

## The Breath of God Acts 1:4-8, 2:1-4

- I. In the Bible, there is a transition from hierarchy to shared ministry.
- A. The Old Testament offices were prophet, priest and king.
    - 1. Those individuals were set apart from people.
      - (a) Tim Keller sermon: Every Man a Ministry.
      - (b) Prophets heard God's voice and spoke to the people.
      - (c) Priests mediated worship between God and people.
      - (d) Kings were anointed to lead, fight, make judgments.
    - 2. The people were somewhat like spectators.
      - (a) They were a step removed from God.
      - (b) They received Word, ministry, leading.
      - (c) To a certain extent, passive recipients.
      - (d) God still wanted the devotion of their hearts.
  - B. The Old Testament ministry of the Holy Spirit.
    - 1. The Spirit did not permanently indwell people.
    - 2. Prophets, priests, and kings were anointed by God.
      - (a) That anointing represented the Spirit coming upon them.
      - (b) But it was external.
    - 3. That anointing was the difference in the David and Goliath story.
      - (a) David had some natural courage.
      - (b) That courage, touched by the Spirit's power, won the day.
    - 4. Other individuals would be empowered when needed.
  - C. Transition to the New Testament ministry of the Holy Spirit.
    - 1. Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:21-22, 4:1).
    - 2. Jesus empowered his disciples (Luke 9:1-2).
      - (a) This is still the Old Testament model (Spirit on the outside).
    - 3. Jesus spoke of a transition (John 14:16-17).
    - 4. Wait for the gift (Acts 1:4-5).
      - (a) A familiar question, is it the end times, Lord? (Acts 1:6-7).
    - 5. "You will receive power?" (Acts 1:8).
      - (a) Who will receive power?
      - (b) The apostles, the men, the Hebrew believers? (Acts 2:16-18)
  - D. Pentecost changed everything (Acts 2:1-4).
    - 1. They were all together (Acts 1:15).
    - 2. "All of them were filled..." (whoever was there).
    - 3. "like a sound of the blowing of a violent wind."
      - (a) Ruach: Hebrew for Spirit, breath, wind.
      - (b) God breathed his life (zoe) into his people.
    - 4. A gift for all who believe (Acts 2:38).
- II. God's methodology for ministry is incarnation.
- A. Adam and Eve bore God's image (holy).
    - 1. They were to reflect God's character.
      - (a) To maintain that image required that they be faithful.
      - (b) But the image was shattered by sin.
  - B. Jesus is the "exact representation of the Father's being."

- 1. Incarnation means "into flesh" (carne).
  - 2. Jesus came as God in the flesh.
  - 3. God took on human flesh in order to rescue us.
- C. After his death and resurrection, Jesus was going back to heaven.
- 1. Was his earthly ministry over? How would it continue?
  - 2. "I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you."
    - (a) How would he come to them? He was speaking of the Spirit
  - 3. "It is for your good that I am going away."
    - (a) Why is it good?
    - (b) Because Jesus, by the Spirit, now lives in all believers.
  - 4. John the Baptist said, Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit.
    - (a) He baptizes us with his Spirit, into the body (I Cor.12:12-13)
    - (b) That is our anointing.
  - 5. Incarnation: Jesus puts himself into our flesh.
    - (a) Our bodies become a temple, a dwelling place of God.
    - (b) We are not God in the flesh, like Jesus.
    - (c) But Jesus lives in us.
    - (d) Jesus is present wherever we are. We are his body.
    - (e) Jesus continues his mission through us.
- D. The Spirit in us works to renew the image of God in us (Rom.8:29).
- III. There is a flattening out of ministry rather than hierarchy.
- A. There is still authority in the Church (elders, etc.).
  - B. The difference is calling to ministry.
    - 1. We are a priesthood of believers.
    - 2. All are temples of the Holy Spirit.
      - (a) This is true individually, and collectively (body of Christ).
    - 3. We are all empowered to represent Christ.
  - C. The calling is to bear witness.
    - 1. We don't all have the gift of evangelism.
      - (a) But we all have a story to tell, and a gift with which to do ministry in Jesus' Name.
      - (b) All of it bears witness to the reality of who Jesus is!
    - 2. Sometimes we use words, sometimes action, hopefully both.
  - D. Through the Holy Spirit we experience the love of God (Rom.5:5).
    - 1. "We love (God and people) because he (God) first loved us."
    - 2. Our love bears witness: "They will know you are my followers..."
  - E. "The Breathing Church", an excerpt from, The Sacred Overlap, by J.R. Briggs, printed in Christianity Today.
    - 1. Formation for mission, the chief role of the Church is character formation because that is God's goal.
    - 2. God calls us to transformation, and eventually to conformation to the image of God in Christ.
    - 3. As we get breathed out today, we represent Jesus. He is with us
      - (a) We bring his light, his love, and his message to the world.
    - 4. Why should we care? Because we represent Jesus, the one who loved us and gave himself for us!