

As this is Pentecost Sunday I want to spend a little time thinking about The Holy Spirit. If you have been coming to this congregation for a while you'll know that the Holy Spirit is 'he' and not 'it', and he is God along with the Father and the Son. It's a hard thing to understand:

The concept of a Holy Perfect God we get – we might not agree but we can understand the concept,

The concept of God as Creator makes sense, Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, we can get our heads round and we are comfortable with the concept of Father God.

We understand that Jesus was real,
He was born, He lives a perfect life,
Jesus willingly went to the cross to,
and even though He was sinless,

He died in our place, as payment for sin and those who trust in Him as their personal Lord and Saviour receive forgiveness and restored relationship,

We believe that on the third day - Jesus rose triumphant from the grave,
His resurrection - evidence that He was who He said He was - the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.....

.....Jesus, we are pretty comfortable that we know, what we know we know.

But, understanding the presence and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives today - now that is an area where some can feel out of their depth.

As post Pentecost people we can know more about the Spirit than we do already,
we can draw closer to Him in our everyday lives,
we can sense His presence within us,
we can allow Him to work in us and through us,
we can experience a fresh sense of purpose,
we can experience a fresh fire in our lives,
a fresh fire that changes us, changes our families, changes the community that we are part of.

As a minister - my desire is that all of us would not just know more about the Spirit but that we would experience His fresh fire in our lives as we allow Him to work in and through us.

Let me encourage you to allow yourself to be inspired, moved and changed by the Holy Spirit.

All of us at times can stifle the work of the Spirit in our own lives, don't quench the power of the Spirit in your life – spending too little time with God, being disobedient.

Allow the Spirit to work in your life today - that your life may be a beacon to others

Allow the fire of the Spirit to use you to bring truth and life and light to people who need to be in a personal relationship with God – **the train journey home.....**
Instead

Today allow the Holy Spirit to make you the person God has called you to be.

If each of us allowed the Spirit to use us this year what a difference we could make - in our families, in our friends lives, in the life of this community.

What a difference we could make in the World if we allowed the Holy Spirit to take control today!

The book of Acts is the story of the growth of the early church. In Acts 1:8 *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth*

Are you willing to allow the Holy Spirit to bring fresh fire into your life? He doesn't force his way in – at Pentecost the disciples didn't know what was going to happen, but they had been praying and waiting for God to act – there was an expectancy about their faith that we all too often lack.

When we allow the Spirit to work amazing things can happen. When we allow the Spirit to fill us others will see the change in us. These disciples who had run away from Jesus, who were living in fear of the authorities, suddenly become bold - the Holy Spirit empowers them and they are changed and they begin to speak in tongues.

Then Peter, uneducated Peter, fisherman Peter, preaches his first Spirit powered sermon:

The Holy Spirit changed Peter that day.
The Holy Spirit can change you this day!

The last days Joel speaks of are the days before Jesus returns, the last days are today and tomorrow and every day till Christ returns. Significance.....Kingdom of God

How is that worked out in Acts?

In Acts 3 the crippled man is healed - then Peter and John preach and many people come to faith in Jesus.

Peter and John are arrested and led before the rulers and elders and priests of the Jerusalem Council.

Acts 4:7-13 tells us that *“They brought in the two disciples and demanded, “By what power, or in whose name, have you done this?” Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of our people, are we being questioned today because we’ve done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he*

*was healed? Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead. For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says,
'The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.'
There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.'
The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures.*

Ordinary men with no special training - but filled with the Holy Spirit. I think it is good to have some theological education, but it's not absolutely necessary.

We are also ordinary people,
but we are loved by an extraordinary God,
And ordinary people who are filled with the Holy Spirit can do extraordinary things for God.

And the God who is the same, yesterday, today and forever wants you to feel the touch of the Spirit on your life today.

Peter was transformed through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, from a coward who denied Christ three times, to a Spirit empowered preacher who saw 3000 saved at his first altar call.

The disciples became bold in their witness.
They stood before the Sanhedrin and witnessed to the ones who wanted to stop them.

They prayed **for more boldness**.
And their prayer was answered.
They wanted more of the Holy Spirit to be manifest in their lives.

They wanted more. Not so they could be praised.
They wanted more so that God would be glorified.

Do you want more of God today?

Worshipping God involves your head and your heart. It involves your emotions. Many of us shy away from outward displays of emotion in church. But the first fruit of the Holy Spirit that Paul mentions is.... JOY!
I know that is more than just emotion – but it is emotion.

Fire softens -- the Holy Spirit softens the heart of the sinner and brings repentance.

Fire consumes - it burns out the sinful and unnecessary “stuff” in our lives – allowing areas of new growth

Fire purifies - it makes us pure and holy before God

Fire prepares - makes us tasteful and pleasant to each other.

Fire cheers -- when we are caught in the cold grip of despair and discouragement, He cheers us on to victory.

Fire unites -- the Holy Spirit brings unity to the people of God. Look at the people around you - it is God that has brought us together - it is the Spirit that unites us.

Do you want to know God better?

Do you ever feel that your spiritual life is lacking something?

Are you willing to allow the Holy Spirit to bring fresh fire into your life?

John 14:12 *I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father.*

I read the stories in Acts and see the disciples doing the things Jesus did and I wonder why I don't see them in my own life.

I want more of God in my life – so I need to be obedient to the leading of the Spirit in my life.

Fresh Fire is about allowing the power of the Holy Spirit to enable you to do what God has called you to do, but also to be what he has called you to be.

Can you hear the voice of the Spirit challenging you today?

Can you feel the touch of the Spirit changing you today?

Can you sense the refining fire of God falling on you today?

In life, things happen around us, things happen to us, but the only thing that truly matters is what happens within us.

What will happen when you allow the fresh fire to touch your life?

What will happen when you allow the Holy Spirit to work in you and through you today?