

“What’s gotten into you?”

Growing up, when I found myself in trouble with my parents, I might just hear the question of contempt, “What’s gotten into you?” It was not a question I enjoyed hearing. It usually was an indication that something had radically changed in my behavior, as if something mysterious had entered my body and exerted its control over me. The question is quite appropriate for this week’s study.

After weeks and months of stumbling and bumbling and not really understanding much about Jesus, suddenly, in Acts 2, something has gotten into these disciples of Jesus. Peter himself, who weeks earlier, did not dare to be linked with Jesus, now sets his former behavior aside and is suddenly bold and proclaiming God’s Word. What has gotten into these people? Well, something, or someone, has gotten into them – and as a result, the world will never be the same. Let’s find out together what, (or who,) is getting into people.

Monday – Empowerment for a Far Reaching Vision

“Pentecost brought to the Apostles the equipment they needed... to be his primary and authoritative witnesses.”
John Stott, “The Message of Acts”

1. Please Read Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 1:6-9 and Acts 2:1-14. What do these passages promise which was fulfilled in Acts 2:1-4?
2. What do we learn about the purpose of the Holy Spirit from these texts? Does his influence appear to be primarily for our personal comfort and consolation, or for ministry?

Digging Deeper - What connection might there be between the cross-cultural directives of Matthew 28 and Acts 1 and the events of Acts 2? What implications do these commands and events have on our current Christian lives?

Tuesday – Un-Babbling

“The range of languages in which (the mighty deeds of God) were proclaimed suggests that Luke thought of the coming of the Spirit more particularly as a preparation for the worldwide proclamation of the gospel.”

F.F. Bruce, “The Book of Acts”

1. Please Read Genesis 11:1-9, and Acts 2:1-4. When was the last time you found language a barrier to a relationship or task?
2. How do the events in Acts contrast to those in Genesis? What does this suggest about the work of the Holy Spirit?
3. Today, God’s Word is preached in hundreds of languages all around our globe. What do you think this vast diversity indicates about God’s intended ethnic makeup of his global Church?

Putting it into practice – close your time by praying for a people group other than your own.

Wednesday – A New Era of God’s Work

“At Pentecost all the disciples were baptized with the Spirit. This baptism and filling marked the gift of the Spirit from Christ’s throne of glory. It brought the fulfillment of the promise of the Father, and sealing of the New Covenant. It was not an episode in the spiritual development of the disciples for us to imitate; it was the beginning of a new epoch in the history of redemption.” Edmund Clowney, “The Church”

1. Please Read Acts 2:1-4 and John 16:5-16. How do you think Jesus’ teaching in the John passage relates to the events of the Acts passage?
2. Who or what is “the counselor?”
3. Is the counselor a “he” or an “it?” What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?

Making it Personal – How does the identity and presence of the Holy Spirit impact your average daily tasks? Prayer? Worship? Attempts to share your faith?

Thursday – An Elemental Event

“The continuing miracle that continues to astonish is that the same breath (life) of God that created heavens and earth, that validated and blessed Jesus, is now being breathed into ordinary men and women and formed into words that continue to give witness to God’s Genesis-creation and Jesus-salvation.”

Eugene Peterson, Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places

1. Please Read Acts 2:1-4. What do you think of that’s associated with wind and fire? Are they pleasant or unpleasant associations?
2. Read Ezekiel 37:9-14 and John 3:8. What Biblical imagery tends to be associated with wind?
3. Read Exodus 3:2-5. What is associated with fire in this passage?

Digging Deeper – How does the presence of wind and fire illustrate the initiation of a new era of God’s work?

Friday – What’s gotten into Peter?

1. Please Read Acts 2:14 and Luke 22:54-62. When Luke wrote the book of Acts, there is no doubt that he had Luke 22 in mind. As you contrast these two pictures of Peter, what explains the remarkable difference?
2. What is the purpose of Peter’s message as he states it in verse 14? How is this different from “trying to convince?”
3. Check out Jeremiah 20:9. What does Jeremiah experience as a result of his reluctance to speak of God?

Putting it into practice – Pray for appropriate opportunities to speak and “make known” the risen Lord this week.

Weekend: Read through the first and second chapter of Acts a couple of times in preparation for Sunday’s message. Consider what difference the Holy Spirit is making (and will make) in your life and ministry.