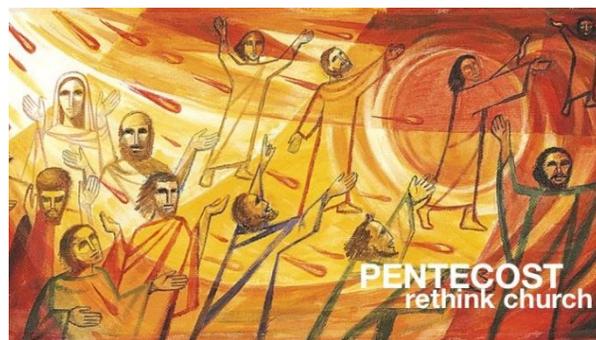


Crossroads Daily Guide
Week of May 15, 2016
Pentecost



Sunday May 15, 2016

Acts 2:1 When Pentecost Day arrived, they were all together in one place.

Reflection: Ten days before the Day of Pentecost Jesus ascended back to heaven. The followers of Jesus were obviously concerned about their future. They had spent the better part of the past three years following Jesus and now he was gone. Obviously this was a trying moment in their lives. However, instead of individually going off to mourn Jesus' departure they chose to come together to rethink, to pray and discern what the future might be for them. Maybe they remembered the words Jesus taught them earlier – "Where two or three are gathered together, there I am with you." There is something powerful that happens to us individually when we gather together in Jesus's name. Who is your community that you gather with to rethink, to pray and discern your future?

Monday May 16, 2016

Acts 2:2-3 Suddenly a sound from heaven like the howling of a fierce wind filled the entire house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them.

Reflection: The story of Pentecost is certainly not boring. It is full of motion and drama. With graphic words like "a fierce wind filling the entire house" and "flames of fire alighting on each of them" we can 2,000 years later still feel the power of the Holy Spirit at work in that community. The wind, the breath of God's unconditional love, the Holy Spirit, fanned the flames of passion within the hearts of those gathered together. Whenever that happens you can't help but feel it. You try to describe it as best you can. And yet it is so big, all you can really say is, it had to come from God. What are you most passionate about? Have you ever felt the Spirit of God lighting a passion within you? If so how would you describe it? Is there any part of that passion you need to rethink?

Tuesday May 17, 2016

Acts 2:4-6 They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak. There were pious Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. When they heard this sound, a crowd gathered. They were mystified because everyone heard them speaking in their native languages.

Reflection: The way we communicate God's unconditional love to others is very important. That's the point of this part of the Pentecost story. When we talk about God's love we need to be mindful of the words we use. We need to speak the language of love in ways that make sense to all people regardless of what they believe or don't believe. Sometimes we Christians speak in "Christianize" and this kind of language makes little sense to others who are not Christian. This part of the Pentecost story asks us to rethink how we demonstrate with both words and actions the unconditional love of God to others. As you try to communicate the unconditional love of God to others are you able to do so without speaking "Christianize"? What does that mean for you?

Wednesday May 18, 2016

Acts 2:7-8 They were surprised and amazed, saying, "Look, aren't all the people who are speaking Galileans, every one of them? How then can each of us hear them speaking in our native language?"

Reflection: If you have ever travelled to a different country wherein people speak a language that you do not know, then you know how frustrating it is to try to communicate even the simplest of things without success.

But once you find someone who speaks your language you feel a surprising sense of relief. The same is true with the language of love. Sometimes we think we are speaking love and yet what others hear is judgment or exclusion. Four years ago through Imagine we invited 50 people who are not religious into a conversation. Our part of the conversation was asking a few questions but primarily to just listen to what people had to say about God, church, life, etc. Numerous times the people said, "I can't believe you just want to listen to me without preaching at me." When we Christians listen and then speak only the language of love, people are surprised and amazed. How hard or easy is it for you to listen to your friends, co-workers or family members without "preaching" at them? How might you rethink your "love language"?

Thursday May 19, 2016

Acts 2:11-12 We hear them declaring the mighty works of God in our own languages!" They were all surprised and bewildered. Some asked each other, "What does this mean?"

Reflection: We all long to hear about the "mighty works of God" for our lives, and yet what that means is we have to think and rethink, "what does this mean?" What if God is already doing a mighty thing in your life? Sometimes God's mighty work is as simple and profound as giving you the strength and courage to face a challenging day. Sometimes it comes with a word of affirmation. Sometimes it is a word asking you to rethink a major decision. Can you name a mighty work of God in your life either past or present? What does this mighty word of God mean for you today?

Friday May 20, 2016

Act 2:14 Peter stood with the other eleven apostles.

Reflection: Peter was the early leader among those who gathered together on Pentecost. We often look to leaders as outliers, solo players, and yet in a very subtle way what we read in this short passage is that Peter had eleven others standing with him. He wasn't a solo leader. We all have gifts of one kind or another but no one, no matter how gifted we might be, can do life alone. The gift of Pentecost is the needed reminder that God's greatest movements throughout history have happened with a group of people. Someone may be called to keep the people motivated and the vision alive, but God never called a solo leader. As you lead your life day-to-day who stands with you? What might you need to rethink about your idea of leadership?

Saturday May 21, 2016

1 Corinthians 12:27 You are the body of Christ and parts of each other.

Reflection: These words of the Apostle Paul describe who that first group that gathered on Pentecost really were. They were going to be the Body of Christ in a multitude of ways. Before Jesus ascended to heaven he commissioned his followers to be his presence, his love, his healing, his touch, his unlimited welcome to the world. That is brilliant. One person could not and cannot traverse the globe and share God's unconditional love; but 2.2 billion people can. But even with such a global goal it all begins locally. As followers of Jesus we are to think "glocally" – Change the world through local acts of God's unconditional love and the entire globe is impacted. How might you be the Body of Christ today right where you are? How might this understanding of who you are and what you are a part of (The Body of Christ) cause you to rethink your goals day-to-day?