

2021 Fall Spiritual Renewal

Redeemer Lutheran Church

The Church Lives

Week 6

New Beginnings

“It’s nice to share our toys!” That’s what parents in every generation tell their young children. Some kids get the message and others don’t seem to catch on.

Teens face the same challenge. “Let someone else use the remote and pick the show.” “Don’t grab the last slice of pizza.”

Fortunately, people become generous and share naturally by the time they enter the grown-up, adult, world ... right? Wrong! It is still a battle and a challenge, well into our adult years.

When the Holy Spirit is poured into the lives of the apostles on Pentecost, God is essentially saying, “It’s nice to share!” God tells His people that the grace they have received, the love they are experiencing, the amazing fellowship they share as a community of believers, the forgiveness of sins, and the restored relationship they have with God should not be hoarded and kept hidden. God calls his people, then and now, to share the Good News and hope found in Jesus alone.

How are you doing? Are you quick to share? Have you discovered that the more you give away the things of God, the more you receive?

Talk About It

Describe a time when you had something brand new and found it difficult to share with others.

Discussion

Read Acts 2:1-21. Jesus was clear that our source of power to share His life-saving message is the Holy Spirit. This is exactly what was experienced on Pentecost when the Spirit came upon those gathered in the upper room. Peter was filled with the Spirit and proclaimed the message with boldness. How have you experienced the Holy Spirit filling you, moving you, and giving you strength to share the message and love of Jesus?

Read Acts 1:8. Jesus told His followers that their ministry would radiate from Jerusalem to go into the entire world (Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, the ends of the earth). How do you see God using you, your church, and the church at-large to share the life-saving, life-giving, message of salvation in Jesus Christ in the following places:

- Jerusalem (your immediate neighborhood)
- Judea (your surrounding community and region)
- Samaria (the tough places most people avoid)
- The ends of the earth (around the nation and the world)

How could your group act as a team to get involved in sharing the love, grace, and message of Jesus in one (just pick one!) of these places?

Along with sharing the message and love of Jesus, we are also called to be generous with our resources (material goods), meals (fellowship), and lives (stories). How is each valuable and what can we do to share these more intentionally?

What sorts of conflict and spiritual battles did the early believers face as they tried to share Jesus' message? How did they respond to persecution and resistance and how can this inspire us as we encounter people who push back against the message of God's love for them in Jesus Christ?

Read Acts 4:8-12. This reading only mentions Peter, but we read further in the book of Acts that Stephen and, later, Paul were clear that Jesus is Messiah, the only hope for salvation. How did people respond to that bold claim in the religiously diverse ancient world (religious pluralism isn't a new phenomenon) and how do they respond today? How do we continue sharing with boldness, even when others disagree – sometimes vehemently – with us?

The risen Christ called His disciples to be witnesses (Acts 1:8). Give an example of how we can share the message of the Gospel in one of the following ways:

- By sharing the story of Jesus
- By sharing your own story of faith

Reflection

Reflect this week on the people who shared the Good News of Jesus with you. What did they say? How did their lives reinforce the message of God's great love? Seek to use their examples as inspiration as you share the grace and message of Jesus with those you encounter each day.