

Pentecost

Read Acts 2:1-21

I feel that the day of Pentecost that we read about in Acts was like the dawning of a new season. Something new was happening to God's people. In a similar way, I believe that God is doing a new thing with his church now.

The anniversary of Ascension Day, when Jesus was lifted up to heaven, was just over a week ago, and it was because of the original Ascension Day that we can now receive the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that it was better for him to go away, because unless he did the Holy Spirit would not come - go read John's gospel, chapter 16, verse 7.

Jesus told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5), and so I suspect they waited with excitement mixed with a trace of trepidation.

Pentecost was, and still is, a Jewish festival, and so Jerusalem was full of people from around the known world. What a perfect time for God to announce the birth of his church! Over the last five weeks we have been looking at the theme of re-emerging from the Covid lockdown. Today's service wasn't necessarily going to fit in with that theme, but I think that it does. Pentecost was a time for the early church to re-gather, under the power of the Holy Spirit.

Things to Ponder

- Are you looking forward to anything? How do you think the disciples felt, waiting for the Holy Spirit?
- Are you eager to get back to life as it was, before the pandemic, or are you looking for something else/more?
- Do you believe that God has new plans for you? If you do, what could they be? If not, why not? You may like to look up Jeremiah 29:11.
- Have you received the Holy Spirit?

Read Joshua 1: 7-9 and 2 Corinthians 12: 9-10

How do you respond to the messages in these passages?

Whatever we are called to do, we can be sure that not only will God be with us, but that his power will also be available to us, through the Holy Spirit. We do not have to do it on our own, and in our own strength.

Where will the Spirit take us in our new-look future? We don't know, but we need to trust Jesus. On the day of Pentecost, the new thing, as Peter quotes from Joel, was that the Spirit, who has always existed, was now available for all people. He was not just available on that one day, but for all days, now and forever.

Summary

In summary, we can be assured that:

- God has plans for us, which will give us hope and a future.¹
- We will not be alone - God will be with us.²
- We can rely on God's power.³
- God can do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine.⁴

And all this is possible because God has poured out his Spirit on all his people. That not only means Jesus' disciples in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, but also us, here, now.

¹ Jeremiah 29:11

² Joshua 1:7-9

³ 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

⁴ Ephesians 3:20-21