

Parish of Ferndown

Study sheet for week commencing 11th May 2008

Receiving Together: Acts 2:1-21

1. What difference do you think it would make if the Holy Spirit were withdrawn from your own life, and also the life of St Mary's Church?

John Stott says, "Without the Holy Spirit, Christian discipleship would be inconceivable, even impossible. There can be no life without the life-giver, no understanding without the Spirit of Truth, no fellowship without the unity of the Spirit, no Christ-likeness of character apart from his fruit, and no effective witness without his power. As a body without breath is a corpse, so the church without the Spirit is dead. Luke is well aware of this and emphasizes the power of the Spirit throughout Acts, especially in Acts 2, which is all about the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit comes."

2. Now read Acts 2:1-21
3. What reaction do you have to the events of Pentecost? Are you excited, scared, bored, puzzled etc?
4. What were the different reactions to the events of Pentecost?
5. When Luke spoke of the international nature of the crowd which collected, he was speaking from his own horizon – the Greco-Roman world situated around the Mediterranean basin i.e. every nation in which there were Jews. This was the international, multilingual crowd which gathered around the 120 believers. Why do you think Luke emphasizes this fact?

Pentecost brought to the apostles what they needed for their special role. Christ had appointed them to be his witnesses. He had also promised them that the Holy Spirit would teach and remind them of all Jesus taught. Pentecost was the inauguration of the new era of the Spirit. Although his coming was a unique and unrepeatable historical event, all the people of God can now benefit from his ministry, at all times and places.

6. Read Genesis 9:1-11 about the Tower of Babel. Ever since the early church fathers, commentators have seen the blessing of Pentecost as a deliberate and dramatic reversal of the curse of Babel.
7. When have you worshipped Jesus with people from other countries or cultures (either abroad, or in the UK)? And what impact did this make upon you?
8. In what ways were the "scared" disciples now changed by the day of Pentecost?
9. How do you want to be changed by God's Spirit? Try to name one thing each that you know God wants to change in you. If you're stuck for answers, why not look at the desired fruit of being Spirit-filled in Galatians 5:22-23, and pray for each other to be filled afresh by God's Spirit, with the goal of being fruitful Christians.

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