*This Corrupt Generation*

It seems that in these times we often hear about what is wrong with the world, especially the Godlinessness of our society. It seems that the Christian faith is declining, that more and more people, especially our kids, do not know who Jesus is and what church is all about. The same thing was happening in Jesus’ time. It was on the occasion of the Holy Spirit coming at Pentecost that Peter was able to stand up and defend the people who seemed to be acting drunk and speaking what sounded like gibberish to those around them. They seemed to be drunk and were accused of that very thing. Here is Peter’s statement of faith and their response to it: (Read Acts 2:14, 36-41)

We do need to be strong in our witness to our Christian faith. Other voices are becoming stronger and proclaiming their faith or lack of faith even louder than we Christians. The people in Peter’s time listened and responded, “What shall we do?” Peter had touched their hearts with the truth about Jesus. The people believed Peter and Peter told them to repent, be baptized and that they would receive the Holy Spirit.

So what does repentance mean? It means a radical change in life orientation, a change of mind that brings about different thinking. Spiritual reformation is possible only with an intellectual reorientation. It is not enough to feel a warm, fuzzing sense of the truth about Jesus, but one must change one’s whole thinking process, one’s way of looking at the real world. When our orientation in life is centered around our belief that Jesus has done what he has done and is the way God has chosen to get us in right relationship with Him, then we are on the path to fuller understanding of ourselves and our relationship with the rest of the world. But it is not just one act of repentance that completes us. When we believe we are called to a life of witness, in our words, our deeds, our way of responding to others. It’s not a one time “Oh I get it” sort of thing. It involves a life time of prayer, study, being in fellowship with each other, tuning ourselves into the way God speaks to each one of us. God and our understanding of God unfolds over time. We come Sunday after Sunday to find understanding, clarification, any precious gem that God would direct our way through all that we do here. But just coming on Sunday morning may not be enough. In order to grow in faith, so that we can literally change the world, so that we can know God intimately enough to proclaim statements of faith and act upon our faith, we must have an active, vital relationship with the author of our faith.

So I have put together a little checklist of things to do to strengthen and grow our faith. Some of you will begin to see immediately that following this guideline, or any guideline you set forth for daily living in faith takes discipline, real commitment and a whole lot of faith to see it through every single day. But the payoff is worth it! We begin to feel more secure in our faith, begin to make a difference in how we look at life, find greater peace because we are growing in the most important aspect of our lives, how we do and be faith people.

(go over guide)

We know that our faith is the most important element of our lives, or do we. What would we have to hang on to when things get stormy in our lives? How can we live with assurance that all will be well if we don’t have faith. How can we face death if we don’t believe that there is a beyondness, a promise of new life beyond death? How can we make this world better without faith and believing that our Creator knows what we need to be happy, knows how we are meant to live with creation. The only way to know this creator is to be in touch with him. Daily disciplines of faith help us to grow and learn how to respond. This little guideline can be modified to fit our needs, but the important thing is to don at least one thing on it daily.