

Devotion 32:

Our Father Pours Out His Spirit

Joel 1—3

The most famous passage from this brief book is probably the following:

“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.” 2:28-29

Peter quotes this passage in his Pentecost sermon in Jerusalem in Acts 2:17-21. The revolutionary thought is that all people--young, old, males, and females—will be bestowed with the Spirit of God. Up until this time, certain people—usually kings, priests, and prophets--had been set apart to receive God’s Spirit as He saw fit. Moses hoped for more than a few to have God’s Spirit in Numbers 11:28-29. As the story unfolds, two men are prophesying in the Israelite camp with the Spirit. A young man tattles on the two men to Moses:

“Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses’ aide since youth, spoke up and said, ‘Moses, my lord, stop them!’ But Moses replied, ‘Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the Lord’s people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!’”

And that is the circumstances in which we find ourselves today in the Church. The Holy Spirit has been poured out on all God’s people. Galatians 3:28 extends the thought:

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

This promise didn’t end at Pentecost either. The Spirit will continue to be given to all true believers until the Day of the Lord when Jesus returns. Christians of all nationalities and of every rank and station in life will become partakers of the Spirit and His wonderful gifts. And though the working of the Spirit is not manifested in the same way as in the early days of the Church, yet the Spirit lives in the hearts of all believers, gives them the knowledge of Jesus Christ, their Savior, and urges them to speak of Him, and to call upon the name of the Lord and thus be saved.

The pouring out of the Spirit is the last of the great miracles of God until the great day of His returning to Judgment. To fully appreciate the meaning of this miracle, it might be helpful to understand the word “prophesy.” Most people mistakenly assume it means to tell the future. The essence behind the word means “to speak God’s message to the people.” Thus all believers are now our Father’s mouthpieces to the world, declaring salvation through the blood and death of our Savior Jesus Christ.

There is no greater display of love and no greater gift we can give to a neighbor than to faithfully proclaim our Father's Good News. Unfortunately, many believers are tempted to think they need a certain amount of knowledge or their lives should be such and such before they can speak God's message to a dying world. Acts 1:8 says this to such thoughts:

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

How is your witnessing today? To whom are you speaking our Father's Good News? Do you feel weak, ineffective, and uneducated? Focus on what our Father has given to you. Focus on the Spirit being poured out on you at your baptism. And focus on the Spirit as Paul did when he entered Corinth:

“My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.”

I Cor. 2:4-5