

## 05-11-08: He is Able, We are Able

Ramping up to Pentecost &dash; He is Able, We are Able

Next Sunday, May 11th is Pentecost, the arrival of the promised Holy Spirit. Jesus had directed His followers to wait for the &ldquo;promise of My Father upon you&rdquo;&hellip;when &ldquo;you are clothed with power from on high.&rdquo; Today, we&rsquo;re taking a look at the way the Holy Spirit works in us and through us.

A foundational message of the New Testament is &ldquo;incarnation,&rdquo; that God became a person and God works through people. Since Jesus&rsquo; Ascension, He has not been walking around in the flesh and blood. So God has had to count on us and the fact is, we&rsquo;re not a very well-organized team, by our normal nature. Probably a good analogy is a sports team or maybe the military, an army. Each of those is a group of people, sometimes alike and sometimes not, who&rsquo;ve come together for some purpose. We expect that purpose to be pretty clear &dash; basically, it&rsquo;s to win one for the team or, more thoroughly, to win the pennant or the campaign.

What&rsquo;s our purpose? Part of the reason the church on the whole has been so pitiful in the past hundred years, or more, is that it doesn&rsquo;t know it&rsquo;s purpose. Our purpose is to declare relationship between God and people and to be agents of God&rsquo;s plan for restoration of the creation to a complete form. There are lots of additional factors but those are God&rsquo;s purposes. The consequence of fulfilling the purpose is that, as a team, we work together and our lives become much more fulfilled.

Well, this team needs work and every generation it&rsquo;s a &ldquo;young team,&rdquo; as they say in sports. Each team needs clarity of direction, motivation, good coaching and lots of drill on the basics, especially on weaknesses. But on God&rsquo;s team, every individual has a role, a position, if you will. But each one has to learn to play for the team and not for him or herself. God gives us the motivation to play for the team. Everybody who&rsquo;s called to play or wants to participate gets time in the game, each in a unique position but each ends up supporting the whole effort. The Holy Spirit enables us to be a team.

&bull; Unity &dash; This is a big biblical theme. We&rsquo;re playing for the same team but our victory comes in the declaration to our community that God wants them in his team, now it becomes his family.

&bull; Participation &dash; every member has abilities and gifts, we just need training and refinement. We&rsquo;re all &ldquo;gifted&rdquo; and we have to learn our gifts and not get stuck in our limitations. God&rsquo;s spirit enables us to move beyond our selves, our self-centeredness and our fears, to the point of usefulness.

&bull; Engagement &dash; sooner or later &ldquo;game day&rdquo; arrives. For the trained athlete, it&rsquo;s the day he or she has been waiting for. The well-prepared player will do his part or her part and will love being part of the team. The game day is already here, every day is game day. Jesus said the fields are ripe for harvest but the gatherers are few. Let&rsquo;s become incarnate now, let&rsquo;s know our purpose, let&rsquo;s discover our gifts, let&rsquo;s be on the team and let&rsquo;s go for game day. Here&rsquo;s the surprising irony &dash; it&rsquo;s a lot more fun than sitting around.

Desert Oasis Chapel - Sunday, May 4, 2008

&ldquo;Ramping up to Pentecost &dash; He is Able, We are Able.&rdquo;