

**100% Proof!**

Acts 2<sup>1-21</sup>; Romans 8<sup>14-17</sup>; John 14<sup>8-17</sup>

*These men are not drunk as you suppose, for it is only nine o'clock in the morning! [Acts 2<sup>15</sup>]*

The Apostle Peter has obviously never visited Handsworth otherwise he would not have made a point of saying that 9.00am is too early to be drunk!

Yet, such was the power of the coming of the Holy Spirit - in wind and fire - that those who received that Spirit were transformed by it in a way that dramatic and noticeable.

That same Spirit is the Spirit we celebrate at Pentecost and anticipate being active in the lives of all believers:

- ✦ We will pray for the renewal of those baptised today
- ✦ We will commit ourselves to be used by God's spirit to change the world where we live.
- ✦ We anticipate that same Spirit at work as those Baptised and some others are Confirmed by Bishop David next week.

Without God's Holy Spirit at work in us we cannot become Christians, but today we unashamedly want more - we want to experience that same transforming power that the disciples knew at that first Pentecost!

We don't want a diluted Spirit - we want one that is 100% proof!

**Power to Change**

The first change experienced by the Apostles was not being able to speak in other languages (or, more precisely, to be understood in other languages) but it was to become followers of Jesus.

To Spirit of God changes us from being self-possessed and self-obsessed individuals to those who count everything secondary to being a follower of Jesus:

- ✦ We accept that the Holy Spirit prompts us that we are sinners - people who have wilfully ignored and offended God - and then gloriously leads us to repentance.
- ✦ We accept that it is the Holy Spirit that gives us the power to begin again - buried with Christ in Baptism and raised to the new life he offers.

The Holy Spirit has the power to change us into Christians, followers of Jesus and people who live to glorify God.

**Power to Conform**

The Holy Spirit's primary role is to work within each of us so that we become more and more like Jesus. We are to conform to the family into which we have been adopted.

- ✦ We may want to realise the truth that John reveals **the one that believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater** - but that follows on from being like Jesus in character. The closeness of the relationship is the same as the Father and the Son - **I am in the Father and the Father is in me**: they are effectively the same person.
- ✦ Whatever gifts the Holy Spirit may give, you will never receive any gift that doesn't have the end result of making you more like Jesus.

The Holy Spirit doesn't make us the same as each other but does make us the same as Jesus and that is full of potential for our own good and the good of those around us.

**Power to Confront**

Romans tells us that the Holy Spirit turns **fear** into confidence that means we will even embrace **suffering for Christ** as a way to glorify him.

- ✦ When the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost the fearful country folk (Galileans) were transformed into ambassadors for God in the Capital City and when they had the courage to open their mouths God made the people make sense of their words.
- ✦ The story goes on to show that Peter had the courage to tell the crowd that **you crucified and killed....but God raised him up**. And then on to say **know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah this Jesus whom you crucified**. And concludes by stating **repent and be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**. 3000 responded and did exactly what our candidates will do today.

The Holy Spirit still gives us power to confront - to tell people of hope in Jesus and to confront injustice in our world just as Jesus would have done.

Peter may not have visited Handsworth - but the Holy Spirit has and with the same power and potential as he had on the Day of Pentecost. Today it will be clear that God has his hand on our candidates for Baptism, but how will it be evident for them and for us all that the Spirit of God lives in us?