

Monday, 3 September 2018 Acts 1:16, 24-26

“Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus...And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.” And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

From the beginning, shortly after our Lord was taken up into Heaven, His followers turned to Scriptures and the Lord for guidance.

It is a beautiful pattern, to search the Scriptures and be before the Lord about the decision before me. Lord, forgive me for those, all too numerous times that I charge blindly ahead, and teach to follow the example of Peter and his fellow disciples.

Tuesday, 4 September 2018 Acts 2:1-8 , 36-38

*When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly **there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind**, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. **And at this sound the multitude came together**, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?... Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.” Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” And Peter said to them, “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.*

I guess that Jerusalem was not an unusually quiet place, filled with visitors from every corner of the Roman world. However, whatever the sound of a mighty rushing wind was, it was an attention getter. And then to hear these uncultured Galileans speaking in all the languages of the Roman Empire. I'm sitting here, in a quiet room in Vermont trying to imagine the impact upon those assembled. *And they, the disciples, were filled with the Holy Spirit.* The fulfillment of Jesus' promise that He would send the Helper. Immediate results: 1) Peter, no longer the denier of Christ, but stepping out in his new role as a messenger of the Good News. 2) Those in the crowd who were quickened by the Holy Spirit received the message and were immediately baptized. 3) The

Church grew from about 120 souls to over 3000 from morning to evening.

Wednesday, 5 September 2018 Acts 2:16-18

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

I believe that this is a demonstration of our Lord's words in Luke 12:11-12 that the Spirit will supply the words as needed, I am not to be anxious. Yes, Peter was not before synagogues, rulers and, authorities, but he indeed was called to testify. His, and my only task is to fill our hearts with the Scriptures; to be prepared to witness to whomever we are called to speak to.

Thursday, 6 September 2018 Acts 2:33

Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

What were they seeing and hearing? The mighty roar of the Holy Spirit entering the souls of men? Yes. The words that tumbled from Peter's mouth? Yes. Transformed lives? Yes. The Scriptures and prophecies therein unfolded? Yes. It is no miracle that over 3000 came to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and Savior that day. Are the same conditions and opportunities available to me? Yes. All I need is to be bold as Peter, the no-longer-cowardly, craven Peter, and let the Holy Spirit flow through me.

Friday, 7 September 2018 Acts 2:37-38

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” And Peter said to them, “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.

Peter was never one to hesitate to respond to a question, sometimes impulsively, but now filled by the Holy Spirit, he had all cylinders firing. “Repent and be baptized!” Repent—acknowledge your sin and draw near to the LORD, God the Almighty. No longer blame others for your sin, own it; no more the devil made me do it; I chose to disobey God. Change me, LORD.

Be baptized, a simple but powerful statement to the world, to the culture around me that I have a new heart, a new way of being. I am now a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ who paid the penalty for my sin and who now directs every aspect of my life. **He is**

Lord!

Saturday, 8 September 2018 Acts 4:8-13

Then **Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit**, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, (9) if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” **Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.**

Cause and effect. Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit. The cause: Peter presents a clear and concise statement of the situation. 1) A good deed was done. 2) A man was healed. 3) The healing agency was the name of Jesus Christ. 4) Jesus Christ was the one whom you rejected and crucified. 5) There is no other path to salvation. The effect: the rulers and elders were that they 1) saw the boldness of Peter and John. 2) saw that they were two common fishermen, not the graduates of the School of Gamaliel. 3) recognized that Peter and John had been with Jesus. 4) were astounded.

Did any there that day become believers? Only time will tell, that time when we are all assembled before the LORD, God, the Almighty. But I will not be surprised. I need to focus on a clear, unvarnished presentation of the Gospel. It can only come about by the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Lord's Day, 9 September 2018 Psalm 119:147

I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words.

We are now at that time of year where rising before dawn is getting easier and more manageable. This is a time without distractions from the outside, there is nothing that can be seen, and all is quiet before the bustle of the day begins. But soon, slowly the world will start to be revealed, and I will need to be ready for it. The opening, the revealing of Your creation each morning is a story in itself, a story of how You come to us and show Yourself as the loving, Creator God, coming to draw us unto Yourself and provide for Your people. Praise You, my Lord and Master.

VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



September 3-9, 2018

Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: Romans 15:5-6

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus, may the focus of every aspect of our lives bring a spirit of unity to our fellowship so that we will glorify Your and our God and Father with one voice. Give us that endurance and encouragement that comes only from You so that we do not allow the routines of life and ministries to distract us from that call to bring glory to You and the Father.

Through the power of the indwelling Spirit, granted to each of us, *Amen*.

To fear or not to fear, that is the question.

The fear of the Lord, an expression that occurs many times in Scripture, 142 in the ESV in various forms, is not well understood in the Church today. For many, the phrase represents a weak and flabby description of an overly saccharine spiritual being of some sort. It certainly does not include the concept of the LORD, God the Almighty who spoke all things into being and who controls all things.

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, www.ailbe.org; along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

Pastor John Nunnikhoven, The Church at Prison, Inc.
PO Box 8318, Essex Junction, VT 05452 or to prior@ailbe.org

The Fellowship of Ailbe, (www.ailbe.org)
Realizing the presence, promise and power
of the Kingdom of God.