

WHITFIELD PARISH

St James' Church † St Luke's Church

LIFE Group Notes w/b Sunday 7 September 2008

Danger : Church at work – Power source

Acts 2.14 – 41

Well it really was August just three days ago and here I am looking out of my study window, thanking God for all the wonderful rain he is blessing us with and looking forward to a scorching September. No, the Creator hasn't given me inside information you understand – I'm just an optimist. I had some time in Devon this summer... in a tent... in the rain... but it was great to spend time with friends who I don't often see. And visits to the coast and up to Dartmoor just filled me with a sense of awe at the handiwork of our creator God.

Wherever you were over the summer, what did you enjoy doing? Where and how did you see God at work? Where did you see evidence of God's grace? Maybe you've had a grotty summer? It's really important in LIFE groups to 'do life together' and so don't just rush into Bible study and earnest intercession... take time this week to share about what you have been up to over the summer... and about what God has been up to with you.

Now, let's turn to Bible study and prayer. Do you ever in your group have your prayer time BEFORE the Bible study, and if not, why not!?

Colin has picked out some passages from Acts for the Sunday morning services and LIFE group studies over the next couple of months and we pick up the story this week on the Day of Pentecost just after the Holy Spirit has been poured out into all believers.

Read Acts 2.14-41

1. Recap in your group... what has happened over the 6 weeks prior to the Day of Pentecost (NB There are a few clues in the passage!)? List the events, in order.
2. John Stott says 'The best way to understand Pentecost is not through the Old Testament prediction, but through the New Testament fulfilment, not through Joel but through Jesus.' What is he getting at?
3. In what ways do we see the Holy Spirit actually at work in this passage?
4. How might this encourage us as Christ-followers today?
5. I am sometimes uneasy about the way some television preachers speak of the Holy Spirit, seemingly treating him as a kind of impersonal commodity to be moved around as we think fit. Who is the Holy Spirit and how should we treat him... and not treat him!?
6. What difference should having the Holy Spirit within us make in our lives?
7. 'God's empowering presence'. It's not a phrase from the Bible but the title of a book by a bloke called Gordon Fee. But I do like that description of one of the roles of the Holy Spirit. What prevents you from being more empowered by the Holy Spirit... and what might 'being more empowered' look like in your life!?