

Sermon 5.31.20 Pastor Jordan Gades **Acts 2:1-21 John 20:19-23**

Grace and Peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Now I wanted to say something about the fact that we have lived with agony and we have seen our cities going up in flames. And I would be the first to say that I am still committed to militant, powerful, massive, non-violence as the most potent weapon in grappling with the problem from a direct-action point of view. I'm absolutely convinced that a riot merely intensifies the fears of the white community while relieving the guilt. And I feel that we must always work with an effective, powerful weapon and method that brings about tangible results. But it is not enough for me to stand before you today and condemn riots. It would be morally irresponsible for me to do that without, at the same time, condemning the contingent, intolerable conditions that exist in our society. These conditions are the things that cause individuals to feel that they have no other alternative than to engage in violent rebellions to get attention. And I must say tonight that a riot is the language of the unheard. And what is it America has failed to hear? It has failed to hear that the plight of the negro poor has worsened over the last twelve or fifteen years. It has failed to hear that the promises of freedom and justice have not been met. And it has failed to hear that large segments of white society are more concerned about tranquility and the status quo than about justice and humanity.

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr March 14th 1968

52 years and 77 days ago the Reverend Martin Luther king Jr spoke those words. We are failing. We as humanity are failing to use what God has blessed us with. And it is a tragedy unfolding before our very eyes.

We have been blessed beyond our understanding. Blessed with abilities and strength to rise above. The courage and might to move forward as the people united by God and filled with the Holy Spirit.

There is almost a tragic irony when we start to compare today's reading to the world around us.

Today we have read the story of the Pentecost. Today we hear this story of unity, of the outflowing of the peace of God. This outflowing of the Holy Spirit unto all who believe and what does the spirit of God bring but the spirit of understanding and hope.

Understanding so that all may hear the good news, all may understand that this message is for them, understanding that we are all together in this fight against sin and death. The understanding that when just one of us dies, that is one to many and God weeps for creation and all that God loves. This understanding that we are all connected through our creator and feel that pain as well.

And with that understanding also comes hope. Today marks and represents the promise of Jesus Christ realized. This wonderful gift for the believers. We have the fire of our creator within us. We have the gifts of the Spirit ever flowing out of us to radically change this world.

And it is this very world where we are standing that I am talking about, not some fantasy or wild creation, this very earth beneath our feet marks the new beginning of change and renewal brought by our God.

We have been given the gifts needed to spread the hope of the gospel, this incredible hope that we will know forever. The hope that lets us know that we are never alone along our paths. The hope that we know that we are constantly creating this world with our creator. This hope that lets us know that wherever we are or whatever is going on in our life that is not the end, it is not the last word.

How can we be doing anything else but to spread this hope? How can we not speak of our God and give his words and story to all?

“Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.””

We have been given this gift because we are sent into this world, into this world to ALL ITS PEOPLE.

Why have we been given the gift of speaking the words of the gospel when we immediately stop listening to those whom we talk to. How can we speak without listening to those we are supposed to be loving as Jesus Loves.

The true beauty in the day of Pentecost, the true miracle, isn't the flames shooting out and resting on the disciples. The true gift of that day is how they then went out and talked to the people. They brought the message of Jesus to every person and showed them all who this Jesus was through their words and actions. They listened to the people and shared with them how Jesus cared for them, how Jesus knew their pain and would be with them and help them in their time of need, how Jesus would lift them up out of their oppression as only the messiah could, and they these people that they would be there helping them as well because that was the mission and calling that Jesus the Christ had given them as well.

And those disciples held to that promise. They were not drunk on their power or confused about the simple truths of the gospel. “As the Father has sent me, so I send you” they lived their lives raising people up and defending them in their hour of need. They supported the weak and stood up to the strong. They loved when they could have hated, they listened when they could have struck.

So, what now is our response to the world we now live in? This same world that Jesus came into and redeemed? This same world that the disciples walked into unafraid, filled with the holy spirit? What is our response to things that we see going on? What is our response to the pain and anger that plagues us? What is our response to ignorance and oppression? What is our response to the children of God when we see our brothers and sisters being knocked down day after day?

We already know what it should be. To do as Jesus did. To do as the disciples did. Go and help them up. Go and show them love. Go and speak to them of hope. Go and build them up so they can see the person that God sees them as. This is the power that we mark today. This is the mission that we are joined into everyday of our lives. We cannot fail because our God goes with us. Amen.