

# South Bay Church Plant Sabbath School

## 2 – The First Church

### The Waiting

And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.” Luke 24:49

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit 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.” Acts 1:8

Why was it important that the disciples wait in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit?

How easy is it for you to wait? Why?

What happened during this waiting period? Read the following quotation and identify specific activities and attitudes.

“As the disciples waited for the fulfillment of the promise, they humbled their hearts in true repentance and confessed their unbelief.... The disciples prayed with intense earnestness for a fitness to meet men and in their daily intercourse to speak words that would lead sinners to Christ. Putting away all differences, all desire for the supremacy, they came close together in Christian fellowship.... These days of preparation were days of deep heart searching. The disciples felt their spiritual need and cried to the Lord for the holy unction that was to fit them for the work of soul saving. They did not ask for a blessing for themselves merely. They were weighted with the burden of the salvation of souls.” *Acts of the Apostles*, Chapter 4.

How can we incorporate these activities and attitudes into our lives during this waiting period in our church plant?

### Pentecostal Power

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. Acts 2:1-6

What would it have been like to have been in the room that day? What do you think happened when they went out into the city?

What was the purpose of the gift of the Holy Spirit and the gift tongues that they were given?

How was this giving of the Holy Spirit different from the working of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament? Why did God wait to bestow this gift?

“It was as if for ages this influence had been held in restraint, and now Heaven rejoiced in being able to pour out upon the church the riches of the Spirit's grace.” *Acts of the Apostles* 38.

What do you think would happen if we had more people filled with the Holy Spirit in our church?

Do you think the following statement is true? Why or why not?

"If God were to take the Holy Spirit out of our midst today, about 95% of what we are doing in our churches would go on, and we would not know the difference." (A. W. Tozer, quoted in David Watson, *I Believe in the Church*, p.166)

Why is it that we don't have more of the Holy Spirit in our lives now?

"The lapse of time has wrought no change in Christ's parting promise to send the Holy Spirit as His representative. It is not because of any restriction on the part of God that the riches of His grace do not flow earthward to men. If the fulfillment of the promise is not seen as it might be, it is because the promise is not appreciated as it should be. If all were willing, all would be filled with the Spirit. Wherever the need of the Holy Spirit is a matter little thought of, there is seen spiritual drought, spiritual darkness, spiritual declension and death. Whenever minor matters occupy the attention, the divine power which is necessary for the growth and prosperity of the church, and which would bring all other blessings in its train, is lacking, though offered in infinite plenitude." *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 50

What will happen when we receive the Holy Spirit?

"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him." Acts 10:38

What would this look like today?

### **Asking for the Gift**

How do we receive the Holy Spirit?

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. Acts 2:38

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" Luke 11:9-13

What would this look like practically?

Since this is the means by which we are to receive power, why do we not hunger and thirst for the gift of the Spirit? Why do we not talk of it, pray for it, and preach concerning it? The Lord is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to those who serve Him than parents are to give good gifts to their children. For the daily baptism of the Spirit every worker should offer his petition to God. Companies of Christian workers should gather to ask for special help, for heavenly wisdom, that they may know how to plan and execute wisely." *Acts of the Apostles*, 50.

What can we do to have more of the Holy Spirit personally and in our church plant?