

Reflection



- Showing love
- Giving hope
- Bringing peace

The Church of St John & St Leonard

Acts 2 v 32 – 42 Wednesday 3rd June

32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

"The Lord said to my Lord:

"Sit at my right hand

*35 until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet."*

36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

38 Peter replied, "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 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The Fellowship of the Believers

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Let's begin by looking back. Less than 2 months ago these same disciples ran away when Jesus was arrested, Peter denied him 3 times when challenged as to whether he knew him and they hid away together, desperate, confused, frightened and distraught. Then Jesus appeared to them several times as their resurrected Lord; he spoke to them, he restored Peter's sense of worth and of calling, he told Thomas he could touch his hands and his side, he called Mary by name. Later he ascended into heaven and left them, telling them to wait for the Holy Spirit, the gift his Father had promised, and giving them the great commission – to go and make disciples of all nations, promising that he would always be with them. Then came the sound of a mighty wind, filling the house they were in, and what seemed to be tongues of fire resting on each of them; they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues. Not surprisingly, a crowd gathered! Peter, the one who had denied Jesus, who had hidden away in fear, stood up with the eleven to address the crowd. What a transformation!

Today I think we are being called to believe that if that transformation can happen to Peter in less than 2 months, then it can also happen for you and me in and by the power of the Holy Spirit! We may not be speaking to large crowds (though you never

Reflection



- Showing love
- Giving hope
- Bringing peace

The Church of St John & St Leonard

know what God might do!) and the result may not be 3000 new Christians (though again you never know what God might do!) but we are still all called – whoever we are, whatever our age, our experience or our learning or training – to go and make disciples, to speak about our Lord and saviour, to challenge people to repent and to do it in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the knowledge that Jesus is with us always.

We are called to 'talk the talk' and, looking at verse 42, we are also called to 'walk the walk' – to devote ourselves to the Word of God, to fellowship, communion and prayer. Are these the things we are devoted to? Devotion means love, loyalty or enthusiasm for a person or activity, commitment and dedication, even passion and consecration. Like me, are you challenged by this today?

We are called to both 'walk the walk' and to 'talk the talk'; called to speak about our faith and to share the good news of the Gospel with a world that so desperately needs to hear good news, but we are also called to act in a way that backs up our words, to live lives of passion, of dedication, of consecration, to be marked by our love for Jesus and for one another. We simply can't do this in our own strength and we shouldn't try to! We have been given the gift of the Holy Spirit, promised not just to those first disciples but to all who are called by God, and we have the promise of Jesus' presence with us always. As we pray to be filled and re-filled with the Holy Spirit (remembering that God promises to ' pour out his Spirit on all people'), as we devote ourselves to God through our words and in our actions, let's both imagine and dare to find out what God can do in us and through us in 2 months, just as he did with his first disciples!

Sue Williams

Rector: The Revd Vicki Bryson



The PCC of St John's and St Leonard's is a Registered Charity - No. 1131545