

Sermon Title: **Pentecost and Leadership**

Bible: John 16:4b-7 and Acts 2:1-4

Where & When: Pentecost Sunday Service at Gilroy UMC on June 9th, 2019

Audience: about 35 English-speaking Church Members

Opening Prayer

Gracious God, on Pentecost Sunday, you sent us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads us to this church. And the Spirit guides us to be one, even though we are different. Please be with my lips! Your love and grace are here with us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

1. Many Languages

As we read in Acts, on Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to the disciples and they started to speak in many languages. I wonder how many languages we can speak.

Can you say "hello" in other languages? In English? (In Korean, Spanish, etc.)

How about "thank you"? (In English, Spanish, Korean, etc) Even though there are language barriers, thankfully we can communicate. And we love each other. I am so proud of ourselves, because we are the witnesses of Pentecost here and now!

2. What is Pentecost?

The word "Pentecost" comes from the Greek, which means 50. Pentecost is the seventh Sunday after Easter. It's 7 weeks and 7 days after Easter, so 7 times 7 is 49. 49 days plus Easter is 50 days. After His resurrection, our Jesus appeared to the disciples for 40 days.. And then, He went up to heaven. In Acts, for 10 days, the

disciples were waiting for the Spirit, Who is the Advocate in the Gospel of John, instead of Jesus Christ. After the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, it was Jesus Whom the disciples needed. But Jesus only appeared to the disciples for 40 days.

3. Leadership of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit

I wonder if 40 days were good enough for the disciples. What if Jesus had stayed longer on the earth with the disciples? What if Jesus had stayed one more year? What if Jesus had made more disciples? Then, another 12 disciples could have made the world better, right? But, what Jesus did was to go away from the disciples. As we read in Acts, the Holy Spirit came, but some people thought it was the influence of a new wine. We cannot prove the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not in science or in our knowledge. We know the Holy Spirit, but it is difficult to explain the presence or the ministry of the Holy Spirit. What if Jesus were here? Then, we could invite our friends and families to come and see Jesus. They might be able to talk with Jesus, shake hands, and hug. Or we could ask Jesus, “Jesus, can you visit my best friend with me?” But, because Jesus was not here, we could not take Jesus. It seems like to me, Jesus might not have had enough love or responsibility to the disciples.

4. Highest Rulers in Taoism

I did not understand why Jesus' left us. The Gospel of John says that it is to our advantage that Jesus goes away. But is it really to our advantage? I did not understand why it was good that Jesus went away. But I learned some hints from Taoism. Taoism is one of the religious traditions in Asia, such as Buddhism or Confucianism. Taoism has their own text, which is called 'Tao Te Ching'. Chapter 17 is about the rulers;

The highest rulers, people do not know they have them.

The next level, people love them and praise them.

The next level, people fear them.

The next level, people despise them.

If the rulers have no faith in their people, their people become unfaithful to them.

When the highest rulers achieve their purpose, people claim the achievement as their own.

What kind of rulers are Jesus and the Holy Spirit? When I think of the accession of Jesus Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit, I cannot help but regard our God as the having the ways of the highest rulers. Some people believe that there is no God. Even I do not know that I have Jesus sometimes. I forget that I have Jesus, when I celebrate my own achievement! I did it! I myself made it! I forget that it is all from God's grace and the gifts from God.

I have done many things for the first time after coming to this church. Gardening is one of them. I shoveled the soil and planted many seeds. The seeds sprouted, and they grow day by day. I am so surprised at the speed of their growth. The tiny seeds that I cannot see became the plant. I already ate two cucumbers, and I hope to eat more vegetables this month. I planted them and watered them. So, I thought that it is all I myself did. But it is what many church members did together, and God, the Creator, did together. Actually, God provides all, seeds, soil, water, sun, my body, and church members. But I forgot these many times.

5. My Leadership and Hope

Among 4 rulers in Taoism, what type of ruler do you expect me to become? I do not want to be the third and fourth types of pastors. I hope my church members do not despise me or do not fear me. It will be terrible for you and me. In this case, I should have chosen another job. Honestly speaking, I hope that church members love me and praise me, like the second type of ruler. But I want to challenge myself to be the highest ruler, like Jesus. Jesus spent time and energy on the disciples, in order to go away from them in the end. Jesus guided them to meet the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit leads and guides the disciples to love God and to love one another.

I am one local church pastor of the Gilroy United Methodist Church, and I want to be an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church. Our appointment system, sending a pastor to each church, according to the gifts of the pastor and the needs of the congregation, is our United Methodist Church's distinctive character. I am so grateful to be re-appointed to Gilroy UMC. I am already so excited to serve this church more and better. I do not know how many years I can serve you and this church. But I know that I will leave from this church someday, and you will stay in this church. While I serve you, I hope that we experience the grace and love of God. And I hope that we love each other, beyond our differences. But what I really want, what I really pray is that even when I am not here, we worship God and love each other, and serve this church and Gilroy. Last Sunday, I asked you to pray for the vision team. Among 3 co-chairs, I will be the first and the best servant for our Vision Team. I am your servant. And I will be your servant. God pours out the Holy Spirit not only upon me, but also upon all of you. Please speak up for the church, and for Gilroy. I will listen to you and follow your vision. It might take some time and I might ask many questions, because you and I speak in different languages. But The Holy Spirit will lead us to love each other and love this church, in order to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The

Holy Spirit, the fire, is in all of us. Please do not put out the Spirit's fire. It will not burn down this church building. In the Spirit's fire, we are the living sacrifice.

Closing Prayer

Gracious God, we are your living sacrifice. What we need is your Spirit's fire. You sent us the Holy Spirit. Your Spirit makes us one beyond many differences. Please lead us to worship you, love each other, and serve this community. In Jesus' name. Amen!

Possible Qs.

1. What languages can you speak?
2. Among 4 rulers in Taoism, what kind of rulers have you experienced?
3. How can you define the leadership of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit?