

Life Group Notes

Sunday 29th May 2022

Speaker: Scott Taylor

Title: Power of the Holy Spirit

Passage: Acts 1:4-8

Jesus told his disciples not to leave Jerusalem until they received the gift the Father had promised. This was of course the coming on of the Spirit in power for all believers.

They knew about the Holy Spirit – Jesus had spoken to them at length about Him. But they also knew from all they had been taught. The Holy Spirit was present at creation (Gen 1v 2), He was the very life breathed into Adam, the Ruach of God (Gen 2 v 7). The Spirit came on the likes of Elijah and was passed on to Elisha, from Moses to Joshua. David had the Holy Spirit come on him. Even Jesus himself at his baptism had the Spirit come on Him. The disciples knew all this and were familiar with Him.

Jesus also talks of them being baptised with the Holy Spirit. He mentions both baptism of water and of the Spirit in this passage. Just as we know we have been baptised in water, Jesus says we too will know we have been baptised with the Holy Spirit. We would refer to that first moment of receiving the Spirit as baptism, and subsequently we would say filled with the Spirit. We use baptism because Jesus did.

Jesus then goes on to tell them that power will come upon them so that they will be his witnesses. Our encounters with the Spirit are to empower us for the mission. The mission is to preach good news to teach all that Jesus has taught, to heal the sick, to cast out demons, to set the captives free. We cannot do these things without the power of the Spirit. If we want to carry on Jesus' work we need His power.

Now obviously these are the disciples, and they had a special relationship with Jesus. We could be forgiven for thinking that this was something for them. And that would be true if we didn't see it then replicated in ordinary folk like us as they became Christians.

We can read in the book of Acts various moments when people believe in Jesus and then they get baptised in the Spirit. Acts 8 v 4-25, Acts 9 v 1-19, Acts 10 v 44-48, Acts 19 v 1-7. The only exception here is Acts 10 in the home of Cornelius. Here it seems as if they get everything at the same time, which is totally possible. It doesn't mean there were not different things happening in the moment, rather that they all came together.

The baptism of the Spirit and subsequent fillings is so that we have the power to do all that God has called us to, it is so we can be his witnesses. It's not just so we get a nice feeling. Dwelling in His presence is good and sometimes it is so we experience his love. But even then, it is so we can share that love. Being filled with the Spirit is not a hobby or a pastime it is essential to the daily life of a Christian if we are to continue Jesus' works here on earth.

Suggested Questions:

1. What did you hear or experience through this message that was either new to you or a good reminder?
2. Tell stories of your baptism in the Spirit or if you don't have a specific story of the first time, can you recall a memorable moment of being filled with the Spirit.
3. Why do you think Jesus would want us to be filled with His Spirit?
4. Where do you know you need the power of God in your life right now?
5. Spend time laying hands on and praying for each other.