

“The Holy Spirit’s Work: Your Salvation” Acts 2:17, 21 PentecostB 5-20-18

Many of you use Facebook or know something about it. One of its most important features is the ability to invite a friend whose posts and comments will show up on your page. You can also invite people to attend an event or “like” a business, share comments on someone else’s page, share links to news, stories as well as post pictures and videos. There are many ways to link to others. Facebook has about 2.2 billion monthly active users.

But that number is very small compared to those whom God would invite to be His friends if he had a Facebook page. I say this based on today’s reading from Acts. I will read it all now, but just key phrases. *all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. devout men from every nation under heaven.. each one was hearing them speak in his own language. the mighty works of God.”, God declares, I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, sons, daughters, young men, old men male and female. wonders in the heavens above, signs on the earth below, everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’”*

What an invitation! Young, old, male, female, every language, every nation, every religion, everyone in the world is invited to “accept invitation”. The signs in the sky and ground were hard to miss. God wants all to call upon His name.

That is the one main point Luke makes here. Previously, Jesus had commissioned his 12 to be his witnesses, first in Jerusalem, then to all the world. They were to wait for the power to do that very thing. On Pentecost, celebrated by Jews from many nations, the wait was over. The power of the Holy Spirit came with the sound of wind and tongues of fire as signs that God was up to something special.

Then another sign, the main event: The Gospel spoken by a miracle of the Spirit in every language known to the thousands of pilgrims who came to Jerusalem. God has invited the whole world to believe in Jesus.

And He has invited you. He has done that through the Holy Spirit, present in the promises of your baptism, in the hearing of the Gospel, urging and enabling you to believe. By His Spirit He has invited you through the preaching of the law’s conviction leading you to call upon the grace of God. He has invited you by words of forgiveness and freedom when you have felt overwhelmed or trapped by your sins. That same Spirit, poured on the Pentecost

apostles, invited and enabled many to repent, believe, and receive the love of God.

What articles would God post on His Facebook page? The words the Spirit gave the apostles to write down. The message that only through Jesus can the world be reconciled to God. Only His life was precious enough to be a sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

If you have not accepted God’s friend invitation in Jesus, now would be a good time. Say in your heart a thank you to God for grace that cancels all your sins. Ask for His help to believe that all that He has done for you is all that needs to be done for you. Pray that His Spirit keep you in the true faith.

What’s next? If you are a Facebook user, have you ever gotten annoyed when people make you feel like you’re not patriotic enough or otherwise decent person if you don’t share a message that may not even be completely or even partially true? Yeah, me too.

But God does have a completely true post for His friends to share. He calls His Church to like, share, and invite many to be friends of Christ. Invite others to like salvation by grace alone through faith alone. Invite others to repent and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

What kind of friend of God will you be? Will you like what God has posted and share it? Will you love people enough to desire their salvation more than you fear any risk in sharing it?

A page I am linked to is Open Doors, a ministry to and by the persecuted church. The month of Ramadan is a dangerous time for Christians, but also a time many Muslims come to Jesus. Open Doors urges believers not to hide for safety, but to love their Muslim neighbors and to pray that they know the God who loves them—to share God’s invitation of friendship.

If God had a FB page, He would use it for one purpose: the salvation of the world. He does have a page, a book of sacred text that messages His mercy, and many friends who can share. Let us be busy sharing His page with all whom God has invited. The Holy Spirit is ready to use your likes and shares. Amen.