

## Pentecost – Grace City Church’s anniversary

### introduction | New Identity

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The Bible encourages us, even though we are weak. It enables us to resemble Christ more and more as we grow spiritually. In today’s passage, we will first focus on how the Holy Spirit helps us, despite our weakness. Then, we will clarify our identity as the Holy Spirit lives in us: we are “conformed to the image of the Son” (verse 29). Finally, let’s see how we are continually renewed and become more mature thanks to the Holy Spirit’s action in us.

### scripture | Romans 8: 26-30

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8: 26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God. 28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

### questions |

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- 1: (verses 26-27) How does the Holy help us? (reference: John 14: 16-17, 26)
- 2: What kind of encouragement does the Holy Spirit’s intercession bring to you? Share a recent anecdote when you experienced encouragement from the Holy Spirit.
- 3: (verses 28-29) What does the passage say about our identity? How does it influence your personal image?
- 4: (verse 28) There is a lot of sufferings and sorrow, struggles and frustrations in our lives. How does God “make all things work for our good”? (reference: Hebrews 12: 7-8)
- 5: (verse 30) This passage says that God predestinated us by his grace to transform us to the “image of his Son”. In this maturation process, where did you make progress recently? Where do you want to grow more?
- 6: What is the purpose of your life? (reference: Michael Horton)

### reference |

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John 14: 16-17, 26

14: 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— 17 the Spirit of truth. [...] But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Hebrews 12: 7-8

12: 7 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father? 8 If you are not disciplined—and everyone undergoes discipline—then you are not legitimate, not true sons and daughters at all.

Michael Horton, *A Better Way*, p. 57

Our goal is [...] to accommodate ourselves to the real drama of history. Jesus Christ and the drama of redemption that begins, climaxes, and is consummated in him is the real world, the real setting of our life's play. [...] In Christ, "change" means growth in Christ as we are transformed through perpetual immersion in Scripture as the story of our life.

### prayer |

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- Pentecost is an occasion to celebrate and be thankful the coming of our helper, the Holy Spirit. Even when we cannot pray, "he intercedes for us through wordless groans" and we can rely on him, as he is full of love.
- Meditate on your identity. "Who are you?" In case you have trouble accepting or being thankful for being renewed to "the image of his Son" as described in this passage, think of the reasons why and pray about it.

### upcoming events |

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lunchtime meeting (18 Kasumigaseki, 19 Otemachi), obento project (21)  
Grace City gospel (23), lunchtime meeting (25 Marunouchi, 26 Otemachi)  
financial seminar "money and life" (29), introduction diner (29)