

Romans 15:14-20

May 19, 2013 – THE DAY OF PENTECOST

S#1466

CW 462

Pastor Mark A. Cordes

## Exercise Your Pentecost Legacy

 **Sanctified counseling (vv.14-16)**

 **Powerful proclamation (vv.17-20)**

In the name of Jesus, who promised, then sent His dear Holy Spirit, my dear loved ones in the Lord:

Pentecost is one of the three high festivals of the Christian Church Year, yet Pentecost is sadly neglected. Conservative Lutherans are sometimes so turned off by the emotionalism of Pentecostals and sensationalism of modern Evangelicals, we miss some blessings of Pentecost. For example, the woman who made our wedding cake said, “I want all my cakes to be a testament to the Spirit’s power.” Sounded strange to me. But then I ran across a passage in Exodus where the Holy Spirit gave skill to build and teach to Bezalel and Oholiab. (Exodus 35:30-35) Remember how they built the tabernacle in the desert? The Bible says the Holy Spirit gave craftsmanship to the craftsmen. Our cake maker’s comment reminds me of something Professor Valleskey told me when I said something sounded “a bit Pentecostal”: “Sometimes the questions of other Christians can help us pay attention to God’s Word.”

Remember that, dear teenagers, when your friends give you grief in school. And college students, when professors challenge your faith. And parents, struggling to raise your children right, while coworkers question your beliefs. Some of your harshest critics God can use among His greatest blessings. They drive you into God’s Word for answers. They help you **Exercise Your Pentecost Legacy**.

 **Sanctified counseling (v.14)**

We neglect Pentecost quite often by our silence. Sure we talk about lots of things like families that call each other and visit all the time – but rarely if ever mention the name of Jesus Christ or speak God’s wisdom to each other. God fearing women take the Lord seriously when He says through His Apostle Paul, “*A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent.*” (1 Timothy 2:11f NIV84) But that does not say, “Silence all the time,” just not teaching authority over a man. But when is it time to speak? God fearing men sometimes fail to speak up. I’m convinced that even we pastors ought to say it more often especially to tell each other, “Your sins are forgiven.” Sometimes our silence can do a lot of harm because someone needs a word of wisdom and encouragement. We neglect our **Pentecost Legacy**.

Did you hear the Holy Spirit today, what He said through Peter in our Second Lesson for Pentecost? Peter is quoting the Old Testament prophet Joel: “*In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.*” (Acts 2:17f NIV84)

You know from our Sunday Bible Class a few weeks ago how Paul in the last chapter of Romans mentions eleven or twelve Christian women like Phoebe, Priscilla and even the mother of Rufus, “*who has been a mother to me too.*” Paul dearly loved his sisters in Christ and told the Christians in Rome about their hard work and dedication. For Phoebe he said, “*Give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me.*” (16:2)

So Paul is speaking to the whole congregation when he says, “*I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another.*” Not that they knew everything and had nothing left to learn. Our dear Lord Jesus kept learning as a twelve-year-old in the temple, growing “*in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.*” (Luke 2:52 NIV84) Paul told Titus to “*teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live....Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure,*

*to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.*” (Titus 2:3-5 NIV84) This was not something new among God’s holy people. One of my favorite examples is Mrs. Lappidoth. In Judges she is introduced this way: *“Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time. She held court under the Palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came to her to have their disputes decided.”* (Judges 4:4f NIV84) Deborah did not speak in the assembly, but everyone knew where she was, near the palm tree named after her. Men and women sought her wise counsel. And God used Deborah’s wisdom to bring about a great victory for Israel by encouraging Barak to go fight the LORD’s battles.

The older I get, the more I love how God’s people **Exercise our Pentecost Legacy in Sanctified counseling.** God says you are competent to counsel one another. One weekend when our three daughters were home from school, I knocked on the bedroom door where they were having their morning confab. “Come in, Dad!” “I need advice from three of the wisest young women I know.” Like their mother they helped me – the way my sisters helped me growing up, sometimes when I did not appreciate it. The way my wise Christian mother helped me including the time she urged me to find good role models among Christian men who love and honor their wives as God commands. The dear Holy Spirit has provided many brothers and sisters in **Sanctified counseling** of our **Pentecost Legacy**. There is a time to be silent, but there is also a time to speak because our **Pentecost Legacy** drives and thrives on...

### **Powerful proclamation (vv.15-20)**

Paul’s great mission was to take all the Gentiles, the non-Jews, right to the cross of Jesus Christ. There we find forgiveness for all the times we spoke too soon or talked too much, all the times we were silent when we should have spoken up in the right way. WELS people sometimes fail to witness because they’re afraid they might say the wrong thing. Sadly, Mormon missionaries come back from two years of ringing doorbells and say maybe once or twice a Christian finally told them about God’s perfect and complete forgiveness that makes us right perfect now in God’s sight. Speak up, dear friends! Speak up!

God’s all-forgiving grace in Christ compelled Paul to keep *“proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.”* Where no missionaries had gone before, to cities where sins of idolatry and homosexuality were running rampant – Paul would have targeted the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/Saint Paul proclaiming Law and Gospel, sin and grace. God’s Word changes lives. Sinners became obedient, believing God said through Paul, *“Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.”* Then, as now, this favorite passage is still **Powerful proclamation**: *“And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”* (1 Corinthians 6:9–11 NIV84)

It does not take physical strength or mental stamina to **Exercise Your Pentecost Legacy**. In the early 17<sup>th</sup> Century, a British commander Thomas Watts jumped into a river to escape a tiger. It swam after him. So he turned around, shoved its head under the water until it drowned. His son, Isaac Watts, fighting tigers of persecution back in England, was jailed for his faith. Stress on his young wife brought on a premature birth of a sickly baby boy. Little Isaac Watts frustrated his father, like the time he giggled in family devotions. He saw a mouse run up and thought, *“There was a mouse for want of stairs / Ran up a rope to say his prayers.”* About to get a spanking for that, he begged, *“Oh, father, father, pity take / And I will no more verses make.”* Years later, he grumbled about their church music, so father Isaac told Isaac to write his own. For the rest of his life, the odd shaped man did, hymns like *Joy to the World; Our God, Our Help in Ages Past; When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*; our Closing Hymn: *Oh, that the Lord would Guide My Ways*. Whatever your gifts, at every opportunity, **Exercise Your Pentecost Legacy**. God will guide and bless **Sanctified counseling, Powerful proclamation**. Amen.