

The Parish of Wellow

Who is the Holy Spirit?

Acts 2: 1-21, 36-39

Passage, Sermon Notes and Questions

Please feel free to take these sermon notes home with you and you may wish to find some time during next week to consider the questions below.

1. Sermon Passage

Acts 2:1-21, 36-39

1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.

2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.

4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven.

6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language.

7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans?"

8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?"

9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome

11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs-- we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!"

12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say.

15 These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!

16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 "'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

19 I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will call."

2. Sermon Notes

2.1 To understand the significance of the Day of Pentecost we need to look back at the activity of the Holy Spirit in the Bible from The Book of Genesis to Acts. This will help us answer the following questions

- Who is the Holy Spirit?
- What was happening on the Day of Pentecost?
- Why this event is so special?

2.2 The Holy Spirit - a brief Biblical overview

i. Holy Spirit is involved in Creation

- a. Bringing order out of chaos (Genesis 1:2)
- b. Giving life to man (Genesis 2:7)

ii. Throughout the Old Testament the Holy Spirit comes upon particular people at particular times for particular tasks e.g.

- a. Bezalel - for artistic work (Exodus 31:1-5)
- b. Gideon - for leadership (Judges 6:14-16, 34)
- c. Samson - for strength (Judges 15:14, 15)
- d. Isaiah - for prophecy (Isaiah 61:1-3)

iii. The Holy Spirit is promised to all - but the prophecies remain unfulfilled for 300 years

- a. 'They will all know me' (Jeremiah 31:31-34)
- b. 'I will put my spirit in you' (Ezekiel 36:26,27)
- c. 'A river flowing from the temple' (Ezekiel 47)
- d. 'I will pour out my spirit on all people' (Joel 2:28,29)

iv. The Holy Spirit bursts into activity with the birth of Jesus - everyone connected to the birth is filled with the Holy Spirit - but still particular people at particular times for particular tasks.

- a. John the Baptist (Luke 1:14,15)
- b. Mary (Luke 1:35)
- c. Elizabeth (Luke 1:41)
- d. Zechariah (Luke 1:67)
- e. Simeon (Luke 2:25-27)

v. The Holy Spirit is linked with Jesus by John the Baptist

- a. Jesus the spirit filled man
- b. Jesus receives power through the anointing of the Holy Spirit at his baptism (Luke 3:22, Luke 4:1,14,18)

vi. The Holy Spirit's promise to all confirmed by Jesus and by what happens on the Day of Pentecost

- a. Jesus tells his disciples to wait in the city until they are clothed with power from on high (John 7:37-39, Luke 24:49, Acts 1:4,5,8)
- b. At Pentecost the disciples were filled with the spirit and received:
 - New languages (Acts 2:4-12)
 - New boldness (Acts 2:14)
 - New power (Acts 2:37-41)

2.3 We live in the age of the Spirit. God has promised to give his spirit to every Christian: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off-- for all whom the Lord our God will call." Acts 2:38-39.

3. Questions to consider back at home

3.1 If your son or daughter or grandson or granddaughter were to ask you 'Who is the Holy Spirit?' how would you respond?

3.2 What exactly happened on the Day of Pentecost and why was it so special?

3.3 'All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.' (Acts 2:4) Should we expect similar things today? If so, what prevents the work of the Holy Spirit?

3.4 What should we learn from the reaction of those who heard the disciples 'speaking in other tongues'?

3.5 A close friend asks you one day, 'Do you believe in miracles?' How would you respond?

If you would like to discuss these questions further please feel free to call me on 01761 432293

Matthew Street 15th May 2005