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SERMON TITLE: The Authentic Christian
SCRIPTURE: Luke 6:39-45
DATE June 5, 2022

Online service at www.fpcd.org/live-stream

Read also Isaiah 61:1-6.

For years Israel anticipated their savior.

For example, at the time of John the Baptist, Luke tells us this:
“Everyone was expecting the Messiah to come soon, and they were eager to know whether John might be the Messiah” (Lk 3:15).

Later, John the Baptist was in prison, and discouraged. He believed in Jesus but then he landed in jail. Unsure, he sent word to Jesus:

“Are you the Messiah we’ve been expecting?” (Mt 11:3)

Crowds were amazed at his teachings and healings; so they asked among themselves:

“Could it be that Jesus is the Son of David, the Messiah?” (Mt 12:23)

Here is an interesting one that occurred in the temple eight days after Jesus was born:

“At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord’s Messiah” (Lk 2:25-26).

That very day, Jesus’ parents brought him to the temple to be circumcised.

God’s people were looking for the Messiah. The Holy Spirit is the great revealer of God’s Messiah.

Today is Pentecost. When the Holy Spirit came this day, the fiftieth day after Easter, he filled the disciples with heavenly power so they could see Jesus was indeed the Messiah. He enabled the disciples to boldly proclaim Jesus to the surrounding world, which was waiting for him.

Luke 4:1 says that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit and he was led by the Holy Spirit. His very first sermon was in his hometown, Nazareth, in Galilee, and it was on Isaiah 61:

Jesus read this:
“The Spirit of the Lord is on me and he has anointed me to...”
Preach good news to the poor;
Bind up the brokenhearted;

Proclaim freedom for captives;
Recovery of light for the blind;
Comforts all who grieve;
Gives a crown of beauty instead of ashes.

Jesus is the Lord of *Happy Endings*.

All these things are the work of the Holy Spirit which we celebrate today. If you do not feel very strong spiritually, would you like to gain some of these blessings? I would!

Jesus started his ministry with the Holy Spirit. He began by talking to his own people who were seeking the Messiah. He did this because his Father loves the world. Like God, Jesus takes delight in loving you, despite our life habits which are often incongruent with the Bible. Jesus does not wait until you get your act together to seek you or accept you. He loves you first, before you even give him one thought.

Jesus is patient with us all, not wanting us to perish, just like his Father. Thus, Jesus seeks the wandering ones. Jesus sticks with the Peters of the world. Being loved is the defining ideal of knowing God through knowing Jesus. Are you getting the picture I am trying to paint?

You are loved!

We relish being loved by Jesus—or we should!

There’s action, though, that proceeds out of accepting his love. We set a new motivation to put Jesus in the place of teacher and Lord, and conform to Jesus’ lifestyle. The authentic Christian reflects Jesus.

Jesus is our teacher. He just finished saying “love your enemies, do good; pray.” These are the dos and don’ts. Now he says why we do these practices. READ Luke 6:39-45

Jesus did not speak just to that crowd; he speaks to us in 2022. Let’s consider his words with 2022 America in mind.

He asks a question: “Can a blind man lead a blind man?”

He could have been talking about physical blindness, but it’s an illustration of more than that. The question is, *can you become mature without subjecting yourself to a teacher?* That takes time! It is much easier to look at others rather than submitting to the teacher. But watch out, Jesus says! That’s the blind leading the blind.

Jesus calls for a certain style of life. Jesus lives a particular worldview, and that is to

- 1) live in obedience to God,
- 2) live by faith and virtue,
- 3) to do good to others.

It's 2022. We all know how divided our nation is. We all know there are different worldly views. So, what is the tendency? To focus on the faults of those with whom we disagree. **If we do not spend significant time listening to Jesus in the Scriptures, we will become "the blind leading the blind, filled with only our own views."** Jesus says, we'll fall into a ditch.

The word used is actually "cistern." My grandmother had a cistern—a well. Cisterns are very deep, dark, and you are unlikely to climb out.

Jesus says, *your primary influencer as a Christian is his Word.* Submit yourself to it. You cannot go wrong because Jesus has the authority, as the King of kings, to lead you. He can not only lead you, but heal you, restore your losses, exchange your mourning and grief for a new day, and recover those things that have diminished you.

Be careful who you follow! Earthly wisdom is not enough! Jesus offers you heavenly wisdom from the Lord of heaven and earth.

Forget that other guy sitting right beside you. It's not about him—it's about you!

Have you ever had a child who did something wrong? And the child feels guilty? And then the child goes to the parent and tells something on his brother so that the brother gets in trouble? Somehow that makes the guilty child feel less guilty.

For instance, you have a large bowl full of delicious chocolates in the living room, and your children are told they cannot eat it unless they ask permission. Permission is granted only when special requirements are met—eating all their dinner, without being disruptive. Now this may be impossible to follow for some.

So, one child sneaks in when no one is looking and takes a piece of chocolate, goes outside and eats it. He does it a second time. After the fourth time he realizes someone might notice the missing chocolate that he could not resist eating.

In the meantime, brother two goes in and sneaks a piece of chocolate, and eats it.

Brother One sees him. (Why? Because he was trying to sneak a fifth piece.) So, he finds Mom and with contempt he says, "Hey, Billy is eating the chocolate all up!"

Of course, he is standing there oblivious to the chocolate ring around his own lips as he points the finger at his brother. And Brother Two's fingers reveal evidence, too. And now, there is one small piece of chocolate left in the bowl.

Jesus' message is quite clear. You must begin with your own life—you have control over responding to the life-giving, freedom empowering, beauty-building Words of Jesus Christ. And it gets even better than that! Refer back to the Isaiah 61 blessings. 😊

Can you turn off the TV, computer, phone, whatever it is for one hour a day to become stabilized by the Word of God? You have the Holy Spirit, and with consistency, he will help you understand and live into his words.

It is a growth process. Use weed killer on the addictions and fertilizer so the good stuff will grow. Then the tree called "your life" will flourish.

Mostly this means—be attentive to your intentions: assess yourself. When you get stressed out by the world views around you, turn to that heavenly wisdom. Godly wisdom gives stability.

Lord,

Open thou mine eyes and I shall see;
Incline my heart and I shall desire you;
Order my steps, Lord, and I shall walk
In the ways of thy commandments.

O Holy Spirit, be thou to me a God,
And beside thee let there be none else,
No other,
No one else but thee.¹

AMEN

¹ John Rutter, "Open Thou Mine Eyes," anthem. Look it up on YouTube.