

“Can’t Miss a Sunday: Power Place”
Acts 1:8 (NLT), Romans 8:11 (NLT)
May 20, 2018 Pentecost Sunday
Rev. Dave Baldrige
Palm Harbor United Methodist Church, Palm Harbor, Florida

<https://www.sermonspice.com/product/59711/the-day-of-pentecost>

The day of Pentecost is here. Today is the day. Before ascending into heaven Jesus told His followers in Acts 1 “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.” And then in Acts 2 the story of Pentecost where the Holy Spirit came, and scripture says EVERYONE present, all were filled, with the Holy Spirit.

We continue Part 2 of our sermon series, “Can’t Miss a Sunday.” Now let me stop and say...sure you can miss a Sunday...it’s your choice. And of course, there are legitimate reasons like sickness where you can’t make every Sunday. The emphasis of the series “Can’t Miss a Sunday” is not that you can’t miss a Sunday, but more an emphasis on why would you NOT want to miss a Sunday. In the sermon series we share why it is important and hopefully a desire of yours to be here every Sunday.

Last week my wife Sarah began the series on Mother’s Day with “Can’t Miss a Sunday: Cause Mom Said So.” I heard several times last Sunday after Sarah’s message that my job may be in jeopardy! She did so well that I sent Sarah out of town, so I wouldn’t have to compete. She Sarah left Monday to take her Mom back to Kentucky and will be back first of this week. We want to go beyond can’t Miss a Sunday because mom said so to Can’t Miss a Sunday because this place right here is a Power Place. A power place because the Holy Spirit is here, and, on this Pentecost Sunday, we want everyone present to know, experience, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

You may have seen a power plant (**image**) and know that the power that plant generates goes all over the area. Where according to what was read in Acts 1:8 “you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses...all over the place!!!!” The power the Holy Spirit gives you enables you to be His witnesses.

How many of you have experienced a power outage? XXX Last year during Hurricane Irma many experienced loss of power. With loss of electrical power, you feel that your world is definitely changed. There is a sense of hopelessness. There is dark rather than light. There is discomfort and perhaps even anxiety. When the Holy Spirit comes upon you you will not be powerless. That means hope not hopelessness. Light rather than dark, comfort rather than discomfort. Peace rather than anxiety.

We are in an electronic age where we need power stations. We need to be plugged in. How many have ever used a power station for one of your electronic devices. Airports are known for them. (**Image**)

I love this one in the Denver airport. Now I have a preacher’s brain and happen to sermonize some things that I see. For example, I love the saying on this power station.

Recharge your device's life. Stay connected, keep in touch, never miss a beat.

Oh, the church is the power place where you can recharge your life...stay connected, keep in touch! Woo-hoo that's what I'm talking about, that why you can't miss a Sunday. Come to the Power Place the Power station to recharge your life stay connected with God, keep in touch with others of the faith and never miss a beat. Oh, how we need a Power Place. Here it is.

Now I get excited and some of you may wonder how much caffeine I've had this morning. None, but I have had some of this **(image-Powerade)** Oh, not that Powerade, but the power that aides me in making it through life...I'm talking about the Holy Spirit.

We read one verse from Paul's book to the Romans. Let's look at a couple of more from Romans 8 that sets the stage for the verse that was read. **Romans 8:2 And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death.**

You are a child of God. You belong to Him. And because you belong to Him you have power--- the power of the life giving Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. Paul earlier says this: **Romans 6:23 New Living Translation (NLT)**
²³ **For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Sure, there is the power of sin, but the power of God is greater than sin. **1 John 4:4 ".... the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world."** Not just the spirit of worldliness, or the spirit of evil, but the Holy Spirit who lives in you is greater that the devil who tries to be the prince of this world. The Holy Spirit is greater!!!!

It is a choice we have to decide. Who is going to be in control? **Romans 8:6 "So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.**

Oh, where is the Holy Spirit. On that Day of Pentecost, He descended on everyone who was there...all believers. They saw and experienced His power. Oh, for each of us to have the Holy Spirit control us. Today we are bombarded by so many things it is hard not to let our sinful nature control us. But when the Holy Spirit controls us there is peace.

Our graduates are headed off to their new adventure. High School, college, the work force. Who knows of the places you'll go? My guess is that one of our graduates today will probably get a book that has been around since 1990. It is Dr. Seuss's "Oh the Places You'll Go."
(image)

I think the words of his book apply to not just graduates but to each one here. We are all on our way called to somewhere. How are you going to handle it? Not only where are you going, but how are you going?

Hear some of the words from this classic book (my edited edition):

Congratulations!
 Today is your day,
 You're off to Great Places!
 You're off and away!

You have brains in your head.
 You have feet in your shoes.
 You can steer yourself
 any direction you choose.

OH! THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!

I'm sorry to say so
 but, sadly, it's true
 that Bang-ups
 and Hang-ups
 can happen to you

But on you will go
 though the weather be foul.
 On you will go
 though your enemies prowl.
 On you will go
 though the Hakken-Kraks howl.
 Onward up many
 a frightening creek,
 though your arms may get sore
 and your sneakers may leak.

On and on you will hike.
 And I know you'll hike far
 and face up to your problems
 whatever they are.

So...be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or Bray
 or Mordecai Ali Van Alenn O'Shea
 you're off to Great Places!
 Today is your day!
 Your mountain is waiting.
 So... get on your way! Dr. Seuss

But... before your get on your way.... make sure, make sure of one thing. Make sure you recognize, know, experience and depend on the Holy Spirit that is in you.

Yes, you are a child of God and the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit is in you. Oh, the places you'll go. Remember that God is with you. Wherever you'll go...depend on the Holy Spirit's power. Whatever you do remember the Power of God.

It's not just where you go, but how you go. Now we get to the powerful verse that was read earlier. **Romans 8:11** ¹¹ **The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.**

Now we read that, but did you hear it. You may have heard it, but do you believe it? Jesus had been crucified. He was buried. He was in the grave not just one day, but 3 days. But on the 3rd day He was raised from the dead. He's alive! He's risen! He comes out of the tomb and says, Yanny, or did He say Laurel. No, he says, "HALO" (**image**) Oh I try to make a joke to let you know to show you the extreme opposite and seriousness that some of the last words Jesus said after He came out of the tomb and ascended into heaven were indeed no laughing matter.

Matthew 28:19 New Living Translation (NLT)¹⁹ **Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.**

(Oh, we baptized this morning in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit) Go...oh the places that you'll go. Go in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit---the Trinity. St. Augustine said this, "Love, therefore, which is of God and is God, is specially the Holy Spirit, by whom the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by which love the whole Trinity dwells in us." (On the Trinity XV.18.32, 19.37. St. Augustine)

The Trinity dwells in us. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And the Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) begins "the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace." Interesting the first thing that is mentioned as a fruit of the spirit is love.

Many, billions, watched the Royal Wedding yesterday. Powerful message by American Episcopal Bishop Michael Curry. In part his sermon said this:

"There's power in love. Don't underestimate it. Don't even over-sentimentalize it. There's power, power in love."

And there's a reason for it. The reason has to do with the source. We were made by a power of love. Our lives are meant to be lived in that love, that's why we are here. Ultimately, the source of love is God himself, the source of all of our lives.

There's power in love. There is power in love to help and heal when nothing else can. There's power in love to lift up and liberate when nothing else will. There's power in love to show us the way to live. Set me as a seal on your heart. A seal on your arm. For love, it is strong as death.

This love, this is the way of Jesus. And it's game changer. Imagine our homes and families when this way of love is the way. Imagine our neighborhoods and communities when love is the way. Imagine our governments and countries when love is the way. Imagine business and commerce when this love is the way. Imagine our world when love is the way. No child would go to bed hungry in such a world as that. Poverty would become history in such a world as that. The earth would be as a sanctuary in such a world as that. We would treat one another as children of God, regardless of differences. We would learn how to lay our swords and shields down by the riverside to study war no more. There would be a new heaven, a new earth, a new world. A new and beautiful human family. The very dream of God Love is strong as death. Its flashes are flashes of fire. Many waters cannot quench love."

Can I get an Amen???

Rev. Curry said, "God love...it's flashes are flashes of fire." At Pentecost there was tongues what looked like fire. The fruit of the Spirit is Love.... Oh, friends at this Power Place...there should be the fire of love. And it only takes a spark...and we are to spread it.

But do you realize, do you get it that just as God raised Jesus from the dead...that miracle power, that power aid, that same Spirit is living within you!!!! That fire that love should be there. If He raised Jesus from the dead what can He do in your life? Oh, Holy Spirit you are welcome here.

Jesus was dead, but raised. We were dead in sin but raised by the forgiveness of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. Yes, the Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead is the same Holy Spirit who is in you. Woo-hoo!

The church is the Power Place. It is where we recharge our life. It is where we get plugged in. It is where we stay connected with God. It is where we keep in touch with others of the faith and never miss a beat.

Beloved on this Pentecost Sunday at this Power Place may you be charged up with the power of the Holy Spirit and the fire of His love.