

Thornbury Baptist Church:

Following the Way of Jesus: Loving God - Loving One Another - Loving Neighbour & World

## Small Groups @ TBC Sermon Discussion Notes

**Date of Sermon:** January 29<sup>th</sup> 2017

**Speaker:** Paul Ferguson

**Title:** Pentecost

**Introduction:** The disciples, as Jesus had instructed (Acts 1: 8), waited in Jerusalem for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon them. Those things that Jesus had been talking to them about during the forty days following his resurrection and before the ascension began to unfold. Power to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom, to speak and to live for God was the gift to them. The power to speak for God was associated to the prophets of the OT and now this prophetic ministry was given to the church.

**Review:** Invite one or more who have heard the talk to give their own brief review.

**Read:** Acts 2: 1-21

**Reflect:** On some of the themes that Paul surfaced in his talk.

### The Promise of Pentecost

- Don't leave Jerusalem until you have received power was Jesus' instruction. Therefore, it is important for us to know that before we can do our mission, we need the power of the Spirit. Why might it be the case that the filling (Luke's word) of the Spirit has been associated with personal spirituality or gifts within the church and not mission? Do we pray for the filling of the Spirit to help us share our faith?
- This event was dramatic because the expectation at the time was that Spirit

**Leaders:** feel free to be selective and creative with your use of these notes.

**Don't feel you have to use all of the material,** but do try to keep the shape of Review - Read - Reflect -

Respond and **DO make room for the 'And Finally' questions!**

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didn't do the things he used to do in the OT empowering the prophets etc. Acts 2, Peter quote Joel. "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh." Pinch your neighbour and if they cry-out in pain we can assume they are flesh. We are all included in this promise, why might we feel sometimes this is not so?

### **The Preparation for Pentecost**

- Before the gift of the Spirit was given restoration was needed. One disciple was lost (Judas) others need drawing back together.
- The whole Pentecost narrative is framed by the disciples being together in unity and prayer. Acts 1: 14, praying together. 2:1 they were together.
- How might we support one another in prayer so that our witness is more effective? Are there things in our own hearts that war against unity?

### **The Proof of Pentecost**

- Dramatic signs of wind and fire like mount Sinai, like Ezekiel prophesying that the breath of God would rouse the valley of dry bones. These signs spoke of God's presence and purifying fire but also the breath of new life. A new world being exhaled from the mouth of God. This reading is shot-through with imagery, can you see any other allusions? How do these pictures affect you?
- The other sign was the disciples praise God in other people's language. Unlike the other two events, this happens two more times in Luke. Luke wants to emphasise this point. Why? Because Luke wants to emphasise this very important function and reason for why the Spirit is given. The capacity to speak God's praises in other people's mother tongues. Acts 1: 8. I am giving you the power of the Spirit to cross cultural boundaries, to speak of me. Discuss what it might mean to speak across our own culture boundaries?

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### The Peoples of Pentecost

- Although the gathered crowd were from the Jewish diaspora they represented the ends of the earth and all people. V.9ff. Many scholars argue that this is a reversal of Babel (Gen 11: 1-9). Discuss what is being reversed, what are the implications of the reversal on Babel, read Rev 7: 9

### And finally:

- Spend time praying for the fullness of the Spirit so that we can be witnesses?
- Consider how the vision of a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-national people of God should affect the way we consider the stranger today in our nation?
- Share the name of a friend, neighbour, family member who you would like to share Christ with and pray for them.

### As you conclude, ask each person:

- What is the main thing you are taking away as an action point?
- How can we pray for you?
- Is there anything we can check on next time we meet?

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