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Let us all be disciples.

<sup>14</sup> But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: Acts 2, 14

Pentecost is the celebration of the establishment of the Christina Church, and the start of the first congregation. The Acts of Apostles vividly describes the events of the Pentecost the formation of the first congregation, who initiated that congregation, and who joined to make the full congregation. The starter members of the first congregation were the disciples of Jesus, then many people who were in Jerusalem for Jewish Harvest celebration became Christian after listening to Peter's testimony. According to the Acts of the Apostles the number of those people was around 3000. The leadership by the pupils of Jesus was essential to form this congregation, and that makes it important to examine what is the nature of being and becoming a pupil, a disciple.

Let's look at the life stories of the disciples in the Scriptures. How did they become disciples? Peter and his brother Andrew were simple fishermen near the Sea of Galilee.

We see in Mark I, 17-18 that the Nazarene told Peter and Andrew "Come ye after me, and I will make you become fishers of men. And Straightway they forsook their nets and followed him". A little later in Mark I, 20, we see the Nazarene talked to Jacob and John (the sons of Zebedeeh) "And straightway he called them, and they left their father Zebedeeh in the ship with the hired servants and went with him".

When the disciples followed call from Jesus, they gave up their usual way of lifestyle, and took on the challenge of following Jesus. The descriptions from the Scriptures not only inform us about the thinking of the disciples how they related to the teachings of Jesus, and how they acted upon those teachings. Through all those descriptions the Scriptures open a window into the souls of the disciples.

The actions and life of Peter is especially telling. We find a combination of resolute enthusiasm, willingness to act, readiness to help, but we also see skepticism, denial, and then the recognition of mistakes and weaknesses, and all that followed by repentance. These episodes in the life of Peter, his reflection on the teachings of Jesus are the stages on the journey to mould his soul, stages on the journey to become a

disciple. At the end we find the disciples saddened, exhausted, dispirited in the upper room in Jerusalem. Orphaned, cast out, and destitute. They were together, each steeping in his own bitterness and fear.

My Christian brethren. Have you considered that when the disciples began their journey with Jesus they instantly became homeless? They gave up their previous lifestyle, and left behind their possessions, their sources of income. The years they spent with Jesus convinced them that they found their happiness, their tranquility, their savior, their keeper. Then 3 years into their journey, the events of Good Friday left them disheartened. However, there is something unseen that they acquired on the way. They all have a hidden source of poise and grace planted into them during the journey with Jesus. They learned the calm gaze of love, the conviction of the belief in God, and now they are recalling the memories of those 3 years, and ready themselves for the harmony of a new world order.

My dear Christian brethren! Many people in our time tend to react to outward appearances, react to shiny visual effects. Many people in our time are captivated by artificial luminosity, but lost the ability to see the light shining inside them. The ear-splitting surround sound of the world distracts them from hearing the words of their hearts and souls. Listening to those more faint sounds might actually be scary for them.

Many people in our time while they might move at incredible speeds on the highway, in the air, and on the water, they falter on the trails of a spiritual journey in their souls. In our times Christmas and Easter have been made into an dressed-up, over-decorated spectacle while the true meaning of those holy days are ignored.

For many people in our time the light of the Morning Star, the sound of the Heavenly Choir, the sight of the empty tomb is nothing more than fodder for disbelief and skepticism. For them the visual gratification is very short-lived, and they have to constantly moving on to the next spectacle. And that leaves no time for deep reflection.

For many people in our time the family, friends, members of their congregations, members of their community grow evermore distant. The single minded pursuit of life's fleeting satisfactions comes to rule their waking hours.

The New Testament brings to us a spectacular description of the Pentecost, yet the Pentecost is the most orphaned Christian holiday. I implored you to ask why?

An unknown poet wrote: Pentecost comes, yet the heart remains closed where the Lord doesn't dwell.

The spring comes, leaves green out, flowers bloom, birds sing anew, nature is revived, gladness is upon the Earth,

though it all matters none when in the heart the heavenly spring has not been awakened. Without God's spirit in the heart the holidays wither,

Christmas day passes quickly by, the light of Easter dims fast, that is the time for Pentecost to rekindle again and again the life gifted by the Spirit of God.

Could it be that Pentecost is orphaned because we lost the Spirit of God from our souls? The story of Pentecost tells us the disciples bravely professed their faith, and about everything they learned and experienced of God's country. After an initial timidness and insecurity they stood up for the teachings of Jesus. What gave them the courage? Not their surrounding which was distracting them, not the noise of the crowd of Jerusalem, not the gusty wind, but an inner recognition that the God Jesus was talking about is present in their souls.

The signs of Pentecost, like the split tongues of fire, the talking in tongues, the gusting wind acted outside their hearts and souls. It was in their hearts and souls where they became disciples; it was in their souls where they became strong; it was in their souls where God was speaking.

As the passages of the gospels describe it, the circumstances and stories of disciples may be considered as stages of an inner journey. Such journey is possible only if, even for short time, we can ignore the distractions from our environment. For that short period of time we, too, may become homeless. And then retracing the teachings of Jesus, and reflecting on them we, too can rediscover the spirit of God. If the events of Good Friday makes you disheartened, you are noticing God's presence in your soul. As you grow in your relationship with God's spirit, you will grow in your relationships with your fellow human beings.

Once the disciples experienced Pentecost, they remained receptive to the teachings of their Master. The disciples weren't distracted onto side roads by external appearances, but they on the inner trails of their souls they remained firm in their faith. They prayed quietly, and acted decisively. They stuck to their ideals by walking the trails of on their inner journey pointed out by their teacher. The power from the conviction of their souls successfully resisted the tremendous pressure and temptations of the external world.

Until we decide to onto those innermost trails of our own souls. All we can be is disciples in outward appearances. The spirit of God move us, direct us only if we frequent those innermost trails. Only there we may gain the courage of Peter to stand up for, and bear witness to God's true nature.

The poet Turmezei Erzsebet writes: They gathered quietly, waited with the news of Easter still in their hearts; Then came Pentecost; the power of the Spirit spoke, and three thousand took it heart; the church was born. Thousands of souls today still without the Spirit; while they talk loudly, only quiet wait may bear that fruit.

In our own lives receiving the teachings of Jesus, participating in church life, and personal prayer are the part of the quiet waiting in our own upper house. That is the path to become true disciples of Jesus every day; that is the path to gain the guidance of God's spirit each day.

I wish you all a blessed holiday, and that you all receive the spiritual strength and peace from the true and forever God. Amen.