

## **Thoughts on the Readings 5.31.20**

### **The Common Thread**

Wait for God. Too often, individuals and entire congregations rush ahead of the Spirit. They are determined to do things their way—even if that is the same old way, “the way we’ve always done it in our church.” But God is doing something new, and we may see it, if we wait. Without the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and his guidance (inspiration), we stumble, at best. Alcoholics Anonymous describes insanity as “doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.” We may feel that we must move ahead, but faith (not feelings or emotions) bids us wait on the Lord so that we have renewed strength and godly courage (Isa 40:31, Psa 27:14).

### **First Reading - Numbers 11:24-30**

The congregation or its leadership that is not open to insights of the Spirit is doomed. Only God knows the way ahead. Our own vision will sometimes serve us — but will it serve the kingdom of God? Business people may keep a church afloat financially, but will the word of the Lord be served? The kingdom of God cannot move forward without an outpouring of the Spirit of God.

### **Psalm - Psalm 25:1-15**

Just as the 70 elders initially prophesied, and then did not (save two), we will go through seasons, congregationally and personally. In dry seasons, such as the psalmist was experiencing, we must learn to wait upon the Lord, for “he teaches the humble his way” (Psa 25:8). Even when it feels like the Lord is not near, we may be sure that he is. Our souls may always abide in his peace, even we do not feel so peaceful (Psa 25:13).

### **Second Reading - Acts 2:1-21**

Leading up to this point in our text, Jesus has spent a month teaching his disciples and concludes with the Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20). As yet, nothing momentous will happen. It is left to his disciples to prayerfully wait upon the promised Spirit. Just as Jesus was conceived of the Holy Spirit, we must wait and be filled before anything good will be birthed in our efforts for the kingdom of God.

### **Gospel - John 7:37-39**

As Luther notes (Luther's Works, vol 23), in the previous pericope Jesus taught with frightening words: "I am leaving and you cannot come where I am going." It should have frightened them but the Jews found his prophecy agreeable. They were "as little concerned as people are today" (ibid). In other words, they were not thirsty since they believed they were already righteous because they were religious. In our text today, Jesus speaks to those who realize their thirst, who know they are not righteous. To thirsty souls, this is a comfort; to those who are full (of themselves), it is despised (ibid). We must preach to the thirsty, for they are ready to drink—and the Spirit of the Lord is ready to fill them.