**Things are Different Now: New Anointing**

**5-9-21**

Good morning. It’s been a couple of weeks since I stood here.

* I want to say how much I appreciate Jason Hudson being here last week to bring the Word.
  + Jason is a great guy and I have truly appreciated getting to know him and sharing him with you all.
  + I also am very grateful that Jeremy and Julie Bunker were able to be here two Sundays ago and share their ministry with us.
    - Please don’t forget, if you were planning to hand in a Faith Promise Card, that you can still do that in the back in one of the gold bowls.
    - There are also extra cards there if you don’t have one – if you are online and would like a card, just let us know and we will send one to you.
* During those couple of weeks I was able to enjoy both a “stay-cation” at home, getting lots done around the house as well as spend some time alone with the Lord up in Challis during a study-break.
  + All very refreshing and well worth it.
* But before I begin today, I would like to ask you to be in prayer for my brother-in-law, Glen Westphal, who is presently on a ventilator in the ICU of a Minnesota hospital with a severe case of Covid-19.
  + My wife, Nancy, left this morning to be with her mom and family during this anxious time.
    - And I would appreciate your remembering to pray for her and her brother over the next few days.

You know, before the last couple of Sundays, we had begun a series of messages entitled “Things are Different Now” that focused on the way things changed with the Resurrection of Jesus that first Easter morning.

* And all I can say is that I am so grateful that they have.
  + For since that day, those of us who believe have an advocate with the Father in days just like these.
  + The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 8:26 and following that:

*26 In the same way the Spirit also helps us in our weakness, because we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with inexpressible groanings. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because he intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. 28 We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.*

* Things are, indeed, different now as the Holy Spirit of the living God now dwells within us, searching our hearts and communicating with our heavenly Abba the unspoken longings He finds there – the depths of which we ourselves often don’t even comprehend.
  + And it all goes back to that first Easter Sunday, when everything changed.
  + In fact, John expresses this directly in John 20:21-23.
    - Turn there with me now.

RELEASE KIDS FOR KIDS ON THE ROCK

Some of you may remember that last June we spent some time talking about the incarnation of Jesus and how he became the Christ – the anointed One – upon His baptism.

* The three synopitic gospel writers record the event. Luke puts it this way in Luke 3:21-22

*21 When all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. As he was praying, heaven opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended on him in a physical appearance like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased.”*

* And while John’s gospel does not record the actual event, He does record John the Baptist’s recollection of the event in John 1:32-34.

*32 And John bore witness: “I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. 33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ 34 And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”*

* These passages are all depicting the same thing: the moment that Jesus was “anointed” with the Holy Spirit – thus being “Christened”, if you will, the Messiah.
  + The Hebrew title that is translated into Greek as “Christ” and means “the anointed One” or “God’s anointed”.

Now, I begin there because it relates to the events we just read about in the upper room.

* Let me remind you of what is going on here in John 20.
  + It is the day of Christ’s resurrection - the first Easter Sunday.
  + At the beginning of the chapter we read of Mary Magdalene going to the tomb very early in the morning, while it was still dark, and discovering that the stone had been rolled away from the opening to the tomb.
    - So she takes off to find Peter to inform him.
    - After Peter and John run to the tomb, see that it’s empty, and continue on their way…
    - Mary hangs around the tomb and inadvertently runs into the living Jesus, whom she mistakes to be the gardener.
    - After revealing Himself to her and caring for her, Jesus sends her to tell His disciples, which she does.
  + The other gospel writers pick up the story from there for the rest of the morning and probably into the afternoon.
  + But John again picks up the story later that evening, with all the disciples (minus Judas and Thomas) hiding out together in an undisclosed location with the doors locked.
    - When suddenly Jesus appears in the room, saying *Shalom* or “Peace be with you”.
      * This understandably startles and frightens the disciples, so Jesus calms their fears by assuring them that He is no ghost, but rather their resurrected Lord.
      * *Shalom*, he says – evil has done it’s worst and yet, here I stand.
    - Then He says it again: *Shalom*, “Peace be with you”.
      * This time telling them that in the same way the Father had sent him into the world, so He was sending them.
      * All of the events of these past couple of days have been a part of God’s glorious plan, so *Shalom* – Peace out.
        + God is on His throne and in control.
  + No doubt, the disciples of Jesus were thrilled as it gradually dawned on them that all of their hopes and dreams were not lost.
    - With Jesus alive, their plans could get back on track, only now with even greater power and authority.
    - Now they could pick up where they left off with even more momentum with Jesus shocking everyone and marching to victory over the Romans and corrupt religious leaders of the day.
* But throughout each of these incidents and interactions that Jesus has with His disciples in John 20, Jesus makes it clear that while death has been defeated, things will not go back to the way they were.
  + The work of the glorified Christ will be different from the ministry of the Spirit-filled Jesus.
    - Which means that the lives of His followers would be different than they were before as well.

And that all begins with a new anointing.

* Jesus had just told His disciples:

*“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”*

* So how had the Father sent out Jesus?
  + Jesus’ ministry began with an anointing that defined Him and His ministry.
    - We talked about it just a few minutes ago when we read Luke’s account of His baptism and the Holy Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.
    - Immediately after His baptism, Luke tells us in Luke 4:1

*1 And Jesus,* ***full of the Holy Spirit,*** *returned from the Jordan and was* ***led by the Spirit*** *in the wilderness…*

* + - Mark 1:12 says it even more forcefully where we read that following his baptism:

*12* ***The Spirit immediately drove him*** *out into the wilderness.*

* + - Following his defeat of Satan in the wilderness, Luke 4 tells us in vs. 14

*14 And Jesus returned* ***in the power of the Spirit*** *to Galilee...*

* + - And when Jesus reaches Nazareth, he even declares about Himself:

*18 “****The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,***

***because he has anointed me***

*to proclaim good news to the poor…*

* + With the anointing of the Spirit at His baptism, Jesus, by definition, had become the Christ – the anointed One – who was authorized and empowered by the Father to fulfill His plan of salvation through the agency of that same Holy Spirit.
    - And it was because of this anointing that John the Baptist was able to recognize Jesus as the Christ who would himself…

*33…baptize with the Holy Spirit.*

* In other words, the anointed one would eventually become the anointing one, passing His Spirit on to His followers.
  + Jesus, Himself, had made this clear while still teaching His disciples before His passion.
    - In John 14:12 and 16 He said:

*12 “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father…* *16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth…You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.*

* + - And way back in John 7:38 and following, Jesus had told them:

*38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” 39 Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

* + But now, on this evening of the first Easter Sunday, the Anointed One was about to anoint His disciples, just as the Father had anointed Him.
    - Or as John the Baptist had said; Jesus was about to baptize them with the Holy Spirit.

*21 Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” 22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.*

* And with that, everything changed: Jesus says, Things are Different Now.
  + No longer will the physical person of Jesus lead the charge against the Romans and the religious leaders of Judaism.
    - In this, the disciples were thinking too small.
      * The lives of the disciples of Christ would no longer about restoring the Kingdom to Israel.
      * The goal now shifted to the establishing the Kingdom of God *on earth as it is in heaven*.
    - Things were different now.
  + From now on the anointed Church of Jesus Christ, directly filled and empowered with the Holy Spirit, would carry out Christ’s plan to defeat no less than Satan and His legions.
    - The Apostle Paul expressed this explicitly to the Corinthians church when He wrote in 2 Corinthians 10:3-4

*3 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.*

* + - While to the Ephesians he wrote:

*12 …We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.* (Eph. 6:12)

* + - This mission is more than correcting the religious errors of the Scribes and Pharisees.
    - And it’s bigger than overcoming the political power of the Romans.
    - Things are different now and the church of Jesus Christ has bigger fish to fry.
      * But this fish fry can only come through the same agency and power that raised Christ Jesus from the dead. For it is…

*6…* *Not by might, nor by power, but by [His] Spirit, declares the Lord of hosts. (Zechariah 4:6)*

* + - Things are Different Now!
    - And it has become so because the resurrected Christ has anointed His disciples both then and now with the same Spirit He received.
* Now with this amazing anointing at hand, it is amazing to me how much ink has been spilt arguing over whether the disciples actually received the Holy Spirit at this point or if that didn’t actually happen until the day of Pentecost.
  + So I guess I should address the question so there is no confusion.
    - Our text here in John 20 reads:

*22…he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”*

* + - * There is really only one way to understand this text – that in the symbolic act of breathing on them, Jesus anointed the disciples at that moment with the Holy Spirit.
      * There is nothing in the text that would suggest any kind of delay or foreshadowing of the day of Pentecost.
      * In fact, the Greek word used for “breathe” here is a VERY unusual one that is not used anywhere else in the New Testament and is used only once in the Greek translation of the Old Testament in Genesis 2:7 which reads:

*7 then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.*

* + - * + In Genesis the word is used to describe God the Father breathing physical life into His creation.
        + While in John, the only other time the same word is used in Scripture, it is used to describe God the Son breathing spiritual life into His new creation.
    - In addition to this, from this time on the disciples are changed.
      * Here in John 20 we find them separated, in hiding, desperate and disorganized.
      * But by the time we get to the ascension, when Jesus returned to His Father in heaven, their fear seems to be gone and their faith strengthened.
        + In fact, it’s hard to imagine them being the same troop just a few weeks later.

Look at the last couple of verses of Luke that recount events that took place 10 days BEFORE Pentecost.

*51 While he blessed them, he parted from them and was carried up into heaven. 52 And they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, 53 and were continually in the temple blessing God.*

* + - * + Note how different their response was when compared to their response to the crucifixion – the first time they thought Jesus was gone for good.

That time their faith was shattered and they dispersed in all directions.

When they did come together it was to hide from the religious leaders and the Romans, fretting over what might become of them.

* + - * + But things were different now.

After the ascension, they are certain in their faith and immediately worship Christ Jesus.

When finished with worship, it says that they return to Jerusalem together in broad daylight with joy!

And Luke tells us that they continually entered the temple and openly glorified God in the name of Jesus.

* + - * In other words, the manifestations of the Spirit’s presence in their lives – peace, confidence, joy, unity and the like – were already present in their lives **prior to Pentecost**.
        + And it was there because Jesus had anointed them – as He had been anointed – with the Holy Spirit on the evening of that first Easter Sunday.
    - Don’t get me wrong, the disciples surely were filled with power from on high on Pentecost, just as Jesus said they would be. Acts 1:8 says:

*8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

* + - * And in Acts 2 we see this happen in a big way.

*4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.*

* + But the order with which all this happened was the same that we see happened with Jesus after His anointing.
    - In Luke 3 we have the story of Jesus’ baptism and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.
      * This is what John the Baptist was talking about when He said that He saw the Spirit descend and remain on Jesus – this was His anointing.
    - But then, in Luke 4:1 we read:

*1 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness.*

* + - * And again in 4:14 we read:

*14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee…*

* + - * First, there was the anointing, then there was then filling with and empowerment by the Spirit.
    - So why, if Jesus said in John 20:21

*[In the same way] the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”*

* + - * Why would we be surprised that He would first anoint His disciples with the Holy Spirit and then empower them with that same Spirit at a later time since that was exactly how the Father had anointed and empowered Him?

But what difference does all of this make for us as Christ’s church today?

* Honestly, it is the same difference it made way back then.
  + Jesus was saying, Things are Different Now.
    - The Disciples were no longer dependent on the presence of the person of Jesus of Nazareth for their peace.
    - Now that they have been anointed with the Holy Spirit of Christ – a Spirit that descends and stays with them just as it did with Jesus…
      * They can enjoy a peace that passes understanding.
      * For it is this peace that made all the difference in the lives of the disciples. Think about it:
        + The threat on their lives and livelihoods was just as real on the day of the ascension as it was on the day of the crucifixion.
        + The Romans and Jews were just as belligerent and ominous.
        + The Disciples were just as vulnerable, small and powerless in the world’s eyes.
      * And yet they could boldly stand up and stand out because of the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
        + As yet, there were no gifts, no miracles, no tongues.
        + They had preached no sermons, seen no salvations, started no churches.
        + And there was no evidence that there ever would be.
      * Yet, things were different now, all because of the dwelling of the Spirit of Christ in their lives.
* I think sometimes we have come to believe that the primary reason the Holy Spirit was given to us was to empower us for ministry.
  + That the Spirit is a utility – a power cord that enables us to do things that we otherwise could not do.
    - And there is truth in that.
  + But the lie is that this is the Spirit’s PRIMARY purpose.
* The truth is, while Jesus did say that His church would be empowered and equipped for ministry by the Holy Spirit, at no point did Jesus describe the Spirit AS power; as simply an impersonal utility.
  + Rather, He did spoke of the Spirit with words like “helper”, “comforter”, intercessor, and advocate.
    - While the rest of the New Testament describes the Spirit with adjectives as such “truth”, “joy”, and “hope” as well as “power”.
  + But when speaking of the impact of the Spirit on the lives of believers, we find that of qualities listed as the fruit of the Spirit’s presence in our lives, “power” is not among them.
    - Rather, the fruit of the Spirit is a list of mostly relational qualities:

*Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control.*

* Now I say all of this not to dismiss the empowering activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
  + The Spirit does endow us with supernatural giftings and power from God.
    - But these are the *result* of his anointing in our lives, not the *purpose* of that anointing.
    - The purpose is so that we might know God – His heart, His mind, His love, His mercy, His grace.
      * That we might receive the Spirit of adoption and become sons and daughters of God.
      * And that, as I mentioned earlier, we might have an advocate – an intercessor who can translate the language of our hearts to our Father in prayer – a language for which we often have no words.

There is no one so intimately engaged in the life of the believer as the Holy Spirit.

* No spouse, no child, no parent, no friend.
* So it is not surprising that Jesus anointed His disciples with this Spirit by drawing near and breathing on them.
  + And in doing so, conveying to them (and to we who are in Christ Jesus today) the same ability to commune with the Father as He had during the days He walked on this earth.
    - For God’s Spirit now dwells in us in order that we might know and experience the love of God deeply and that we might, in turn, love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Things are Different Now.

* The Anointed One – the Christ – has anointed you with the same Spirit with which He was anointed.
  + We are baptized, sealed, adopted, sanctified, transformed, equipped, AND empowered.
  + So, *Shalom*! “Peace out!”
    - And exercise this newly given grace of God that changes everything.

*Spirit of the Living God,*

*Fall afresh on me.*

*Spirit of the Living God,*

*Fall afresh on me.*

*Break me, melt me, mold me, fill me.*

*Spirit of the Living God,*

*Fall afresh on me.*

**Benediction**

*Now received these words of blessing from the Paul’s letter to the Romans:*

*God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. So, go in the love and Shalom of Christ Jesus and carry it to a world that so desperately needs it in the name…*