

John 14:8-17, 25-27

⁸Philip said to [Jesus,] “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹²Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. ¹⁷This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

“I have said these things to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. ²⁷Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.”]

John 14:8-17, 25-27

This week obviously is about the Holy Spirit and the work of that spirit in our lives today.

It is Pentecost!

It seems to me now that one important message to take from these lessons comes from Romans 8:16 as Paul writes that through the work of the Spirit we know that we are children of God even in our most desperate times.

When we cry out, “Abba Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

I am reminded also of Paul’s words from later on in the chapter where he says,

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words.”

The Holy Spirit speaks to you, and speaks to God for you.

In our gospel lesson the disciples are with Jesus just before His death and they are afraid.

Jesus has already said to them “...do not be afraid, believe...”

Fear is behind the request Philip makes for Jesus to,

“...show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

Mind you, in Philip we have a faithful Jewish man who understands God in a very particular way and that understanding, that belief and faith is now being challenged. He wants to see the Father who he knows from the story of Moses in Exodus cannot be seen without dying,

And yet will later come to understand that, as we read in John 1:18,

“No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known.”

If you see Jesus you have seen the Father.

Philip’s fear and the fear of all the disciples will be taken away.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit!

From our Acts lesson again the disciples are gathered together some time after Jesus’ resurrection,

and in the period of time up to this day they have been terrified.

But in that moment the Holy Spirit comes and they are filled, and they become courageous,

and they go out into the market place and begin to preach to the people gathered there from all over the world as they understood the world in that day.

The people were amazed because each could understand in their own tongue what these Galileans were saying.

You might recall that about 3,000 were baptized that day.

About 3,000 came to believe in the resurrected Jesus Christ as their Messiah

This was the work of the Holy Spirit.

I have had occasion to reminisce this week and as I did I recalled going to a preaching festival in Nashville six years ago.

It became a week of the Spirit's revelation through powerful preaching by some of the greatest preachers in the country,

and great lectures that often sounded like sermons.

The preachers and lecturers at this festival would not allow us to draw away from the people in our congregations where we serve and preach each week while we were there.

So, whether we gathered at the 1st Baptist Church, or the 1st Lutheran Church 1 block over,

or the Episcopal Cathedral up the street the Holy Spirit came, moved through the sanctuary, and through our hearts turning them toward home,

and the people of All Saints were with me each moment of each day.

That was the work of the Holy Spirit.

During that week Rev. Michael Currey, the bishop of the North Carolina Diocese of the Episcopal Church at that time,

shared a quote from Robert Kennedy:

“There are those who look at things the way they are, and ask why...I dream of things that never were, and ask why not?”

Bishop Currey said that the purpose of preaching is to point to God’s dream, into God’s, “Why Not?”

so that we can be all God created us for and calls us to be.

That is the work of the Holy Spirit.

God has a dream for us as community.

God has shared His dream for us and we have adopted that dream as our work in our community and the world:

To grow in faith,

Lead others to faith

Change the lives of people in our community

And impact the world.

This is now our dream, our vision whether we are making plans for plastic sleeping mats for the homeless, collecting socks,

working for cancer relief, teaching children who come here after school, on Sunday morning or any time about Jesus.

In these things we are making God’s dream a reality in our lives and the lives of others we serve.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Some would say the Holy Spirit moves here, in this sanctuary, in this holy space where you gather to be in God’s presence,

and I would agree.

The Holy Spirit works and moves here to heal your wounds, to nourish you with the food of broken bread and wine,

to strengthen you to be who God has created you to be,

to give you courage to live the dream God has for you.

The Holy Spirit moves here, if for no other reason than to remind you that

when you cry out, “Abba Father!” that you are a child of God.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit.