

October 1st

Acts 1:1-11

“The Holy Spirit in the School of Jesus”

The book of Acts is sometimes called the Acts of the Apostles. Some people have suggested it would be better to call it the Acts of the Holy Spirit because the work of the Holy Spirit is evident throughout the book of Acts. How might a focus on the Holy Spirit change the way we read the book of Acts? Why do we find it so difficult to understand the person and work of the Holy Spirit?

At the end of Luke and the beginning of Acts Jesus tells his followers that they are to wait in Jerusalem until they have received power from the Holy Spirit. What are some of the different ways that Christians have understood that ‘power’? How might our conceptions of power be realigned when we recognize how God’s power is revealed in Jesus dying on the cross?

The gift of the Holy Spirit is clearly connected with the mission or sending of the church into the world – ‘You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.’ In the 19th and 20th centuries the church often understood mission to be about missionaries going to the farthest parts of the world. Now we are beginning to recognize that mission needs to happen right here in our homes, neighbourhoods and workplaces. And mission isn’t just something missionaries should be doing we should all be involved in ‘mission’. What are some of the things which make it difficult for us to be involved in God’s mission or God’s work in the world?

In what ways might the stories of the early church inspire us and in what ways do they seem too far removed from our situation today?