

Acts 2 "Come Holy Spirit Come"

Pentecost was already a feast. It was the beginning of the grain harvest. The feast of first fruits, as the first taste of the harvest was offered to God in thanksgiving. We have to then see what happened that day through the lens of what they were celebrating. Pentecost the first taste of an actual future – Pentecost the promise that there was more to come.

Read Acts 2

(All of it – or - the selection read in service – Acts 2:1-12; 14; 32-38; 41-47)

1. Read Exodus 19:16-20. This is but one of the examples where God's presence is signified in fire. God comes down in fire upon a bush, a mountain, the temple etc... What is the significance that God comes down in fire here upon a people, a community?

The Spirit enables the disciples to proclaim the good news of Jesus in the languages of the people from the nations gathered in Jerusalem – this created a beautifully diverse community centered around Jesus. This has ultimately led to the Christian Church being the most ethnically diverse community on the face of the planet. While each individual church may not be able to reflect the fulness of racial diversity it should be asked does it reflect the diversity of the community around it and if not, why not?

2. In the midst of the cultural movement toward racial justice what should be the response of the church in light of that work of the Spirit?
3. (vs. 42-47) The Spirit comes to make this community a foretaste of Jesus' future, a promise that there is more to come. What are the marks of this renewed human community? What do they look like practically?

As Luke moves into these verses he uses a Greek Particle that can mean "and they" or "so they". The whole force of the story of Pentecost invites us to translate it "so they". This community comes about as the result of, the fruit of, in dependence upon the work of the Spirit.

4. John Stott wrote: "Without the Holy Spirit Christian discipleship would be inconceivable, even impossible. There can be no life without the lawgiver, no understanding without the Spirit of truth, no fellowship without the unity of the Spirit, no Christlikeness of character apart from his fruit, and no effective witness without his power. As a body without breath is a corpse, so the church without the Spirit is dead. Discuss.
5. What are some of the ways we can foster dependence upon the Spirit as a people, a church?