

STUDY 5



The transforming touch of Heaven

Sunday 20th May 2018

Reading – Acts 1:1-8; 2.1-11

5. THE SPIRIT OF THE KINGDOM.

Pentecost is often referred to as the birthday of the church. Pentecost is the festival in celebration of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. As you meet together you could plan your own group birthday celebration!

- Take the opportunity within your group to share about your own experience of encountering the Holy Spirit.

The ancient prayer is still well worth praying *'Come Holy Spirit and fill the hearts of your faithful people and kindle in them the fire of your love.'*

Before Jesus ascended to the Father, he spoke with the disciples about the *kingdom of God*.

- Why do you think the disciples struggled to grasp the true understanding of the kingdom?

1. NURTURED BY THE KINGDOM PROMISE

Jesus gave a promise Acts 1.4 *Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my father promised.* John the Baptist spoke of the promise of the Spirit – Matt 3.11 that was further referenced by Jesus in Acts 1.5. The promise was anticipated by even the prophets in the OT like Joel 2.28. Joel indicates that the distinctive feature of the last days would be the outpouring of God's Spirit upon all believers who would be gripped by the Holy Spirit of God that would give them extraordinary boldness in speaking about Jesus.

- What lies right at the heart of this kingdom promise?

Jesus spoke about the 'counsellor' in John 14.16-17; John 16.7

- Why do you think that there was a need to wait? What did they do during this waiting period?

2. NURTURED BY THE KINGDOM PRESENCE

- In what ways did the presence of God become manifest among the believers?

Acts 2.2-3

- What was the effect of encountering the Spirit?

The spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost but there were subsequent encounters with the spirit like in Acts 2.4; 4.8; 4.31; 9.17; 13.9. Rather than thinking of a once only blessing of God's spirit, we need a repeatable experience of renewing and refreshing that leads to a more effective empowering.

Peter speaks of *times of refreshing* that come from the Lord, Acts 3.19.

3. NURTURED BY THE KINGDOM POWER

Jesus spoke of how his people would receive *power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.*

Acts 1.8 (Lk 24.49)

- What is the nature of this power? How was the power of God released in their lives?

Eph 5.18 commands us to be '*continually filled with the Holy Spirit.*'

- What do you think Paul means when he prays in Eph 3.19 that we may be filled with the fullness of God?

Zechariah 4.6 in the OT offers an important perspective *It is not by might* (like an army of soldiers) *nor by power* (of a given gifted individual) *but by my spirit* (the very breath of God).

‘O breath of God, come sweeping through us,
revive thy church with life and power.
O breath of life, come, cleanse, renew us,
and fit thy church to meet this hour.’

FOR YOUR NOTES