

23.05.2021 – COME HOLY SPIRIT (Bill Cahusac / Pete Greig*)

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

Acts 2:1-12

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ²Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

⁵Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷Utterly amazed, they asked: 'Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?' ⁸Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?' ⁹Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs – we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!' ¹²Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, 'What does this mean?'

1. Most Christians can imagine something of what Jesus is like. We've seen the Sunday School pictures, and the paintings, and we've watched the movies. We can almost imagine God the Father, even if he, probably unhelpfully, looks to us like a white-haired version of Jesus with a longer beard. But the person of the Holy Spirit – or, for Bill, much more scarily, the 'Holy Ghost' – usually remains a much vaguer figure. The Spirit comes to us in metaphors.
 - *What are some of the ways in which the Holy Spirit is pictured in the Bible?*
 - *What do they tell you about the Holy Spirit as a person?*
 - *In what ways have you experienced the Holy Spirit?*
 - *Where have you seen the transformation of the Spirit at work in and through you?*
2. Pete said that Pentecost "is the most amazing day as we celebrate the moment of detonation when the Spirit of God came to a 24-7 prayer room in Jerusalem [see Acts 1:14] and began what has become today a 2 billion strong revolutionary movement committed to fighting injustice, caring for the poor, and proclaiming the good news that in Jesus there is hope for our world." Bill reminded us that the early church excelled in both miracles and mercy; that the Spirit is both powerful and practical. He urged, "Push the button! Don't settle for the drip when you can have the full power-shower!"
 - *Do you recognize Pete's description of the church in the world today? What are we missing?*
 - *What would it be like to be the church living fully in the power of the Holy Spirit?*
3. In **Acts 1:4** Jesus instructs his disciples "not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father." He assures them, "You will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." When the day of Pentecost came, the waiting time was over and "suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind" (**Acts 2:2**). "This is our moment." Pete says, "And it doesn't happen by might, or by power, by spreadsheets, or cleverness (Thank God!). It happens... by the Holy Spirit [**Zechariah 4:6**]. This can't be engineered. This cannot be generated or re-branded. This can only be prayed in... We know that the key to changing the world and fighting injustice, and a renaissance in the arts, and the renewal of all things, is the revival of the church of Jesus. And that comes through unity, it comes through repentance, and it comes through prayer."
 - *After the resurrection, the followers of Jesus had little idea of what exactly might come next. But how did they prepare for the coming of the Spirit?*
 - *What can we learn from their example? What is Jesus inviting us to hope for right now?*

*These notes are based on Bill's message, supplemented by Pete's introduction to the Wildfires Festival (30th – 31st May 2021)