

Have you ever had one of those moments where your tank is empty and you don't have even one more step left? That just putting one foot in front of the other or doing one more thing or making one more accomplishment or even thinking about one more accomplishment would just be too much?

There wasn't anything left. And yet you did. You took that extra step, you lifted that extra load. And another. And another one after that.

Have you ever had that moment? I think there are a lot of people in for one thing the health care industry right now, doctors, nurses, all of those who are helping those who are ill, those who are injured, those who are scared right now. I'm sure every single one of them has a story in their hearts. Of that day when just one more patient wasn't going to be possible. That one more step down the hallway, that one more chart and one more procedure... that one more family was impossible. And yet they found the strength that wasn't there, to take that one more step, to serve that one more patient, to care for that one more family. And another. And another after that.

Those stories are a part of the human experience: those moments when we have nothing left... and then find it. Because we must. I believe those are stories of the Holy Spirit at work. The Holy Spirit is what we're talking about in our scripture today. The Holy Spirit is what we celebrate as Christians today the day of Pentecost.

Pentecost was a Jewish holiday first. But something happened on Pentecost that was meaningful to Christians as well. Something that we took as a story that we carry with us for 2000 years, that gave us what we needed to be a church. On Pentecost we had the Holy Spirit.

Christ was gone. We celebrated Christ's resurrection on Easter and in the days following, but we know that Christ left us, resurrected or not. Our story was ours alone. And Christ had his own journey to go on, where we could not follow—at least not yet. But as we've talked about in Sundays and years past, Christ didn't leave us fully alone. Christ left us with the Holy Spirit. Christ gave us the Holy Spirit, and Christ gives it to us still.

On the day of Pentecost 2000 years ago, a group of disciples—a group of followers of Jesus—didn't know what to do next; they were still trying to figure it out. And they didn't know if they had it in them. Jesus was the source of everything for them. Jesus was the one who had gone through the wilderness for 40 days without water, without food, and each day found what it took to go the next and the next... and after that started a ministry that endures.

How? How do we, as followers of Jesus, follow that example—that impossible example. That's the question that they were asking themselves on Pentecost, when Christ's promise was fulfilled. When the breath of God breathed into those people, those people on their last legs, those people who couldn't see a way forward... and filled them with new life, new energy, new guidance, new ability. The Holy Spirit filled them with what they needed to get their job done, and on that day miracles were done. On that day the people empowered by the Holy Spirit could speak, and not just be heard but be understood. Those people could look around and not just see the world around them but see the plans, the hopes and dreams that God had for the world around them. These people were empowered. Given the courage, given the strength, given the energy to put one foot in front of the next and the next and the next, to do the work that God needs to be done in this world. The Holy Spirit let them do that, the Holy Spirit showed them how to do that. And the Holy Spirit gave them what they needed.

If you have ever had one of those moments where you've got nothing left, or you can't see a way forward, or you can't even imagine picking up one foot and putting it in front of the next because you are drained, because you are empty, because you have given all that you've got to give... I've been there. We've all been there. That's humanity. We're not God.

But we are made in the image of God. God created us with the ability to do amazing things. Christ showed us how to do amazing things. And the missing piece of the puzzle... the Holy Spirit. The fuel that we needed to make those amazing things happen. We have incredible reserves; humans are exceptional beings. The things that human beings can do, whether it's in moments of adversity or just in those normal moments of everyday life, the

things that you and I can do—the depths that humans can draw on is incredible. But it is finite. We've all felt that. But through the Holy Spirit we have a source. Infinite energy, God-given energy, to do what needs to be done, and to see what needs to be seen.

Our Scripture readings for today talk about what it is that the Holy Spirit can do for us. And what we can do through the Holy Spirit. See there's no one-size-fits-all for Christianity—for religion in general, for human beings—there is no one size fits all; every case by every case is different. And that is no less true for the Holy Spirit. As we heard in our reading for today, each person experiences the gifts of the Holy Spirit in different ways. We are all capable of different things. What you can do and what I can do are different; not better, not worse, just different. And if you don't believe that... if you believe that I have what it takes and you don't, or that your parents have what it takes and you don't, or your politicians have what it takes and you don't, or the rich people have what it takes and you don't, or the poor people have what it takes and you don't... you're wrong. It's just different. Because the Holy Spirit has given you a gift and the Holy Spirit gives it to you every single day, every day that you breathe a breath of air into your lungs. Did you do that today? Then you have the Holy Spirit within you; you have new life, you have new breath, you have new spirit, new joy, new strength within you. God is within you, and through God all things are possible.

The Holy Spirit gives some the ability to see. It gives some the ability to hear, to listen. It gives some of the ability to stand up in the face of injustice, it gives some the strength to make things happen behind the scenes, in front of the scenes. It gives what may even seem like small things. Gives you a strong shoulder to cry on. Gives you an idea that came out of nowhere. Gives you that instinct that tells you when to hold your tongue just for a moment to see what happens next. And it gives you those words... those words that came out of nowhere, that's how it goes sometimes. You ever have those moments? Those moments when you didn't know what to say, but you opened your mouth anyway and something came out? Welcome to preaching. It was the Holy Spirit that gave you those words, but it was you who opened your mouth to say them, who put your own flavor on them... and it was you who decided to trust in them. Because God isn't going to do it for us.

God doesn't possess us and move us around like mannequins or marionettes. God has granted us the Holy Spirit, but it is up to us to actually do something with it.

There's an example now that—I hate to say it—is timely. Because it's always timely isn't it? But the Holy Spirit has given us the ability to see people like George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Abery, and all those who have suffered and continue to suffer every day at the hands of injustice. At the hands of dangerous prejudice. The Holy Spirit has given us the ability to see those. The Holy Spirit has given us the ability to speak... the words to speak. The Holy Spirit has given us the courage to stand. The courage to work against oppression and injustice and hatred and violence and bigotry.

The Holy Spirit has placed all of those things inside of us. You have the ability to do pretty much anything with the power of God inside you. But the question is, the question that we all have to ask ourselves, the question that... the question that Christ asked us 2000 years ago and that if we don't keep asking ourselves we are failing God: Can we make use of it? Will we make use of the Holy Spirit inside of us?

There are things that God wants us to do, impossible things. And yet, God has given us something impossible. God has placed within us whatever we need to do God's work; that's the Holy Spirit! Call it... gasoline on an empty tank. Call it the nutrients in the granola bar of life. Call it a bottle of water in the desert. Call it whatever you want. Those moments when you feel like you can't do anything about anything, you've got nothing left, you can't take one more step because you've done it all... at least all that you can... or because you can't see how it's possible for you to do any of it... You're wrong. Because what you need entered your lungs with the first breath that you took this morning. What you need entered your lungs with the breath that you took four seconds ago.

Pentecost was a recognition, Pentecost was a miracle, Pentecost is a thing that we remind ourselves every year: that the same Holy Spirit that gave all the saints and all the miracle workers of this and any age the power to do the things that we love them for, the things that we say to ourselves, “Gosh I could never do that, I am too old or too weak or too poor or too scared, or not educated enough, or not experienced enough, or I don't have

that special something that they had..." You're wrong. And I think they would be the first ones to tell you that you're wrong.

We are all different, we all have different skills, we're all built differently; our life experiences have shaped us into different people. We are not the same person that we were the day we were born, and we are not cookie cutter human beings of the next person down the block. We are all built for different things but the Holy Spirit gives us what we need to do what it is that God needs us... what is it that God needs of you. What is it that God has been telling you today? This week? What is it that God has been hammering into your head for months or even years... but you don't have what it takes to do? That it's somebody else's job? Because somebody else can do it and you can't? What is that if you were only a little bit better you could do? What is it that God wants that you've always told yourself that you are not the right person for? That if only you had whatever it is somebody else has, then maybe—just maybe—you could make God proud? Because you have it. And if you don't feel it, I don't blame you. It's hard. But it's there.

That's the promise of Pentecost, and if we can't believe a promise that Jesus made to us... then what are we doing. What can we believe? Whose promises can we trust? When Christ left this earth Christ promised that we would have what it takes to follow in his footsteps. I want you to believe that. I want you to feel that, I want with every breath you take for you to savor it and realize what it means for you. We're all called to do different things. What God wants you to do in this world is different than what God wants me to do in this world. But you're asked to do it anyway, whatever it is. God needs you for it. And you are enough. You are up to the task. Take whatever moments that you can to figure out what it is that God wants you to do. And then trust that you can do it. Not just because you're an exceptional human being, not just because you're an American, not just because you've got the greatest genes... not just because pastor Dan told you you could do it, kiddo. But because God promised that in the moment that you needed it most, you would have what it takes. To do God's work. And if you can't feel that yet... if we can't feel that yet... then we need to try harder.

There are people in this world who cannot breathe. If you can breathe, then you can do God's work on their behalf. So do it. And trust that God will give you what you need to get it done, because God it needs to get done. And so by the power of the Holy Spirit that is within each and every one of you, go and do likewise. God needs you. Humanity needs you. The world needs you. In the small ways and in the big ways. Figure out what God wants from you, figure out what the Holy Spirit has gifted you with... and share that gift. Because I for one, when I stand in front of Jesus, I don't want to be the one to tell him that I didn't trust his promise.

Christ has shown us the way. God has built us. And the Holy Spirit fuels us anew every day. Feel that. Believe it. And by God live it. Somebody has to. Amen.