

All Saints Talk for 19 May 2024

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Pentecost Sunday

Readings: Readings: Isaiah 54: 2-5. Acts 2: 1-13 and 36-41.

I wanted to start today by asking anyone if they've learnt a new language?

Well I'm learning Swedish at the moment... It is not easy!

I can read it quite well. Write it okish... although I always forget how to spell turtle! But speaking and listening to it is quite a task! It is not easy!

Now if I find this difficult as I learn Swedish on duolingo.... Can you imagine what it would have been like on the day of Pentecost when everyone started talking in tongues!

But lets put this into context. At the beginning we have the apostles in one place, having just chosen Matthias to be a replacement for judas.

The memory of his betrayal probably lingering.

And then suddenly a violent wind came and filled them with the Holy Spirit!

The Holy Spirit did not come quietly, creeping in through the window but in the only way God would... it the most powerful way, because he is the most powerful!

Anyone who has been in a storm knows how the wind can be so unpredictable. Sometimes a gust can come from nowhere. But then wind can be extremely powerful.

We only have to look on the news to see what devastation it can bring.

But this wind was different... why? Because it came from heaven. But put this with fire and the power becomes something else...

The wind and the fire are wild, untameable forces, and the experience of the wind rushing through the house with a great roar, and the fire coming to rest on each person present, must have been both terrifying and exhilarating.

So just imagine....

The mixture of wind and fire and the speaking of different languages but of been quite the sight!

It says in verse 12... they were perplexed and amazed, wondering what it all meant? Even making fun of them thinking they were drunk!

But then Peter stands up and speaks to the crowd. And he speaks in a way that everyone listens and with authority.

He is showing the people that they need to sit up and listen!

He tells them straight! And they are horrified!

The audience's recognition of their sin and their role in the crucifixion of Jesus.

It says they were cut to the heart.

Guilt and shame.... What did we do??

We have all felt that at some time in our lives. That sick feeling in the pit of our stomachs.

So they ask Peter... How can we make this better?

Repent he says!!

This image of Peter standing and telling people to repent... It is the image I have of John the Baptist.... Repent for the kingdom of heaven is near!

Peter... Repent

So what is the definition of repentance?

- Turning away from sin and turning towards God.]
- A change of mind and heart that leads to a change in behaviour.

The importance of baptism

- Baptism as a public declaration of faith and obedience to Jesus.
- Symbolizes the washing away of sins and a new beginning in Christ.

Promise of forgiveness and the Holy Spirit

- Assurance of forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ.
- Receiving the Holy Spirit as a gift to empower and guide believers.
- We have seen Steve today make these declarations.
- To turn away from Sin. To turn to Christ in all things. And through this he is baptised not only with water as a symbol of the cleansing and forgiveness, but also baptised in the Holy Spirit! It's the Holy Spirit that guides us.

Many of you today might be wondering how you can do this.

Am I good enough? I've got too many things in my dusty old wardrobe. Believe me... I had loads! And look at me

- Invite those who have not yet repented and been baptized to consider making this commitment.
- Encourage baptized believers to live out their repentance daily and rely on the Holy Spirit.

When I was preparing for this talk, I was reminded of a relationship that needed a whole lot of healing and a whole lot of forgiveness....

Those relationships that we have like that cannot be fixed and forgiven until we forgive ourselves!

Repent!!

Only then, when we are filled with the Holy Spirit can we heal those wounds.

The promise of the Holy Spirit is for all people: the immediate audience, their children, and those far off.

This is the promise friends!

And Jesus does not break his promise!!!

The promise of joy and peace, and forgiveness and healing!

Why wouldn't we want this!!! ????

- Emphasize the inclusivity of the gospel and the reach of God's promise.

The Gospel is there for all of us to hear... but not just read it, or hear it..

But to FEEL it!!

Like the wind blowing through our hair or the fire hot on us!

The feeling when the holy spirit comes and it makes the hairs on the back of our necks stand up or our legs feel all tingly because it is a sign that Jesus is near!

Why would we not want this!!

Repent! Peter says!

Just like Steve has done today.

It doesn't matter where we are from, what colour our skin is... all nations it says very often in the scripture....

This season, we have been praying for those who don't know Jesus to come to know him...

I would say, don't stop doing that!

About three thousand people accepted the message and were baptized.

The beginning of the early church and the communal life of the believers.

About three thousand people were baptised that day but the holy spirit and the church was born!!

And over 2000 years later we are still here, we are still worshipping and we are still baptising!

Rachael and I were discussing this passage this week and Rachael reminded me.... Jesus, was what would of been a middle aged man when he started his public ministry... But when did he start it? After he was baptised and filled with the Holy Spirit. He needed the Holy Spirit to be able to fulfil his ministry. He couldn't do it alone.

Over 3000 were baptised that day, one is baptised today.

But countless people baptised in the years in between.

There is a massive church all over the world, and we, here in Weston are part of that!

It is our duty to go out and share the Gospel and the message of Jesus in any way we can... in our schools, workplaces, clubs, local shops.

Our reading in Isaiah tells us. Expand our tents... this is what we are called to do... but only with the holy spirit can we do this.

Recap of the main points:

- conviction by the Holy Spirit,
- call to repentance and baptism,
- the inclusive promise of the Holy Spirit,
- he calls us to salvation,
- and the response of the early church.
- Encourage us as believers to seek a fresh infilling of the Holy Spirit and to live out their faith bold.