

Marks

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading
Giving Time, Talents & Resources
Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the

of Discipleship

June 5, 2022

Day 1: Acts 2:1-2

When the day of Pentecost had come; they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.

Wind is used by the biblical writers to talk about how one can feel the effects of God's action in the world. The image of wind is used to keep us from idolatry (giving natural things supernatural qualities). We can feel the wind and we can see its effects on the world around us but we cannot see it. We are to worship the Creator not the creation.

Question: How could they feel the wind if they were inside? Read John 3:8-9 and see what everyone born of the Spirit is compared to.

Challenge: Think of another image for the Spirit of God.

Scripture: Exodus 20:1-21, Leviticus 23:15-21

Day 2: Acts 2:3-4

Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.

It would be a better image for today's world to think of these "tongues of fire" as an electric bolt or something like lightning - one bolt of lightning that can jump from person to person so that they all had the same bolt of energy. Fire is used in a number of places in the Bible because it represents aspects of the divine person. Fire is warm, provides light, and is mysterious. Yet it is also dangerous. If we get too close to it we can be burned. If its full force is felt it can destroy.

Question: Why do you think God used fire to represent the Holy Spirit?

Challenge: Look at an ancient map to see where the countries in Acts 2:9-11 are located.

Scripture: Genesis 1:2, Exodus 19:16-19, Isaiah 66:15

Day 3: Acts 2:5-7

Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, 'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?'

Jews traveled to Jerusalem at this time to celebrate one of the major Jewish festivals - the Feast of Weeks. Jews were to go to the festivals because they served as a way to reinforce and strengthen their basic beliefs in: a) One God, b) Israel is God's people, c) the sacredness of the Land, d) Torah, and e) the certainty of redemption. What amazed the crowd in verse 7 was that they heard the same message in a way that each could understand. Each one there could understand a common language but each one had their own "home" language. God wants us to hear the same message in each generation but in a "language" that we can understand.

Question: How did they know they were Galileans?

Challenge: What was the sound they heard?

Scripture: Mark 1:4-8, John 1:29-34

Day 4: Acts 2:11-13

In our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.' All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, 'What does this mean?' But others sneered and said, 'They are filled with new wine.'

The Pentecost Festival celebrated the giving of the Law from Sinai. The deeds of power were the times God had intervened in Israel's past to save her. The message that was being delivered was that God is saving His people and the means of salvation is through His son, Jesus Christ. It is not a new God but the same God who created and who is now redeeming.

Question: Do people speak better when they have had some wine?

Challenge: Which do you think is the most powerful: the sending of Jesus, the sending of the Holy Spirit, or the Bible?

Scripture: Isaiah 49:5-7, 21-23

Day 5: Acts 2:16-18

Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel: "In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy."

Peter reminds the crowd that God will use the least in creation to do mighty things so that there is no mistake as to who is doing the mighty works of power. To prophesy was to speak the "word of God." Prophets were persons through whom God delivered his instructions. Prophets were not the only means of delivering the message but they were the primary ones. In today's world anyone who claims to preach is in the ancient tradition of a Prophet. Preaching is not lecturing, haranguing, instructing, yelling, correcting or complementing. It is speaking the word of God. It is done in great humility.

Question: What does it mean "in the last days"?

Challenge: Look up what it means to Prophesy. How does it apply to what the disciples are doing?

Scripture: Joel 2:28-32

Day 6: Acts 2:21

Then everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

The result of speaking God's word is to have people apply God's name to themselves. The commandment to not take the Lord's name in vain has less to do with cursing than it has to do with taking the name of the Lord on ourselves and have it mean nothing. We are saved by accepting and by accepting we take God's name upon ourselves. The name has great power and if we take it we must use it.

Question: Does this "everyone" include those who wait until just before death to call on the name of the Lord?

Challenge: What is the minimum requirement to be a Christian?

Scripture: John 3:16-17