

PP It's exciting to be doing this series on the HS.

And we come to a huge moment today as we consider Pentecost and the long-awaited coming of the Spirit. We won't understand the ministry and the person of the Spirit – without Pentecost.

And my hope today is that we not only understand what that extraordinary moment means – but we realise the extraordinary moment we are in today – that we'd be gripped by the power and ministry of the HS as well.

Will you pray with me?

Father do you work amongst us today - by the power of the Spirit - that Christ be known and trusted and experienced all the more. This we pray in His name, Amen.

The tag line we're using for this series is: He who leads us to Christ – that's a very helpful line - even though it doesn't tell us everything about the Spirit - it shows us something very particular and essential about the Holy Spirit that we need to understand.

Who is the Holy Spirit? well the Holy Spirit is God – God who is one in being and essence, three in distinctive persons – The Scriptures reveal God as Father, Son and Spirit – one God, three persons always in unity – with God the HS's role to especially lead to and showcase the Christ – to glory, in the Son– that we might know him, trust him, belong to him, experience salvation and life in him.

This is helpful because there are all sorts of opinions and ideas about the Spirit, what God's Spirit may or may not be up to, what God's Spirit may or may not be saying or revealing. Just as there are all sorts of opinions about what it might mean to be spiritual and what that might look like and mean.

We're going to cover a number of these in our series – but what the Bible is saying, the Spirit, the breathed out Word of God - about the person and work of the Spirit – is He leads people to Christ.

Now we started our series last week, by looking at both the OT expectation of the coming age of the Spirit, and Jesus own teaching about the Spirit. If you're in a growth group you're taking a deep dive in John 14-16 – very important chapters.

But the OT promises of the Spirit coming and the promises of the King, the messiah coming – are coupled together – when the messiah comes, so will the giving of the Spirit – when the Spirit comes, so will the rule of the messiah, the Christ – and so it's no surprise when Jesus does show up, we see the Spirit present in His ministry, present in his baptism - The Spirit of the Lord is upon him in a way never known before – as the OT promised.

Upon him who would die and rise again to gather his people into the kingdom of God – the Spirit leads us to the King.

And as we saw last week, Jesus himself promised that the Spirit would come, once he had departed.

He makes that explicit to his disciples that last supper night - saying after his death and resurrection he will ascend to heaven – and he'll send the Spirit - which is going to be awesome – because the Spirit is Christ's presence with them, the Spirit will remind the apostles of all he's said and done, will guide them into all truth, and will convict the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment - By showing people Christ.

PP Jim Packer describes the work of the Spirit as floodlight ministry.

We live right near Canberra stadium, and without those big lights on game night – there wouldn't be much of a game to play or to watch. When the lights are on, it's the game you can see – if you've got a decent seat. No-one goes there to stare at the lights – you go to experience what the floodlights reveal.

What's the Spirit up to? – floodlighting Jesus.

When do the floodlights get turned on? – Pentecost.

PP Why, what does it mean –

Well let's dive into Acts this morning and find out.

The book of Acts – begins with the now risen Jesus, preparing his Apostles for what is to come and teaching them about his Kingdom.

And he says them, 1 **PP** wait for the promise of the Father which you heard from me, for John baptised with water but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

In the Gospels, JTB speaks about the one who would baptise with the HS – so we’ve been waiting for this moment – it’s this necessary hope and ministry of the one who was to come.

Now the word baptism simply means to be immersed – but not in water – but in the Spirit

Now that Jesus had been raised from the dead – now as he is about to ascend to heaven and be enthroned as Lord – he speaks about this baptism that was promised.

And not many days later they are immersed. And it’s an extraordinary moment. **PP**

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

I wonder if this was what they were expecting?

Pentecost just happens to be one of the major festivals in the Jewish calendar, and there were 10’s of thousands of Jews from every nation in Jerusalem. But it’s not what was going on in the temple that made the headlines – it was what was happening in this Galilean Airbnb –

Also it wasn’t the tongues of fire or the sound of rushing wind that got their attention – it was that they heard the praises of God in their languages, from people who didn’t speak their language. **PP**

⁷ And they were amazed and astonished, saying, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? ⁸ And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?

Now perhaps Galileans weren’t known for their linguistic skill. But they had the skill this day – and Luke lists all these different languages and dialects that were being heard and the crowds wonder in bewilderment - how can this be happening? **PP** v.11 for we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” ¹² And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” With some suggesting they might all be drunk.

This was an extraordinary experience – tongues of fire, rushing wind –symbolic of God’s presence and work – but the filling of the Spirit – the baptism and immersion of the Spirit was accompanied with this miraculous ability to - to declare the mighty works of God – the word of God - in languages the world over.

Now what do we think that means?

vv.1-13 describes the event – then very helpfully Peter then gets up and explains.

PP He says, ¹⁶ this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ “**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; ¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.**

PP ¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke; ²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. ²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

Peter says it’s the beginning of the end. The last days, the HS days as promised in the Scriptures are now upon us.

Now just pause for a moment – this is Peter who just days ago had denied Jesus.

This was Peter, the Galilean fisherman not known for getting his theological assertions correct.

And actually, the book of Acts opens with the Apostles seemingly still clueless - they ask Jesus if he's going to be restoring the Kingdom to Israel. If that's what it means that he's the messiah. Well, it's a whole lot bigger than Israel isn't it?

And Peter, now filled with the Spirit - makes the truth known.

Peter quotes the prophet Joel - and says the promised last days have now arrived. **PP** Because, God's Spirit is now being poured out upon all people.

The Spirit given not just for prophets and Kings like in the OT - but for all classes, all ages and stages - and as we see here - by the speaking in other languages - all nations.

This is not just an Israel thing - this is not just a Jewish thing, this is the dawn of a new age altogether.

PP You'll see that phrase the day of the Lord - the great and magnificent day - the day of the Lord features a lot in Joel - and it was the day of judgement for God's people - but also the day of salvation for God's people. It was the day of God's wrath and judgment for the nations - but also somehow the day of salvation for the nations - before this last day - the Spirit would be poured out on all flesh. Why? What's triggered all this?

Notice what Peter says next - **PP**

22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— 23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

Who does Peter, filled by the Spirit, speak of - he speaks of Jesus. He speaks to the Jews, many of whom had calling for Jesus death just weeks before.

God's raised him, death couldn't keep him down. He's the one, he's the one promised in our Scriptures.

And Peter explains as he quotes the Psalms and recalls the promises of Scripture, that the Son of King David would one day be enthroned as the forever King.

PP

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. This is because of Jesus. It's because Jesus is on the throne.

And he concludes the first Christian sermon by saying **PP 36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."**

What has Peter's sermon been about the day the Spirit was first poured out? It's about the ministry, death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, as promised in the Scriptures, as witnessed by the apostles, events known to all in Jerusalem - the HS is poured out, because the Lord and Christ, whom you crucified is enthroned over all.

And the Spirit being poured out signals these are the last days - all that's left is that final day of the Lord - which could happen any moment.

What a sermon! Incredible.

What's their response?

PP 37 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?"

They had rejected Jesus - in the most comprehensive way possible.

Now Jesus is enthroned as their judge - now the Spirit is being poured out for salvation and life.

The last days have arrived - what have we done?!

Cut to the heart – they don't question what Peter is saying –they don't argue with him – appraise his theology. Cut to the heart – they are convicted by the Spirit – they are stirred and led to faith right then and there. Because the Spirit is at work – in the preaching of the Gospel.

When the Spirit reveals the truth about King Jesus – when the Spirit reveals the truth about ourselves, our sin our need – what are we to do? **PP**

38 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. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

PP To repent is to change your mind about Jesus, and to change your mind about yourself.
The one I have rejected is the one I truly need.
Repentance acknowledges I need the saviour, for I am the sinner.

Repentance is not, I must work hard to change my ways in order to be saved – repentance is not me doing lots of good things – and not doing bad things – that will be the fruit of repentance, yes. But the Spirit is at work, the Spirit was poured out to save – before these people had done anything.

PP Ephesians 1:13 says this when the apostle Paul writes, **in him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.**

PP Baptism is an outward expression of trust and dependence in Jesus that is already present. It's a symbol of what has already occurred. You don't get baptised to get saved, rather it's the saved, who get baptised. And more importantly, it's the saved who have been baptised, immersed in the Spirit – who floodlights Jesus.

Pentecost, unique, nothing quite like it happens again – but – the mission of the Spirit, happens again and again.
The floodlights are now on

But think again, three thousand Jews, from all over the known world who days ago had wanted Jesus dead, now belong to him. What a turn around that is. What a miracle.

One that would not even be possible without the Spirit.
Why so? – well because in our sinful nature – we are not interested in salvation, we're not interested in serving God and putting his King first in our lives. Do you think these Jews were interested in putting their trust in the Jesus they happily saw crucified? What sort of power is this?

Without the Spirit, it's not possible – and it's not possible for us..
For we are in bondage to our sin – as we've seen last term in

PP Romans, none are righteous, we all turn away.

We are dead in our transgressions and sins, Eph.2

we are darkened in our understanding and hardness of heart, Eph 4

and our minds are blinded to the gospel 2 Cor 4.

The odds are not in our favour when it comes to the day of the Lord and his coming judgment are they?

It is the Spirit who awakens us to Christ – it is the Spirit who floodlights his wonder.

To be immersed with the Spirit is to encounter the wonders of Jesus and joyfully put your trust in him.

What we see in Acts 2 – is of course the beginning of what Jesus said would happen.

PP Acts 1:8 he told his apostles that **you will receive power when the HS 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.**

Do you see how the Spirit of God and mission go together? Mission is the heartbeat of the Spirit because mission is all about people being led to know and trust Jesus.

PP All people – even Samaritans – chapter 8 – they respond to the Gospel and are filled with the Spirit.

Even Gentiles chapter 10 – the Spirit is poured out on them, and they turn in trust to Jesus.

Mission crosses geographical, religious and social boundaries.

Those who were excluded under Judaism – the lame, eunuchs, pagans, idolaters – are all included, all prophecy and declare the wonders of God as they come to believe the gospel.

All are baptised in the Spirit – as the truth about Jesus is floodlit that their hearts and minds are changed by his wonder.

And then the rest of the book of Acts, is largely about Paul's missionary journeys, where he is led by the Spirit to see the Gospel proclaimed, Gospel ministry supported.

And the NT letters, most of them, are missionary letters – written to new churches as the gospel continued to grow and spread over the known world. They explain life in the age of the Spirit, which is the age of mission.

Where the Spirit emboldens people to proclaim the gospel,

where the Spirit prepares people to suffer for the Gospel,

where the Spirit transforms people in the power of the Gospel – to live for his praise and glory.

Now I reckon, this emphasis on mission – is one we can easily overlook. That is, Christians can talk endlessly about what the Spirit might be doing in their life – or not – but miss the very mission of the Spirit. Or not even have an interest really in mission. It's as we assume the Spirit is to floodlight something else entirely – not the mission of Jesus – but some other mission. This was one of the problems in the Corinthian church – remember they had all these amazing spiritual gifts – but they were floodlighting themselves, not Christ and his gospel.

Mission is the heartbeat of the Spirit..

PP This is our mission for our church – our vision – to see the news about Jesus producing more and more life-long disciples who together see the gospel go further and deeper in Canberra and beyond.

The HS isn't mentioned by name – but that is the ministry of the HS – floodlighting Jesus so more might know him and put their faith in him.

The mission is not to floodlight Crossroads – we're not building some franchise – we're focusing upon Jesus.

Similarly, the ministry of the Spirit is not to floodlight our careers.

The work of the Spirit is not to floodlight our skills.

The work of the Spirit is not to floodlight a life of ease, success and wealth.

It's much better than that – for in Christ alone all things better than we could ever dream or imagine are found.

Come HS and floodlight him for all to see.

Use us Lord, to speak and share of his wonder. Stir us Lord, as a church family, to be Spirit filled for mission.

Because opportunities abound.

Crossroads English, supporting our global partners, sending more to be trained to lead God's people elsewhere.

But each one of us have a unique sphere of influence, each of us have connections and relationships that are unique to us. May the Spirit lead us, to speak of Christ.

Friends, what a time to be alive, during these last days.

The messiah reigns, the promised spirit has come, God's promises are being fulfilled as he gathers his people from the nations. More are Christian today than at any time in history. More than 3000 every day are becoming Christian – because Christ who was crucified and raised, pours out his Spirit still. We live between Jesus' exaltation and his return.

And actually, the next big thing to happen in our world – is not the Black Friday sales, or the Christmas holidays or the summer of cricket on Kayo or another AI breakthrough or even the Brisbane Olympics – the next big thing in God's timetable – is the day of the Lord which will mark the return of Jesus.

Which doesn't mean we just sit around waiting, slightly bored and distracted – no – these are the days of opportunity, salvation and urgency – these are the days, the last days still, when the Spirit is poured out – not to excite people with the middle class Australian dream – but to floodlight Jesus so more and more might be thrilled to belong to him, captured by the Kingdom dream –

And one day soon – the day of the Lord, the day of Christ's return will come – where the one who faced God's judgment for us, will judge his people blessed and in the right – because the Spirit brought them to call upon the name of Jesus – saviour and Lord.

Have you been Baptised in the HS? Do you have the Spirit? How can you know?

Well the Spirit is not given because people are holy, it's not secured by being especially good. We receive the Spirit as we put our trust, our dependence in Jesus. Do you believe he is the saviour and Lord? Are you convinced that he is the one to trust for salvation and no other – especially not yourself? Well then, you have the Spirit. God's seal and promise, God's presence, the Spirit of Christ in you, stirring you to trust Jesus.

The Scriptures declare, and the Spirit makes clear that Jesus is Lord and Christ. King and saviour, because of his death and resurrection. Friend if you haven't as yet, because the day of the Lord will surely come – turn to him in trust, repent and believe the gospel – and you too will receive the gift of the HS. An you too, will would have been swept into his great mission – to lead many more to Christ.

Pray

The day of the Lord has come – the day of God's judgment and the day of God's salvation come together – who was judged, humanities sin was judged and dealt with in the death of Jesus – as he was judged in our place.

Who was saved? Sinners for whom he bore God's wrath, that they might receive forgiveness.

Because the day of the Lord has come in Jesus – he pours out his Spirit – on all flesh, in these last days.

This is what Jesus promised would happen

Call upon the name of the Lord...before the day of the Lord...

Pentecost reveals the mission of the Spirit – to see more men, women and children the world over - in these last days - knowing Jesus, trusting Jesus. These last days, before that final day.

Because, the Spirit directs our attention to the crucified and risen King.

What a time to be alive!

that they might see and experience and glory in Jesus.

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