



Beacon Church Connect Groups Application: Week commencing 5 May 2019

Background

On Sunday we considered the final chapter of Acts, where Paul is left in Rome preaching the gospel freely. Acts is just the end of the beginning as Paul and us write the subsequent chapters. Throughout Acts we have seen how Peter, Paul and others partner with the Holy Spirit to spread the good news and glorify God. Like any good apprentice Paul knew how to partner with the Holy Spirit though underpinning knowledge about him, learnt from what we call the Old Testament, and from experience of the Holy Spirit working with him. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is behind the Presence of God, the Power of God and the Holiness of God (seen in the laws that Israel was required to follow). The Holy Spirit is God and his presence is represented in such events as Moses and the burning bush, the Tabernacle in the desert and ultimately the Temple. Israel's identity was tied up with having the presence of God with them (Deuteronomy 33, 15 – 16) but they blew it through rebellion and the temple was destroyed. But Paul knew there was always the hope of restoration and the return of God's presence, but now it was for all people and by putting God's laws in People's hearts. (Ezekiel 36, 26-27 and 37, 14). Like Paul we need to experience the presence of God through the Holy Spirit, see his Power demonstrated through us in (among other things), prophecy, healing, sharing good news and making our workplaces and schools the best they can be etc. and in holy behaviours (after all he is the Holy Spirit!).

Discussion and Questions:

Here are a few names for the Holy Spirit. Think about these names (and any others you can think of) and discuss what they might teach you about the Holy Spirit.

Eternal Spirit, Spirit, Holy Spirit, the Spirit, The Holy, The Spirit of Promise, The Spirit of God, Spirit of the living God, The Spirit of our God, The Spirit of Glory and of God, the Spirit of Him who raised up Jesus from the dead, the Spirit of your Father, the Spirit of His Son, Spirit of the Lord, the Lord - the Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of Jesus, The Spirit of adoption, The Spirit of Truth, The Spirit of Life, the Spirit of grace, Advocate, Counsellor....

Think about and discuss the role of the Holy Spirit in Acts. To what extent do we see this now? Is there more we can do to engage with the work of the Holy Spirit?

Discuss 2 Corinthians 5:4-5 which says, 'God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come'.

In John 16:7 Jesus says: 'But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.' Why did he say this?

Overleaf is the picture I referred to on Sunday. I said that despite everything looking calm and peaceful, some may feel they are a long way from God's presence and that there appear to be barriers in the way. If this spoke to anyone, please pray with them.

Encourage each other to bring prophetic words and healing to each other.

Enjoy

Keith

