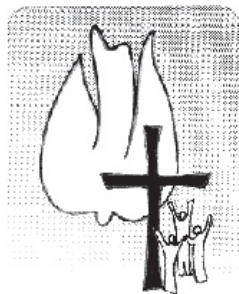


Whatever we fix our attention upon will be what we will grow to be like. If our attention is focused upon ourselves and our sins, we will find that only pride, selfishness, and self-righteousness grow strong in our lives, and we become like the “white-washed tombs” Jesus spoke about to the Pharisees of old. But if we walk in the light of God’s love for us, He knows our light is yet small, and the blood of Jesus continues to cleanse our hearts as we do the little things of obedience that we know God wants of us. The longer we walk in this light of God, the more we will come to see and know how Jesus lives in relationships, in responsibilities, and in all the circumstances of our lives. We are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

As this life in Christ Jesus proceeds to grow within us, we find that indeed the ways of God are not as the ways of the world. What the world counts important, the Lord counts as folly, and we come to experience the reality of happiness in Christ Jesus our Lord. We experience with St. Paul that His grace is sufficient for us in every circumstance. We see more clearly, in the ever-increasing light of His love, that all that we thought necessary for life is turned inside out — and we love. We are satisfied that our lives are real, have meaning and purpose, and for the first time we find that we are living for what God wants. We are happy that He is satisfied with His workmanship in our lives. As Christ becomes more and more our life, we no longer must flee to save ourselves from harm, but we rest in the trust that God fights for us while we trust and obey His loving guidance.

Pentecost, God’s ability available in the lives of His children to heal the broken-hearted, open wide the prison doors of our hearts, and see the wonder-working God work wonders again in our day. Ask God the Holy Spirit to baptize you new and afresh **everyday** so that **He** may **control** your life and set you free. The ax has been laid to the root, the fire is blazing for freeing our souls, the light of Christ has been given. Let us choose life as God desires it for us and live the joy of the grace He has poured out upon us through His Holy Spirit. “Do not give way to drunkenness and the dissipation that goes with it, but let the Holy Spirit fill you: speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and songs; sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord; and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ **give thanks every day for everything** to our God and Father.” (Eph. 5:18-20) NEB We are a people of praise, may we continue to learn to live that calling while God transforms our lives from glory to glory into the life of His Son. Amen.

Pat Mullins



**Jesus is
Lord!**

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PENTECOST REFLECTIONS ON GOD’S PURPOSE

By Pat Mullins

Already the ax is laid to the roots of the trees; and every tree that fails to produce good fruit is cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptize you with water, for repentance; but the one who comes after me is mightier than I. I am not fit to take off his shoes. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His shovel is ready in his hand and he will winnow his threshing floor; the wheat he will gather into his granary, but he will burn the chaff on a fire that can never go out. Matt. 3:10-12 (NEB)

Here is the message we heard from Him and pass on to you: that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to be sharing in His life while we walk in the dark, our words and our lives are a lie; but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, then we share together a common life, and we are being cleansed from every sin by the blood of Jesus His Son. I John 1 :5-7 (NEB)

“...His answer was “My grace is all you need; power comes to its full strength in weakness.” I shall therefore prefer to find my joy and pride in the very things that are my weakness; and then the power of Christ will come and rest upon me. Hence I am well content, for Christ’s sake, with weakness, contempt, persecution, hardship, and frustration; for when I am weak, then I am strong.” 2 Cor. 12:9-10 (NEB)

God, in His immeasurable wisdom, ordained that His own divinity would reside within each of

His children to be for their ability to live as He Himself is - forever. Jesus, the Firstborn of many brethren, should be for each of God's children "the Way, the Truth, the Life. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit would serve the purpose of revealing to God's children the Person of Jesus Christ as Way, Truth, and Life in every moment and area of their lives. For each of us the essential experiential element is continual trust and abandon to the person of the Holy Spirit in order that the ministry of the Holy Spirit might, moment by moment, reveal Jesus. Thereby will Jesus become both the fact of our life and the experience of our souls in this life and forever. The Holy Spirit is the link of revelation to the Person of Jesus Christ. To the degree that we come to see this link in the teaching of Jesus and let the Holy Spirit do the necessary work in our lives, to that degree we will truly know Jesus and the Father Whom He came to reveal. This is Pentecost! A beginning, and an end.

"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." "A fire that will never go out." God's love is like that fire, and all that is incompatible with it must be dealt with if the person is to continue to walk in that fire, that love. Fire also produces light and light allows us to see things we could not see while in darkness. We can see real love,



we can see ourselves as we really are in our attitudes and actions — selfish, prideful in our own ways and wisdom — and we begin to see Jesus as our only real option to be able to live "life.

Reflecting back upon the symbolism of the first sin we see the choice was made for the "tree of knowledge" instead of fellowship with God. We see in Scripture that the root nature of our adversary, Satan, is pride. Pride chooses self above all else, and seeks to exalt self above all other persons and creations. Scripture records that Eve was seduced — deceived. The sin was attributed to Adam, and his treason and submission to Satan produced a race of slaves to sin and self, the Scripture calls **pride**. Hopeless in our own strength, we would never be really free to love without some ulterior motive for the love. The root of that life must



be severed to stop the fruit from continuing to contaminate God's creation. John the Baptist tells us, "Already the ax is laid to the roots of the tree"; the tree of Life awaits our choice. Jesus, the "last Adam" and the second man. The beginning of a new race of people, born out of God's love and destined to live that

love into eternity. Selfless and caring for others even more than ourselves. Impossible for man, but possible, indeed the plan of God.

Pentecost! The coming of the Holy Spirit. Jesus alive forevermore. Alive in each child born of the Spirit. The Church, the Scriptures,



our Tradition, the Saints that have gone before us all shout the challenge to each child of God. Darkness or Light, death or life, sin or obedience to the Holy Spirit. God is light, holiness, love. "If we claim to be sharing in His life while we walk in the sinfulness of our selfishness, our words and our lives are a lie; but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, then we share together a common life, and we are being cleansed from every sin by the blood of Jesus His Son." We are not called to be a "sin-conscious" people, but rather a God-conscious people. We are commanded to "fix our eyes on Jesus on whom our faith depends." The Holy Spirit is not concerned so much with making us aware of our sins as in enabling us to see Jesus as our life. If we will seek and study to know Jesus, it will not take the Holy Spirit to show us our sins; we will see clearly when our actions are not as Christ would act.