

Home Group notes for the week following Sunday 8th June 2014

THEME: PENTECOST

As we Gather

Pentecost – a Jewish festival also known as the Feast of Weeks – was celebrated 50 days after the Passover. This feast was significant for 2 main reasons, commemoration of the giving of the Law of Moses, and gratitude for the (agricultural) harvest.

For Christians, Pentecost signifies the moment that the Holy Spirit became the predominant reality in the life of the early Church, and the source of all guidance. This was 50 days after the resurrection of Christ.

Reading Scripture ACTS 2 : 1 - 21

Thinking together

We are told that the disciples were all together when a sound like rushing wind was heard and a light like tongues of fire was seen (Acts 2:1-3)

What do you think the disciples were doing, all together? Discuss

**What did the witnessed signs signify? Discuss
(Exodus 3:2 & 13:21 1Kings 19:11-12)**

Luke records that immediately after their experience, the disciples began to speak so that foreigners in the city were able to understand them (Acts 2:4-12)

**What do you think the disciples were saying after they were filled with the Holy Spirit?
Discuss**

**Why do you think Luke listed the various nationalities of those present? Discuss
(Genesis 11:1-9 Matthew 28:19-20 Acts 1:8)**

We have seen from previous studies that Peter was a natural leader, although before Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection he was erratic and unstable in his faith and behaviour. Now we see him – humble yet bold, and filled with the confidence of the Spirit – turn into a dynamic and powerful speaker (Acts 2:14-21).

Do you feel that you can never be used by God to grow His kingdom; if so, why? Discuss

In preaching the first Christian sermon, Peter presented a revolutionary thought to the Jews of that time when he stated that the Holy Spirit (God's Spirit) is now given to all people (believers), everywhere, for ever, because the Old Testament prophecies have been fulfilled in Jesus. See for example - Isaiah 11:1-12 and Joel 2:28-32.

**Why do you think his listeners found this thought revolutionary? Discuss
(Genesis 12:2-3 Matthew 13:53-57 & 21:23-25)**

In Closing

We live in the last days (Acts 2:17-18), the era of the Church of Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2). Joel predicted that the end of this present age will culminate in judgement before the ushering in of the age to come – the glorious day of the Lord (Acts 2:19-21).

Do Christians have anything to fear when Christ returns? Discuss

A PRAYER YOU MIGHT LIKE TO READ

Almighty God, on Pentecost you sent your Holy Spirit to the disciples with the wind from heaven and in tongues of flame. Inspire our hearts and set them on fire with His joy and power, and send us out as witnesses to the wonder of your love. Amen