

FIRST things FIRST Daily Devotionals

Devotional Guide for May 13-19, 2024

These devotions are prepared for you each week by Pastor Kevin to use for your own personal devotions with the Lord, and are designed to prepare you for the message next weekend.

Monday, May 13TH “With words, power, and the Holy Spirit”

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 NIV

The apostle Paul takes language originally applied to Israel (that they are also “loved by God”), reapplies it to the predominantly Gentile congregation of Thessalonica, reflecting his conviction that the church—made up of both Jewish and Gentile Christians—is now the renewed Israel of God. Paul defends the genuineness of his past preaching ministry in Thessalonica by contrasting his “words” with his “power,” the latter term likely referring to miracles. The apostle then qualifies this power with a reference both to “the Holy Spirit,” the divine source of these miracles, and to “deep conviction,” the consequence of this Spirit-given power, namely, the boldness with which Paul preached.

Question: How do you feel the power of the Holy Spirit in your life?

Tuesday, May 14TH “Filled with the Holy Spirit”

Scripture: Acts 2:1-4 NIV

The story of Pentecost for the Christian church is found here in this chapter. ‘Pentecost’ is a word that means ‘fiftieth day,’ the start of the Jewish holiday that would occur 50 days after Passover. It was during this celebration that the disciples received the promised gift of the Holy Spirit within them. When we read “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit” (v.4), this most likely refers to 120+ followers of Jesus gathered around the Twelve. The whole church at that time had gathered just before this episode, as in the prophecy from Joel that is shared by Peter in verses 17-21.

Question: How do you imagine the tongues of fire and rushing wind?

Wednesday, May 15TH “A crowd came together in bewilderment”

Scripture: Acts 2:5-13 NIV

Jerusalem was packed with people from all over the world for the celebration of Pentecost. God chose this time to send the Holy Spirit upon the disciples, because of the potential audience. Somehow, the disciples were heard speaking in the languages of all those who were in Jerusalem for the holiday. The reference to God-fearing Jews who

were living in Jerusalem refers to the pilgrims who came to the city to celebrate the festivals. Bible scholars estimate the city would swell to nearly a million people at this time. The sound of the disciples speaking in different languages gathered a crowd; the phenomenon created confusion (a crowd came together in “bewilderment”), since it would have been unthinkable for Galileans to speak fluently in all the languages of the far-flung regions listed in verses 9–11. All of the nations listed here covered every area of the world where Jews had immigrated during and since the Babylonian exile.

Question: What would you have thought if you witnessed this event?

Thursday, May 16TH “I Will Pour Out My Spirit on All People”

Scripture: Acts 2:14-21 NIV

Peter begins to show his leadership skills, by stepping up to preach to the crowds. He serves as the spokesperson for the apostles. He quickly clears up that the reason for the different languages being spoken was not caused by alcohol consumption; instead, Peter shares the end-time outpouring of the Holy Spirit. He explained prophecies many of them would hear as familiar, but how those same passages now related to Christ as the Messiah. The results are seen in Acts 2:40-41, “With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.” 3000 people added to the church... in one morning from one sermon? God works powerfully through His people!

Question: What are you doing to share your faith with others, in order to have them also come to know Christ and be a part of our church family?

Friday, May 17TH “I am going to send you what was promised”

Scripture: Luke 24:44-49 NIV

After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples. This passage emphasizes these things: (1) the proof of the bodily resurrection of Jesus; (2) the connection between the ministry of Jesus and of the apostles; and (3) Jesus’ promising “power from on high” (v.49). This provides a firm foundation for the book of Acts, which is Luke’s second volume of his writings. The prediction of Christ’s death and resurrection is not separated from the need for repentance that it demands. The Holy Spirit will be the answer to that promise.

Question: Have you experienced and/or understood the Holy Spirit?

Pentecost Sunday, May 19, 2024

**Remember to wear
RED for Pentecost!**

8:30 and 10:45 am (Livestream @10:45 am)

Acts 2:1-21 and Luke 24:44-49 NIV

Pastor’s message: **“Pneumatic Faith”**

