

## 08.26.20 – A Re-Imagining Church Weekly Word for Covenant Church

**Title:** The Church Is Born

**Scripture Reading:** [Acts 1:1-8](#)

**Reflection:** Pastor Evan

On Tuesday, August 18, 2020 I was honored to call my 38-year-old nephew, Nathan, to wish him a happy and blessed birthday. I was also honored to call a 14-year-old member of Covenant Church to wish him “Happy Birthday”. And later in the day I was tickled blue to get a Facebook post from two of my former Kuyper College students, now married, and serving as pastor and spouse in a Christian Reformed Church in Colorado who announced the birth of their son, Hendrick at 6:38 AM on the 18<sup>th</sup>. But the only birth on the 18<sup>th</sup> that I was present to celebrate was MINE. I have inserted a picture of my teething ring with birth information (9 pounds, 13 ounces, 21 inches long). From an early age, I was aware of whose I was – the seventh child born to Elmer and Rena Heerema. (After my birth they knew no other children needed be born. Is not seven the number of perfection?) But even after 69 years plus I am still fulfilling God’s purpose for my life. Every day is a new opportunity to serve as a fountain of God’s Holy Spirit. And Lord willing, he is not finished with me yet; he is still shaping, forming, directing, empowering, and bringing me to my knees before him in worship and praise.

The birth of the Church and body of the King of Kings, Jesus Christ, is celebrated by his followers on Pentecost, 50 (Penta) days after Easter. On that day, the promised gift of God the Father was received by the apostles and subsequently by all followers of Jesus. The Church was born as a gathering of believers called to live together in community with Jesus first and also with each other. And there are more family members to come. Jesus com-missioned his disciples to go to the ends of the earth to multiply and give life to more disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything Jesus commanded them and us. How is this possible? Jesus already has all authority over heaven and on earth ([Matthew 28: 18](#)). He really is King of kings and possesses all authority.

As history awaits the return of our King and Lord, we continue to learn what it means to obey and to submit to him. His will is supreme and so worth following. Each day has countless opportunities to be still, to listen for God’s voice, to be filled with the Spirit and to make disciples. Many are saying in this, my 69<sup>th</sup> year, the year 2020, that our world needs improvement. We are the ones who have been given what that the world really needs, Jesus as Lord.

“Gregory of Nyssa, the great bishop and theologian of the fourth century, argued that there exists in us a ceaseless yearning for God’s infinite beauty and splendor. He wrote: ‘We are led to God by desire. We are drawn upwards towards Him as if by a rope.’ Gregory compares the contemplation of God to a person looking at a spring that bubbles up from the earth: As you came near the spring you would marvel, seeing that the water was endless, as it constantly gushed up and poured forth. Yet you could never say that you had seen all the water. How could you see what was still hidden in the bosom of the earth? Hence no matter how long you might stay at the spring, you would always be beginning to see the water. . . . It is the same with one who fixes his gaze on the infinite beauty of God. It is constantly being discovered anew, and it is always seen as something new and strange in comparison with what the mind has already understood. And as God continues to reveal himself, man continues to wonder; and he never exhausts his desire to see more, since what he is waiting for is always more magnificent, more divine, than all that he has already seen.”<sup>82</sup>

Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality Day by Day* (pp. 162-163). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.

Quoted in Robert Louis Wilken, *The Spirit of Early Christian Thought: Seeking the Face of God* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 302.

Brothers and sisters in Jesus, please keep gazing into the well that is Jesus. “Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, ‘Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.’ By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.” ([John 7: 37, 38](#)).

Go in peace and in his power.

**Prayer:**

OUR Father in heaven, open my eyes to what you have done for me in the past, are doing in the present, and to what your redemptive power can do in the future. Gently mold me into the person you want me to be so that I can be a servant in your timing. Amen!

**Action Item for the Day:**

Listen for God's voice speaking his desire for His world to you, his child. And don't worry if you forgot to wish me a happy birthday, you join the majority of people on the earth. I love you anyway.

**Song for today:**

[Breath on Us](#)