

## **The Holy Spirit and Gospel Spreading**

### **Acts 10:33-11:18**

One reason Acts was written was to tell us how something very unlikely happened: how the life of Jesus of Nazareth has had the effect it has. The reason for that is that the gospel was able to spread to many different people groups. As today is Pentecost Sunday, it reminds us that the Holy Spirit is crucial to spreading the gospel.

#### **The Spirit and the Gospel**

Peter has a captive audience at Cornelius' home and could tell them anything. Instead he tells them about Jesus and the gospel, and that is what sets up this new outpouring of the Spirit.

Peter summarises Jesus' life as being anointed by the Spirit, helping and healing people under the oppression of the devil. We may not think that we suffer that kind of oppression, but whilst the tactics of the enemy and the symptoms have changed, we still face this oppression.

It is into that darkness that Jesus shines his light and brings peace. But Jesus does more than talk about peace. When he died on the cross he took our sin and punishment and obtained forgiveness and peace for us. So at the centre of the gospel is the cross. But the cross is not the end of the good news. Peter explains that the resurrection shows God's approval of Jesus. The disciples knew, and we can know, that the resurrection was real because they ate with him.

And so the message Peter was given power at Pentecost to proclaim, was not first about the Spirit, but about Jesus.

#### **The Spirit and Us**

The Holy Spirit interrupts Peter's sermon and falls on the gentiles. We can learn three things from this:

1. We Need the Spirit: to make us alive and to empower us to live the Christian life.
2. The Spirit unites, he doesn't divide: God gives the same Holy Spirit to every Christian.
3. The Spirit's gifts are for glorifying God and building up his body.

#### **Don't Stand in the Way**

Peter has to explain what happened to the church in Jerusalem. He says he was not prepared to stand in God's way. God is a God on mission and we can stand in his way when we allow racism to hide in our hearts, or when we prefer the status quo in the church rather than the messiness of a church on mission.

But when we understand the gospel, are filled with the Spirit and have the gospel dwelling in us richly, we will mobilise all our energy and ingenuity to see that Gospel spread.