

“Filled By The Spirit”  
Psalm 29  
Romans 8:12-17  
John 3:1-17

We have gathered on Trinity Sunday to experience community with God and one another. For it is God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit in dynamic relationship with one another, who creates, redeems and sustains life. Oh how great the love of God is for God’s final act of creation, human, male and female God created them. Regarding the Trinitarian love of God, Stan Jantz, author of *Fire & Wind*, writes, “Before Jesus came to earth, God dwelled in a physical temple. And someday we will dwell with God in his home. In between those two dwellings, God is living in us. We are the physical and spiritual house of Almighty God and his Son, Jesus, because of the presence of the Holy Spirit in us.”<sup>1</sup> God is at work in the life of the believer. The creating redeeming and sustaining work of God lives in you. Are you aware? God invites each believer to participate in and experience the mission of God for life transformation.

The Holy Spirit is the voice of God in our lives. Psalm 29:4 reads, “The voice of the LORD is powerful.” Being filled with the Holy Spirit brings God’s voice into your life. Moreover, God’s voice witnesses to God and emanates God’s power. Romans 8:14-15 reads, “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back in fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption.” The Holy Spirit in our lives is a relational game changer with God and others.

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<sup>1</sup>Stan Jantz, *Fire & Wind* (Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2020), 63-64.

John 3 addresses being filled with the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is beginning of conversion or what in John 3 is called being born again. Wayne Grudem defines born again as “the scriptural term referring to God’s work of regeneration by which he imparts new spiritual life to us.”<sup>2</sup> Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council came to Jesus by night. He said to Jesus, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God. Jesus answered him ‘Very truly, I tell you, no one enter the kingdom of God without being born from above.’”<sup>3</sup> Nicodemus responded immediately to Jesus’ statement. “How can anyone be born having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” Sensing Nicodemus’ urgency Jesus replied, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit.”<sup>4</sup> By being born of the Spirit, we are a new creation.<sup>5</sup> We receive this new life from the Spirit by faith. Jesus does not condemn us, but gives us life. Being born again is rooted in God’s love for God’s creation, not condemnation. God freely chose to love you and me, despite our sinful condition. It is by no merit of our own that caused God to love. Even though humanity stood condemned, God loved us. God freely chose to love you and me, despite our sinful condition. The purpose of God loving us in our condemnation is to provide an alternative to death. Being born of the Spirit negates death having the last word. Being filled with the Holy Spirit

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<sup>2</sup>Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999), 480.

<sup>3</sup>John 3:2-3.

<sup>4</sup>John 3:4-6.

<sup>5</sup>2 Corinthians 5:17

means we have freedom to love one another creating community that does not hold on to the spirit of this world.<sup>6</sup>

Being filled with the Holy Spirit brings to the core of your being the experience that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Moreover, the Holy Spirit is God's voice summoning you to live the Greatest Commandment, The Sermon on the Mount and Matthew 25. Again Jantz writes, "Word Only people adopt a kind of rationalistic view, where truth can be found through reason and logic. Spirit Only people believe truth can be found through their feelings and intuition. The result of each is not good. Word Only people miss the "real time" communion with the Holy Spirit, while Spirit Only people are at the mercy of their feelings."<sup>7</sup> When we idolize the Bible, we exclude the Spirit. When we solely focus on the Spirit, we exclude learning from the Bible.

The message of Trinity Sunday is this: being filled with the Holy Spirit brings us into community with God and others. Relationship with God and others matters. Amen.

*This sermon was preached (In-Person with COVID-19 protocols and Livestream due to the Coronavirus) on Trinity Sunday, 30 May 2021 by the Rev. Dr. Steven M. Marsh in the Sanctuary at Geneva Presbyterian Church in Laguna Woods, California*

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<sup>6</sup>In the two paragraphs of textual analysis above, I have benefited from the thinking of Joel Marcus Lemon, Erica A. Knisely, Claudio Carvalhaes, Renata Furst and Susan K. Olson in Joel B. Green, Thomas G. Long, Luke A. Powery, Cynthia L. Rigby and Carolyn J. Sharp, editors, *Connections, Year B, Volume 3* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2020), 7-9, 10- 11, 12-13, 14-16 and 16-18.

<sup>7</sup>Stan Jantz, *Fire & Wind*, 90.