in Psalm 81: ***"My people did not listen to my voice... So I gave them over to their stubborn hearts, to follow their own counsels."*** Again Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 10: ***The words of a wise man's mouth win him favor, but the lips of a fool consume him. The beginning of the words of his mouth is foolishness, and the end of his talk is evil madness."***

Understand this, but also understand that the life's work of God's children is to clear this fog and to correct this madness by bringing into other's lives the power and clarity of God's Word. The clarity and understanding that we possess can never serve as a source of pride, condescension, or coldness, for it means only that we have been given a gift. As Paul asked the Church at Corinth: ***"What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?"***

The gift of clarity and understanding that we have been given is, in large part, a product of the event that we celebrate this morning, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The text that will form the basis of our Pentecost study is the verbally inspired Word of God found in John's Gospel, the 16th Chapter:

ESV John 16:12-16 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁶ ¶ "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me."

These are the very words of our Savior God. How meaningless, how pointless our lives would be without these live-giving words, and how meaningless these words without the gift of the Holy Spirit poured out at Pentecost. With confidence that that same Holy Spirit is still working powerfully among us and in us through these divine words, so we pray, ***"Sanctify us by your truth, O Lord. Your word is truth."*** Amen.

One of the happy byproducts of the obvious evil that permeates our world today is the constant reminder that while we have to be *in* the world, we certainly don't want to be *of* the world. We want no part of it. This has always been true, but when the evil of this world is masked, it's easy to be lulled into a false sense of security. And not just security but complacency. When evil is shrouded or hidden, we foolishly tend to imagine that our work and calling is somehow less urgent. It is not, but that reality is always harder to see when evil lives in the shadows. The difference today is that evil is not hiding.

No one needs to tell you that all that God calls good and virtuous is under attack today. In fact you would be hard pressed to name even one good, God-pleasing thing in our society that is not being assaulted or threatened. Husband and wife marriage, family, education, honesty, sobriety, virtue, chastity, the Christian faith – all are under continual attack. The very foundations upon which every nation must stand before God are relentlessly assaulted. Christians would have no way to avoid being swept away in the flood of evil if not for the gift that God gave to his Church (and also therefore to each of us) at Pentecost. Without the Holy Spirit living and active within us, we would be just as lost and every bit as foolish as the world around us. We would be just

as befuddled and clueless as the godless, which Paul once described in his Letter to the Ephesians: ***Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. ¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. ¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.***^{ESV}(Ephesians 4:17-19) At Pentecost, God poured out his Holy Spirit into his Church, and with that gift came light and understanding.

Pentecost, however, is certainly not without its detractors. In fact the worst offenders are often those who claim to place the greatest emphasis on this event. Those who profess to be all about Pentecost are, in reality, usually all about the lesser aspects of this day. In other words, they emphasize the outward demonstrations or manifestations of the Holy Spirit, often to the exclusion of the far greater gift. How like man to marvel at the speaking of a foreign language while ignoring the actual words that are being spoken.

Speaking in tongues or languages was just the outward sign that a far greater gift had been given. It was like the shining face of Moses after he had talked to God on Sinai. The greatest gift on this day was the outpouring of spiritual wisdom and understanding. The miraculous speaking in foreign languages or "tongues" not only signified that a special gift had been given, it allowed those to whom the gift had been given to immediately share that gift without a language barrier.

Prior to Pentecost even Christ's closest friends and disciples had been burdened by a limited vision and a clouded understanding. Pentecost brought a clarity that must have been truly remarkable. This dramatically enhanced understanding of spiritual truths is hard for Christians today to comprehend because most of us take it for granted. Most here have, after all, enjoyed such insight and understanding for as long as we can remember. Most couldn't remember back to a time when they *didn't* "get it." Yet that's the stuff that ingratitude is made of – when we've enjoyed a priceless gift for so long that we no longer recognize its value and worth.

Think of it in terms of the gift of sight. How often do you wake from your nightly slumber, open your eyes, and gasp with amazement at your own ability to see the world all around you? Pretty much never. Why? Not because that particular gift isn't just as spectacular as ever, but because we have *always* been able to see. Yet the gift of sight is no less amazing for our lack of appreciation. Imagine how different it was for those who, though born blind, were one day given the gift of sight by Jesus. Imagine the wonder at the colors, shadows, and lighting. Imagine the awe as they

saw clouds for the first time, or the stars, or the face of their own child. Blind people aren't dead; they just lack the ability to fully comprehend the magnificence of God's creation through the gift of sight. No matter what they could *imagine*, nothing could possibly compare with the real thing when they finally witnessed it for the first time.

Compare that to Pentecost, where we were given not so much sight as insight. Surely the disciples that were gathered on that amazing day of Pentecost were already believers. They had come to know Jesus as their Savior and were therefore heirs of heaven even prior to the events of Pentecost. Yet there were important elements of the Christian faith that they seemed unable to fully grasp. Their minds couldn't seem to penetrate the fog that had limited their sight and darkened their understanding. There were big gaping holes in their comprehension of even some very basic Christian doctrines. We know, for example, that they seemed unable to accept the idea of a kingdom of the heart, rather than a kingdom on earth. They had all tried to prevent Jesus from doing what he came to earth to do, which was to offer his sinless life in a sacrificial death to pay mankind's sin debt. There were also deficiencies in their courage and enthusiasm. Time after time they showed themselves to be timid, fearful, and uncertain.

Then came that great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and it was as though the clouds parted, the sun broke through, and suddenly everything was forever different – everything was suddenly and absolutely *clear*. From that moment on we hear nothing of the Apostles ***"hiding in the upper room for fear of the Jews."*** Instead we see them boldly proclaiming their faith on the street corners and in the marketplace. Suddenly they no longer seemed confused and saddened by the death of their Lord; they regarded it as the greatest source of comfort and encouragement in their lives. Suddenly they no longer thought in terms of a kingdom on earth; they spent themselves struggling to expand Christ's kingdom or rulership into the hearts of human beings around the world.

No wonder Jesus was so excited about the giving of this great gift while he walked the earth. No wonder he held up the giving of this gift as one of the greatest arguments for rejoicing at his Ascension. You will recall how (just prior to our text) he said, ***"Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you."*** (John 16:7) He then continued in our text: ***"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now."***

So many simple truths escaped the disciples prior to Pentecost. Again, they were obviously believers, but there was so much that they still missed or lacked, and what they lacked they were simply unable to "get" – despite the fact that they lived with and learned *directly from the Savior himself* for a full three years. Jesus obviously understood that the result of Pentecost would be an immeasurably enhanced understanding and insight into divine truth. It meant his men would finally and fully *get it*.

The excitement of Jesus at this gift ought to teach us something. Pentecost truly is a priceless and all-too-easy-to-take-for-granted blessing. While it has always been the Holy Spirit that works faith, the fact that he has been given to God's New Testament Church in such a special way is truly remarkable. Because of that gift, the delusions of natural man that would otherwise have darkened our understanding have been cleared away, lifted, removed. The result is that we are able to regard countless truths that would otherwise have escaped us as true and obvious. It is because we first got this gift that we "get it," and we never want to allow the spiritual clarity that we have been given to go unappreciated or to take it for granted.

That is also why you and I ought to be excited still today about Pentecost. The fact that we understand divine truth means that we have also shared in the benefits of this day, and continue to reap the benefits every single day we walk this earth. It means that the Holy Spirit has also been poured out into us. That which is foolishness to the world is not foolishness to us. The truths of God's Word that the world dismisses as childish or backward or naïve, we treasure as the height of divine wisdom and truth. What the world demeans as a wandering *path* to nowhere, you and I – by virtue of the gift given to the Church on this day – rightly treasure as the only path to heaven. Pentecost was the only way that you and I could gain such clarity, and it is still today the gift by which we know and trust that Jesus alone paid our sin debt, and that we are saved not by our own works, but through faith alone in him. Amen.

ESV **Genesis 11:1-9** Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. ² And as people migrated from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. ³ And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. ⁴ Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." ⁵ And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. ⁶ And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." ⁸ So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. ⁹ Therefore its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

ESV **Acts 2:1-6** When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. ⁵ ¶ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.

ESV **John 16:12-16** "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁶ ¶ "A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me."



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Pentecost Sunday – June 5, 2022

The Opening Prayer by the Pastor

The Opening Hymn – 224 (*Red Hymnal*)
"Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord"

The Order of Service – Supplement page 12ff. (*Brown Hymnal*)

The Scripture Lessons: (*Printed on the back page of this bulletin*)

The First Lesson: (Genesis 11:1-9) Mankind sinned against God's command to "fill and subdue the earth" by attempting to build one grand, central city around the Tower of Babel. God frustrated this rebellious sin by confusing the languages of man. This set the stage for one of the elements of the event we celebrate on this day – Pentecost – and the gift of tongues or languages. At Pentecost, God gave his disciples the ability to speak in foreign languages so that the gospel could immediately be shared in the world at that time.

Psalm 51 (Supplement page 31) (*Brown Hymnal*)

The Second Lesson: (Acts 2:1-6) This is the account of the event we celebrate on this Sunday in the Church Year – Pentecost. Remember that speaking in different languages was not the greatest gift given on this day. It was an outward manifestation or proof of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on God's Church in the New Testament era.

The Confession of Faith -

The Apostolic Creed – page 15 (*Brown Hymnal*)

The Pre-Sermon Hymn – 226 (Verses 1-6) (*Red Hymnal*)
"Come, Oh Come, Thou Quickening Spirit"

The Sermon – Text: John 16:12-16 (*Printed on the back of this bulletin*)
"Because You Got It, You Get It"

The Offertory – (Supplement page 16 insert)

The Post-Sermon Hymn – 225 (*Red Hymnal*)
"Come, Holy Spirit, Come"

The Prayer followed by the Lord's Prayer

The Benediction

The Closing Hymn – 226 (Verses 7-9) (*Red Hymnal*)
"Come, Oh Come, Thou Quickening Spirit"

Silent Prayer

Welcome! - We warmly welcome any visitors who might be with us this morning and invite you to join us every Sunday at this time. St. Paul is a congregation in fellowship with the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC) – a conservative Lutheran synod with churches and missions throughout the United States and around the world. We are glad you are here. Thank you for letting us share the Word of God with you. Please record your visit in our Guest Book, and come again.

Attendance – Sunday (29) Average (30)

This Week at St. Paul:

Today	-10:00 a.m.	– Sunday Worship Service
	-11:00 a.m.	– Fellowship Hour
Next Sunday	-10:00 a.m.	– Sunday Worship with Communion
	-11:15 a.m.	– Fellowship Hour

CLC News – Ascension of Tacoma has called Pastor Samuel Naumann. Pastor-elect Zach Sippert is scheduled to be ordained and installed as pastor of Redemption of Bowdle and Zion of Ipswich in a 4pm service in Bowdle on July 10th. A fellowship meal will follow. The congregation is invited.

Vacation Bible School and Church Picnic – This summer's VBS is scheduled for July 18-22. Session will run each evening from 6:30-8:30 pm. For more information please see Sandy Roehl. Our annual Church picnic has also been scheduled for the Sunday following VBS week (July 24th). For more information on the Church picnic please see Cindy Ollenburger.

Black Hills Camping – The annual Black Hills Family Bible Camp is scheduled for Friday July 15th through the morning of Tuesday July 19th. Contact Pastor Aaron Ude at (605) 393-1311 or email him at aaronude@gmail.com for more information.

Confirmation Sunday and Communion Change – Sunday, July 3rd, has been designated as this year's Confirmation Sunday. Our confirmand this year is Lydia Schiermeister. A fellowship meal is planned following the service. Since Pastor Roehl is scheduled to attend the CLC Convention on June 26th, communion has been moved from June 26th to July 3rd.

Daily Rest – Subscriptions for the devotional Daily Rest are due for renewal. Payment can be dropped into the offering box and need not be specially marked.