**After Pentecost (Acts 2:42-47)**

 The infilling of the Holy Spirit was the beginning of the true Christian spiritual life.

 Greetings to you dear brothers and sisters as we begin to bring up various topics (in this season) related to our faith-walk. The Apostle Peter had just given his first sermon and three thousand people had come to the Lord. But what did those three thousand and the other believers do in those days, and how can we understand this account today? As an answer, we will be looking at an overall picture of the (ideal) Christian lifestyle today. Again, I say, that being filled with the Holy Spirit – Pentecost, in other words – was the beginning of Christians’ true spiritual life. Let’s talk, then about this ideal paradigm…

 The Church during the Apostles and those of today have the same Holy Spirit. In truth, this is the calling of the church, as the gathering of believers, as the One Body of Christ. Believers are called to live under the influence of the Spirit of God and that creates a very different atmosphere than those who do not live under that Presence. Let us hear the events described in the passage again: the believers persevered in the apostles teaching, in communing together, in breaking bread, in prayers. There was fear or deep reverence in each person. Miracles were performed by the apostles. There was unity. There was an atmosphere of caring for each other, even to the point of selling off personal assets. They went to worship in unity; they ate together in their homes and had fellowship – also taking communion together. There was an atmosphere of rejoicing; there was a pure simplicity among them. They praised God, and even among other peoples, unbelievers even, they found favor. The Lord, it says, added to their numbers day by day. Here you have a picture of what happens when Jesus followers live under the influence of the same (Holy) Spirit.

 I once heard of a church where its members had found favor with the city where the church was located. For example, when a student that attended that church needed a job, they would ask a prospective employer and upon finding out that they were attendees of “that church”, the employer would accept the student because there was great trust in the integrity and the character quality of people being raised up in that church.

 We, as an Armenian Presbyterian church, are called to grow the same Holy Spirit led atmosphere among us. It is important to follow right teachings. Let us not listen to those preachers who study and teach only one thought from the Bible – such as end times related topics. It is important not to miss Sunday services, especially those during which we have communion, if we tend to have unresolvable conflicts on some Sundays. We are called to be prayerful people. We are called to a deep awe and reverence of God’s Power, which works directly upon and within us from heaven as well as through His servants. We need to tell the stories of the miracles that happen to us, so that the faith level of the church is kept burning brightly. A spirit of like-mindedness and generosity ought to be ruling over us – for example, if you have an issue with your brother or sister, be reconciled and let the wound be healed. We cannot do without caring for those who are in need – whether through finances, our time, providing means of travel or supplying possessions that they need. Again, we need to be at church when we have worship. We are called to visit each other without calculating whose “turn” it is to visit or how much or little we should spend on a visiting-gift. Gathering in Jesus is more important. Our gatherings are called to the standard of joy and simplicity – let’s stay away from gossip, information gathering and spreading. Let our praises be directed to God and not to ourselves or other human beings. The Lord will give us favor as we live in His Spirit; God Himself will use us and other means to brings unbelievers to faith. For us, what matters is that they come to faith, and it is not important thru whom or in what location. We say all this simply as a reminder and as an invitation to change our lives if needed. The Church during the Apostles and those of today have the same Holy Spirit.

 May our family and church atmospheres begin to resemble that atmosphere of faith, love and generosity which ruled over the first Church more and more. May the Lord bless you all; Amen.