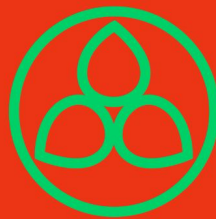




PENTECOST RETREAT



ARNA
Anglican Renewal Network Australia

ARNA PENTECOST PODCAST 2023 Week 5, TALK 4 Fresh Oil

Welcome to week 5, our last week of the 2023 Pentecost Retreat. Today is Thursday June 29. This week's topic is "Holy Spirit and drawing us near."

I Focus, Centring On God's Presence

Jesus said in John 14:17b

"But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."

Holy Spirit, we still ourselves in your presence, wanting to know you more deeply. We desire to discover what pleases you and what delights you.

We ask for a freshly awakened, and deepened, fellowship with you Holy Spirit, as in the fellowship Paul prayed for in 2 Corinthians 13:14.

Holy Spirit, we make this time to draw near to you and focus on your presence in joy, love, and wonder.

We pray for understanding, knowledge, revelation, wisdom, counsel, and a holy fear of the Lord.

We breathe you in, very breath of God, and welcome your fellowship and wisdom.

.... in the silence I pray

[Pause]

I Imagine

On this second last day of week 5 our topic is Fresh Oil.

Matthew 24:4

The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps.

In the parable of the 10 bridesmaids Jesus emphasises being prepared for the bridegroom's sudden return. He describes how all 10 bridesmaids had originally prepared but, in the waiting, five of them had not thought about obtaining further supplies in case the bridegroom was delayed. Oil in first century Judean lamps did not last very long and had to be regularly topped up to prevent the lamp going out. There is an emphasis in the parable of being continually prepared – of having a continual supply of oil.

Similarly in Zechariah chapter 4 there are references to the continual supply of oil to the seven lamps in the temple.

Work on the rebuilding of the temple had slowed and Zerubbabel needed resources – continual resources. The Lord promises, not human power, nor might, but His own Spirit.

'Not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit,' says the Lord Almighty.” Zechariah chapter 4, verse 6(b)

Just as the olive trees in Zechariah's vision continually supplied oil to the lamps on the lampstand, the Lord was letting Zerubbabel know that God's own Spirit would continually supply his need.

Today I reflect on the knowledge that God's supply to us comes from his own Spirit, and our reliance on, and receiving of, all the Holy Spirit gives us can be received continually.

I ask myself: Do I take the time to be filled each day with fresh oil from the Holy Spirit?

[Pause]

I Challenge myself

I challenge myself to look after maintaining a continual 'supply' of the Oil of the Spirit.

2 Peter 1:3:

His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

I am supplied with everything I need in a wonderful, dynamic, cosmic partnership. I recognise that a true authentic partnership takes time to build up. It involves getting to know each other, learning trust, loyalty, faithfulness, truth, and growing in love.

I choose to know you Holy Spirit more intimately by spending time with you and lingering with you regularly. I have found then that your unction flows - a sustained continual presence in my life.

Dear Holy Spirit I long for more regularly seeking this unction that comes from lingering with you – with intent.

[Pause]

I Listen

Isaiah 53:4-5

Surely he took up our pain

and bore our suffering,

yet we considered him punished by God,

stricken by him, and afflicted.

⁵*But he was pierced for our transgressions,*

he was crushed for our iniquities;

the punishment that brought us peace was on him,

and by his wounds we are healed.

In the natural, oil is made by crushing and pressing the olives, or nuts, or whatever living cells are being offered. The oil that drives our engines is formed by a chemical breakdown of organic matter by heat and pressure.

The oil of Holy Spirit has come to us from the costly process of the pressing and crushing, the flogging and the nailing, that Jesus endured once and for all. Jesus' victory directly led to his ascension and the sending of the Spirit to the church. The precious oil of the Holy Spirit is a costly oil.

In the parable of the 10 bridesmaids the oil had to be purchased. Jesus paid this price for us. I, too, have a price to pay to obtain and sustain the oil. But dear Lord what a small price it is in comparison – it is a sacrifice of my time to spend time with you, Holy Spirit, getting to know you more and more, drawing near.

[Pause]

I Pray

I remember a song:

“Give me oil in my lamp,

Keep me burning,

Give me oil in my lamp, I pray!

Give me oil in my lamp,

Keep me burning,

Keep me burning

Till the break of day.”

Loving God, your church sang this song at a time when it began rejoicing in a rediscovery of the gift, and gifts, of you, Holy Spirit. I recognise in its words the honouring of how you fan up the passion for Jesus by your presence, by a longing for your continual presence Holy Spirit.

Thank you, Holy Spirit, that your oil keeps the fire within me and within your church burning – it keeps aflame our First Love for Jesus.

Acts 10:38

“... How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.”

Dear Holy Spirit please yet again flow over, in, and through your church with your anointing oil – the same anointing you placed upon Jesus after his baptism – so that we might have fresh passion to fulfil Jesus’ commission in Mark 16:15-18:

He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

Holy Spirit we humbly, but confidently, ask for a fresh unction today and every day. We choose to receive gratefully your fresh oil, precious oil, costly, oil every day dear Holy Spirit in Jesus’ name Amen.