

June 4, 2006
Pentecost Sunday

"Power of the Holy Spirit"

God works through His people by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Key Verse: Acts 2:32-33 (NIV)

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

Bible Passage: Acts 2:1-4, 38-47 (NIV)

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call." ... Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ... Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Lesson Thought

Power! It is what should characterize the Christian's life, but most of the time we are not plugged into our power source. Rather than relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, we attempt to do things through our own efforts and abilities. This passage shows that from the very beginning of Christianity, God did not intend for His people to do things by their own power and might. Instead Jesus intended to

send the Holy Spirit who would help God's people to do His will. This is why Jesus instructed his disciples to wait until the Holy Spirit came upon them. What a difference it made! One moment the disciples were a bunch of scared people hiding in an Upper Room. The next moment, they were a confident group - stepping out into the world, doing miraculous things, boldly proclaiming the Good News with great effect, and building a strong and united body of believers. How effective are your electrical appliances when they are not plugged in? The same is true for us when we are not plugged into God's power. It is ironic that the more God has gifted us, the more likely we are to try to do things our way and by our own power. However, it is not until we humble ourselves and come to the realization that we cannot live victoriously by our own power that God can work within us and through us by the power of His Holy Spirit.

Application: what does this lesson say to us today?

1) What are the things that you are trying to do on your own that you will turn over to God? Stop trying to move the mountains in your life on your own. Pray to the Father, and let go. Let God do things through the Holy Spirit within you.

2) What bad habit do you need the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you overcome this habit. List all the reasons why you should stop doing this thing and all the benefits of quitting. Make yourself accountable to someone. Follow up regularly with that person on your progress.

3) The gift of the Holy Spirit is to all believers. Yet we are faced with a daily, even a moment-by-moment, decision to be guided by the Spirit in everything we do. Being Spirit-led each day is not automatic for the Christian. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you be more sensitive to, aware of, and responsive to his daily guidance.

Family Activities: putting the lesson into action

Follow the example of the early church. Read this devotion before a meal - just like the early disciples listened to the apostles' teaching. Then pray after the meal, thanking God for His blessings and for each member of your family. Have each person tell something about everyone else present what they appreciate about them. Sing a hymn or worship song before leaving the table.

Suggestions for further study

Acts 1:4-5; 2:1-47

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