Mission... Possible

6/4/2017

Pastor Y. Joe Kim

Acts 2:1-13

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.
2 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. 3 Divided tongues,
as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. 4 All of
them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages,
as the Spirit gave them ability. 5 Now there were devout Jews from every
nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. 6 And at this sound the crowd
gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the
native language of each. 7 Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all
these who are speaking Galileans? 8 And how is it that we hear, each of us, in
our own native language? 9 Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of
Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and
Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors
from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, 11 Cretans and Arabs—in our own
languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' 12 All were
amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' 13 But
others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

1. The Day of Pentecost

Today we celebrate the day of Pentecost. Although Pentecost is not as popular as Christmas and Easter, it is a big day in the life of the church because Pentecost is the birthday of the Christian church. What happened on the day of Pentecost? According to Acts chapter two, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the early followers of Jesus. In the Old Testament, Pentecost was also called the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Harvest (Exodus 23:16) that celebrated the first fruits of the wheat harvest. The Feast of Weeks takes place exactly 50 days after Passover. The Holy Spirit came 50 days after the resurrection of Jesus.

Why do you think the Holy Spirit came to the people at Pentecost? In Acts 1:4-5, Jesus promised to his disciples the coming of the Holy Spirit. **"While staying* with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. 'This', he said, 'is what you have heard from me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."** The Holy Spirit came 10 days after Jesus ascended to fulfill the promise of Jesus. And the

purpose of the coming of the Holy Spirit is to empower the disciples as said in Acts 1:8, **"you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."**

The Holy Spirit empowered Jesus' disciples not to be afraid of being witnesses. The term "power" in Greek is *dunamis*. The word *dunamis* means "power performing miracles." The English word "dynamite" came from this Greek word. The word "power" here means an extraordinary power that would transform the people and turn the world upside down. You and I are the products of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

2. The Coming of the Holy Spirit

How did the disciples know that the Holy Spirit had come to them after Jesus had ascended after his resurrection? Jesus' disciples heard of "**a sound like the rush of a violent wind**," which is the symbol for the Spirit of God. After this, they saw "**divided tongues,**" meaning the ability to speak "different languages." Acts 2:4 says, **"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability."** Jewish people who lived in foreign countries were visiting Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast. When the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, the disciples began to speak "**God's deeds of power**" (Acts 2:11) in the visitors' languages. These visitors were able to understand what the disciples said.

Why do you think God showed the disciples and the visitors such an incredible miracle? As I already mentioned, Jesus told his disciples before his ascension that they would be his witnesses not only in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, but also "**to the ends of the earth**" (Acts 1:8). Jesus' disciples were not sure whether they could be his witnesses in foreign lands because they were not able to speak foreign languages. However, after they experienced a miracle of speaking foreign languages without learning the languages, they began to believe that the mission impossible could be possible.

3. The Birth of Isaac

In Genesis 18:10, the Lord promises Abraham and Sarah that they would have a son next year. Sarah asks**, "After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?"** (Genesis 18:12) Then the Lord asks Sarah, **"Is anything too hard for the Lord?"** (Genesis 18:14) The answer would be "of course not." There is nothing impossible for God. God's plan is

to make the impossible possible. In the same way, we need to ask whether what we are going to do is what God wants or not.

4. Swift Activity Center

As you know, I will be presenting my proposal for the activity center after fellowship. I will share some of the things I feel that God has put in my heart for the center. We are not going to vote or make any decision today, but I would like for us to take some time to discern God's will for us. I hope no one will say that the mission that I will present is impossible because there is nothing impossible for the Lord. The important question for us is whether using the Activity Center for witnessing to the love of Jesus is what the Lord wants or not. If the power of the Holy Spirit is with us, the mission impossible will be possible.

5. Loving Our Neighbors

To be Jesus' witness means to let other people experience the love of Jesus through us. I believe that the best way to love someone is to meet their needs. Yesterday, I went to Scusset Beach and saw many recreational vehicles. How many RVs do you think were parked in the camping area? I counted 83 RVs. If we estimate the total number of people, assuming 3 people in each RV, there are about 250 people in the RVs every day. For 3 months, there will be 22,500 people staying as our neighbors. Many businesses in this area take advantage of these many visitors during the summer. What kinds of plan do we have for them? And if we want to have more children and youth in our church, we should be more creative, offering a place that the younger generation would love to come and participate.

Recently, I keep getting the sense that God wants us to reach out and love our surrounding community with the love of Christ. I am sure that many of them look for a place where they can have a cup of coffee or tea, read books, buy gifts or souvenirs, enjoy music or sports, talk to the local people, and worship the Lord. If we can provide such a wonderful place where their needs are met, they would love to come back to Scusset Beach next year.

6. Conclusion

In Acts 2:14 and following, we find that Peter preached his first sermon at Pentecost. When he was filled with the Holy Spirit, he told the people how much the Lord loved them. When they heard his message, three thousand people became the followers of Jesus Christ. When the Holy Spirit is with the people, miracles happen. This year, on Wednesday mornings and evenings

we have been learning about works of the Holy Spirit. Now is the time for us to experience the power of the Holy Spirit. It is time for us to see a miracle.

7. Application

As we celebrate Pentecost today, we are reminded that the early mission was possible through the empowering of the Holy Spirit. And early followers of Jesus experienced many miracles over and over again. We can experience the same power and life-changing miracles through the Holy Spirit. I pray that we would see the mission impossible become possible as the Holy Spirit empowers each and every one of us to be God's hands and feet, to love our community for the transformation of our world until Jesus comes again. Amen.