

Thursday

- Read Acts :37-47

QUESTIONS

1. How do the crowds react to the news that Jesus, whom they crucified, is in fact Lord and Christ?
2. What does Peter say they should do and why?
3. What characteristics do the new believers have?

PONDER

In verse 40, Peter 'bears witness' and 'continues to exhort them'. What makes his message so urgent?

Do you share this urgency?

PRAYER IDEAS

Think of a person you know who needs to hear the gospel. Ask God for boldness, wisdom, sensitivity and the opportunity to bear witness to them and exhort them.

Friday

- Read Acts 3:11-36

QUESTIONS

1. According to Peter, how was the beggar healed?
2. What does Peter say the crowd should do? Why? (Note the similarities to what Peter said in 2:38-39.)
3. What are the consequences of not responding to Jesus in the right way?

PONDER

Peter explained to the crowd that the followers of Jesus have had their sins "blotted out". What difference should this make to the way you relate to God and treat others?

PRAYER IDEAS

Ask God to help you and other Christians you know to persevere and hold on to your faith until "the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago" (v. 21).



15 Steps through the Bible

Pentecost

When Jesus returned to God, he sent the Holy Spirit to live in his followers.

Jesus calls the Holy Spirit "the spirit of truth" (John 14:17) and tells us that the Spirit makes Christ known to his people and to the world. He convicts the world of its sin, and comforts believers with the knowledge of God.

The Holy Spirit was given on the day of Pentecost, when a group of believers saw "tongues of fire" descend on them from heaven.

They began to speak in different languages, and three thousand people in Jerusalem heard the news of the risen Christ and believed.

God's pledge to Abraham, that he would provide a blessing to all nations, was being fulfilled.

The nations were becoming part of God's kingdom, and God left his Spirit to be with them until Jesus returns.

1 Corinthians 2:12

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

The coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is the gift of the risen Christ to his followers, equipping them to spread the message of the kingdom, and enabling them to live together, as citizens of the kingdom.

So the Holy Spirit does not draw attention away from Jesus, but

maintains a focus on Jesus, as the one who has been appointed by God as Lord of the church. The Holy Spirit provided the following:

Power to witness

Jesus' disciples were empowered to spread the good news of God's kingdom.

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Spiritual fruit

The Holy Spirit works in the lives of people who love Jesus.

Galatians 5:22-25

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Provision for the church

The Holy Spirit provides for the church, so it can exist in unity, maturity and peace.

Ephesians 4:1-6

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to

maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.⁴ There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism,⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

When Jesus returned to God's right hand, his people were not left alone.

The Holy Spirit is 'God with us' until Jesus returns.

QUESTIONS

1. What does the Holy Spirit enable us to do?
2. From the teachings above, what is the role of the Holy Spirit?

PONDER

How has the "fruit of the Spirit" been seen in your life? What can you do to consciously walk by the Spirit?

PRAYER IDEAS

Praise God for the wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit who lives in you and works change in you from the inside. Ask God to help you to live by the Spirit every day instead of gratifying your sinful desires.

Daily Readings

Monday

- Read Acts 1:1-11

QUESTIONS

1. What does the phrase "all that Jesus began to do and teach" (v. 1) lead you to expect about the book of Acts?
2. What special plans does Jesus have for his disciples? According to Jesus here, what will their baptism with the Holy Spirit enable them to do?
3. What signs are there in the passage that indicate that the disciples don't yet understand Jesus' plans and purposes?

PONDER

What are the implications (if any) for you of Jesus' instructions to his disciples?

PRAYER IDEAS

Thank God for the ongoing work of Jesus Christ in this world. Thank him in particular for the gift of his Holy Spirit.

Tuesday

- Read Acts 2:1-21

QUESTIONS

1. Note all the extraordinary events that occur in 2:2-4.
2. According to verse 17, the filling of the apostles with the Holy Spirit means that the 'last days' have now commenced. According to verse 20, what do these last days precede?
3. The "day of the Lord" is a reference to the final judgement when God will punish all sin. What necessary task should be undertaken during these last days preceding the "day of the Lord" (v. 21)?

PONDER

Do you think that the disciples' Pentecost experience is something all Christians should share? Why/why not?

PRAYER IDEAS

Thank God for giving you the opportunity in these last days to call on the name of Jesus and be saved. Ask him to extend that opportunity to anyone you know who hasn't done that.

Wednesday

- Read Acts 2:14-36

QUESTIONS

Although we read part of this passage yesterday there is more goodness in it for us today.

1. According to verses 22-24, what did men do to Jesus? What did God do?
2. According to verse 27, what did David in the Old Testament predict about God's coming king?
In the light of your answer to question 1, what does this tell you about Jesus?
3. Verse 36 now comes as Peter's punchline. How would you put this in your own words?

PONDER

If Jesus really is both Lord and Christ, how should you treat him?

PRAYER IDEAS

Think over verse 33 and use it as a basis for prayer.