

✠ JOHN 14:23-31 ✠

In Nomine Iesu

We are not so far removed from the ancients who attempted to build a tower into the heavens so as to make a name for themselves that they would not be lost. We, too, want to make a name for ourselves. We want people to remember us and know us for what we do. We build monuments and have our names placed on memorials; we eulogize and dedicate, all in our name. We build buildings and take pride in them so that when they are gone or changed we are offended, because we attach ourselves to them by putting our name on them. Oh, yes, we say it is for the glory of God, but we don't hesitate to make sure that our name is right along side His so that we, too, get a little of that glory.

We do not want our lives to pass unnoticed. But rest assured, they will not go unnoticed. God takes note when you build your buildings of hatred and jealousy. He is not ignorant of your plans, to make yourself look better by the little lies you tell and the gossip you spread. Your life does not go unnoticed. Your deeds do not go unnoticed. God sees even what you do in secret. He sees your hatred as you pretend to be loving. He sees your jealousy as you pretend to be humble. And He sees your pride even as you try and convince yourself and others that you do what you do for the glory of God.

But the Word of God comes down and confuses your language. He saves you from yourself. He is not content to stand idly by and watch you destroy yourself and others. He is not content to simply let you be. But He comes to you and breaks and hinders your plans and purposes, He forces you to follow His plans and designs so that He truly may receive the glory and honor due Him alone by rescuing you from every evil of body and soul, possession and reputation.

The things of this life, the wills we leave, the memorials we dedicate, the buildings we build, will all to a one come to naught. They will have no place in the coming kingdom of God, for His kingdom is not of this world and He is not bound by our fears, limitations, or ideas. For it is not according to your own understand that you are saved. It is not according to your own language and ability to achieve great feats of charity and posterity that you are redeemed.

No, it is by the blood of the Lamb that your wickedness is removed and the righteousness of God is given to you. It is the will of God that the evil plans and purposes of the devil, the world, and our sinful nature, which do not want us to hallow God's name or let His kingdom come, are broken and hindered. So also it is the good and gracious will of God that we lead quiet, peaceable lives obeying the Word of God: loving God and neighbor in thought, word, and deed. As our Lord says, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

So it is that God sent forth His Spirit, in the name of His Son, that we should believe His holy Word and lead godly lives according to it. This is the miracle of Pentecost. The curse of Babel, the confusing of our plans and desires, is undone by the blessing of Pentecost, the bringing of peace and life in the name of God.

Do not let your mortal, sinful eye be attracted to the tongues of fire or to the fluency of speech in an unknown tongue. For these are not the miracle. In fact, these really aren't even signs and wonders except for those who were present. The true miracle is that the Word of God killed and made alive.

The true sign and wonder is that those who were dead in their trespasses were made alive by the Spirit of God working through the Word of God. That is the miracle of Pentecost, and just as the miracle of Easter continues today, so the miracle of Pentecost continues today.

Thus God makes a name for Himself by sanctifying His people in His name. For you are not your own. You belong to the Father just as the Son came from and goes back to the Father. The Spirit of God causes you to understand the language of God so that you believe the Word of the Lord and are saved according to it.

And what is this Word of the Lord? It is that the Son of God became Man and made your sin His, and so suffered the penalty of your sins. He became your hatred and your jealousy. He became your gossiping tongue and your lying lips. And so He died; as it is written, "He poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors" (Isaiah 53:12). Thus He did as the Father commanded Him, as it is also written, "it was the will of the LORD to crush Him; He has put him to grief" (Isaiah 53:10).

But the Father did not abandon His Son to the depths of hell. On the third day He raised His righteous Son, whereby Jesus broke the bonds that kept us tied to death and hell. He is the Righteous One and so, as He says, the ruler of this world has no claim on Him. The devil searched for Jesus' sin and found none and so could not accuse Him before God. Thus He was found innocent and holy and God raised Him from the dead.

And this, His death and resurrection, is what you are baptized into; dying to sin and living in Christ. You are given the Spirit of God by whom you cry out to God, "Our Father." When the devil rears his ugly head and throws your sins in your face, you hold up Christ and say, "Yes, Satan, I have sinned grossly and often. I am unworthy to be called a child of God. But this Man, my Lord Jesus, He is truly righteous and holy, having been raised from the dead, and He has promised that because of this I too shall be saved and live with Him in righteousness and purity forever. And He cannot lie for He is God."

Thus is fulfilled the work of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. For He bears witness to Christ's passion, death, and resurrection, as our Lord said, "He will bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Every time you hear the Word of God, every time you read the Word of God, the Holy Spirit is there, convicting you in your sins and bringing you to repentance so that He may also bring you to faith through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

That is the work of the Spirit, to teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that Jesus has said and done. Do not believe the lie that says the Holy Spirit brings you more or better things than faith in the Son of God. For what better thing is there than to know the Son and so be set free from death and damnation? What better thing is there than to live before God in righteousness and purity forever?

The Holy Spirit does not speak His own word, but brings us to faith in the Word spoken by the Son, which is the Father's Word. The Holy Spirit enlivens you through the hearing of the

Word of God that for your sake Jesus Christ died and was raised again on the third day. By His death and resurrection your sins have been forgiven. There is nothing more: it is finished.

In the name of the FATHER and of the ✠ SON and of the HOLY SPIRIT.

✠ AMEN ✠