

# Let us invite Jesus into our lives

Message for Sunday, May 20, 2018  
by Bruce Fraser

**Scripture:** Acts 2:1-12; John 7:37-39

## Children's Message:

This is a bottle of ginger ale. This other is a bottle of poison. The ginger ale bottle is full right to the very top. Can I put some of the poison in the ginger ale? No, because it's already full. There's no room for anything else.

The only way I could add poison to the ginger ale would be to some of it out, and make room for the poison. There's no room for anything bad in this bottle as long as it is filled with something good.

That's how it is in our lives. When we are filled with something good, there is no room for anything bad. In the Bible reading just now, we heard about the people, that "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit." God came into their lives and filled them.

That's what we need! When you are filled with God's Spirit, with God's love, then there's no room for bad things. Just think: if you are filled with God's love, then there won't be room for hating and swearing and fighting. If you are filled with God's peace, then there isn't room for worrying about things.

Let's pray, and ask God to fill us with his Holy Spirit.

Thanks to Charles Bauer for this idea, in his book *More Little Lessons to Live By*.

**Message:** "Let us invite Jesus into our lives" I'm going to do something different for my message. I'm going to ask you to trust me. That's important, because I'm going to ask you to do something which may be unusual for you. I'm going to lead you in what is called "a guided meditation."

Today is Pentecost Sunday. Pentecost was the name of the Jewish festival which was happening on the day when the Holy Spirit came to Jesus' followers. On this Sunday, we remember that wonderful fulfillment of Jesus' promise to always be with his

followers. This promise is not just for back then; it's for us today as well.

Rather than just talk about Jesus, what I'd like to do today is for us to welcome him into our lives. Then, when we take part in communion, we again receive Jesus into our lives.

I'll ask you to begin by relaxing. Close your eyes. Put both feet flat on the floor. Place your hands in your lap.

Listen to the sounds around you. Hear the ticking of the clock on the back wall. Hear the engine of a car going by outside. Listen for birds chirping outside the windows.

Now listen inside yourself. Hear the sound of yourself breathing. Feel the air as it passes through your nostrils or your mouth. Breathe in, and out. In and out. Feel the air coming *in* and *out*, in and out.

Now become aware of the weight of the clothing on your body. Feel the pressure of the clothing on your shoulders... on your legs... on your feet... on your toes. You can feel the weight of even a few hairs on your head. Feel the weight of your eyelids pressing on your eyes.

Now that you are relaxed, and are aware of your surroundings and of yourself, I invite you to become aware of your emotions. During this past week, what was your most common feeling? Did you like feeling that way? What are you feeling right now?

Now that you are fully aware of what is around you and of yourself, you realize that you are not alone. Someone is walking up behind you. You can't see who it is. You feel nervous. The person comes closer, and sits down beside you. You turn to see who it is, and it is Jesus.

How do you react?

Look at Jesus face to face. Look in his eyes.

These are the eyes of love. They belong to the person who gave his life for you.

He asks you, "What are you doing with the life I gave you?" No, not what you *do* all day. What *are* you all day? What kind of person are you?

You can see that he knows all about that secret part of your life that you wish he didn't. But now that he does, it's no use pretending. Imagine that you hold

that part of you life—the part that causes you shame and guilt—and you give it to Jesus.

He lovingly takes it, as though you were handing him the most precious gift in the universe.

And now he is holding out his hands to give *you* something. Cup your hands together, to receive this gift from Jesus. It is the gift of forgiveness.

How do you respond to this gift? Don't just think it. Do that to Jesus, right now.

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Then, when you are ready, open your eyes and come back to this room.

**Next Steps:** Just this: Jesus is here, with us right now. Jesus says to us:

**John 7:37-38, New Living Translation:**

Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, "If you are thirsty, come to me! If you believe in me, come and drink! For the Scriptures declare that rivers of living water will flow out from within."

Let us invite him into our lives. You may have done this every day for the last sixty years, or this may be your first time ever.

As we receive communion in a short while, let us also receive Jesus into our lives.

## 1) Praying "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

[This wasn't part of my message. This came during our prayer time earlier in the service. But it was part of the theme of welcoming Jesus into our lives. So I thought you might like this, too.]

We're going to sing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," and as we sing we will pause every now and then to reflect on what we just said.

What a Friend we have in Jesus,  
all our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry  
everything to God in prayer!

Jesus, how wonderful that we can call you our friend! Yes, you are the almighty God; yes, you are Lord over the universe. But you are also our friend!

We don't need to be crushed beneath the burden of our sins: we can ask your forgiveness, and turn them all over to you. You give us a fresh start!

Jesus, we pray for those who have lost loved ones. Bless them, touch them, hold them, love them. And not just them, but all of us who feel the sorrow.

O what peace we often forfeit,  
O what needless pain we bear,  
all because we do not carry  
everything to God in prayer!

How silly we sometimes are! We wouldn't dream of cutting down a tree with our bare hands; yet, Jesus, how often are we like that with you? We think we're being brave and noble, handling everything so well by ourselves; but the truth is, we're just punishing ourselves needlessly. Lord, we come to you now. We bring all these things to you, and lay them before you.

Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged;  
take it to the Lord in prayer.

Of course we have trials. Of course we have temptations. Everyone does. But we don't need to bear the burden by ourselves. O Lord, instead of feeling sorry for ourselves, let this be an occasion to draw closer to you.

Can we find a friend so faithful,  
 who will all our sorrows share?  
 Jesus knows our every weakness:  
 take it to the Lord in prayer.

Jesus, you are a better friend to us than we are to ourselves. You are faithful, always present, ready with comfort and courage.

Sometimes we are weak—I am weak. On my own, I can do some good things. But I also stumble and fall. I need your help. Help me to love others as I love myself.

Are we weak and heavy-laden,  
 cumbered with a load of care?  
 Precious Saviour, still our refuge;  
 take it to the Lord in prayer.

It's not just ourselves we pray for, Lord. We think of others who need your touch: for those who are sick or injured, or recovering: Norma Darrah, Jim Mayhew, Joan Moorcroft, Alexander Rogers-Stewart, Bob Thackeray, Ellen Jones, Kim Sutherland, Katie, Maxwell and Samantha, Lynda Cooney.

Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?  
 Take it to the Lord in prayer,  
 in his arms he'll take and shield thee;  
 thou wilt find a solace there.

There is nothing either too great or too small to bring to you, Lord. You care about the whole person, not just certain parts. Some are lonely: friends have died, or even turned out to not be friends after all. Let us turn to you. And then, refreshed and renewed, we turn outwards, to find others who also need a caring touch: sometimes, it's a human touch which people need—someone with skin on—and you have put us in place to be your agent.

Thank-you, Lord. Amen.