

APPEAR

Text: Acts 2: 1-12, 36-41

The Plain Truth

THE HOLY SPIRIT APPEARED TO Empower us for _____, and the _____ of _____.

- 1) Jesus promised a _____ which is God's presence alive in you.
- 2) Jesus promised an " _____ "
- 3) Jesus promised a harvest of _____ and of blessings for the _____.

One Year Bible Reading

May 24: 2 Samuel 4:1-6:23, John 13:31-14:14, Psalm 119:17-32, Prov. 15:31-32

May 25: 2 Samuel 7:1-8:18, John 14:15-31, Psalm 119:33-48, Proverbs 15:33

May 26: 2 Samuel 9:1-11:27, John 15:1-27, Psalm 119:49-64, Proverbs 16:1-3

May 27: 2 Samuel 12:1-31, John 16:1-33, Psalm 119:65-80, Proverbs 16:4-5

May 28: 2 Samuel 13:1-39, John 17:1-26, Psalm 119:81-96, Proverbs 16:6-7

May 29: 2 Samuel 14:1-15:22, John 18:1-24, Psalm 119:97-112, Proverbs 16:8-9

May 30: 2 Samuel 15:23-16:23, John 18:25-19:22, Ps. 119:113-128, Prov. 16:10-11

May 23 & 24, 2015

Appear

Life Group Lesson • Week of May 24

Upon His resurrection, the Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples on several occasions, proving to them that “He was actually alive (see Acts 1:3). On Easter morning Jesus appeared to Mary in the garden (Mark 16:9). Late that afternoon, He appeared to two men walking from Jerusalem to the village of Emmaus (Luke 24:3-15). Still later that same evening the risen Lord appeared to His disciples behind locked doors (Luke 24:26 and John 20:19). Eight days after that Jesus appeared so Thomas could be convinced of His Lord’s purpose and power (John 20:26-28). In fact, one morning Jesus appeared on the shores of Galilee and His disciples found Him making breakfast for them after fishing all night (John 21:1-14).

After about forty glorious days of surprise visits from their Lord, Jesus “was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see Him” (Acts 1:9). The risen Christ disappeared into glory before these men could fully understand the magnitude of His ascension into heaven. Long ago their ancestor Jacob had dreamt of a stairway (a ladder) leading to the gates of glory with the angels of God ascending and descending upon it (Genesis 28:10-17). Seeing Him ascend the disciples are now witnesses of the Lord’s purpose—to offer the world salvation and connect heaven and earth with God. And one day He will return!

Read Acts 2:1-13, 36-41

At Pentecost “all the believers were meeting together in one place.” Just before He ascended, Jesus Himself had instructed His disciples to go back to Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit (see Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:7-8).

1. What had Jesus promised His followers according to Acts 1:8 (NLT): “But you will receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my _____, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

In your experience, why is the Holy Spirit’s power absolutely crucial when it comes to being an effective witness of the Gospel message—sharing the Good News about Jesus with the people around you?

Colossians 1:15 defines *Christ* as the “visible image of the invisible God.” There are many occasions recorded throughout Scripture in which the LORD appears in *visible* form. However, it was upon His humble birth through the virgin Mary that He would empty Himself of glorious power and be given the name “Jesus” (see Matthew 1:21 and Luke 1:31).

2. Scripture is replete with accounts of the LORD appearing in *visible form* and speaking to His servants. How exciting that God pursues us and speaks to those willing to listen! Read each passage below and describe in one short sentence (as best you can) the purpose of the LORD on each occasion.

Genesis 3:8-9
Exodus 19:1-6

Genesis 12:7
Deuteronomy 34:1-6

Genesis 28:10-17
Joshua 1:1-5

Exodus 3:4-6
1 Samuel 3:1-10

God desires each one of us to enjoy the special love relationship that He has initiated through the appearance of Christ. Because of the sacrifice of His Son on the cross, sin no longer has the power to keep us from knowing God. We can walk in close fellowship with God—unstained by sin and shame—and live by God’s indwelling power and wisdom. The LORD says: “I love all who love me. Those who search will surely find me” (Proverbs 8:17). We can be united with “Wisdom itself”—the Lord Jesus Christ! “But to those called by God to salvation...Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God” (see 1 Corinthians 1:24, 30).

3. Have you said yes to the relationship God offers through His Son? If so, in what specific ways has God’s love become real to you personally?

Perhaps the Lord has been stirring your heart to be His witness in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and beyond. In other words, how are you being a witness for Christ at home, in the workplace, among the skeptics, and unreached?

The Holy Spirit is our Helper for the harvest. Sharing our faith with others—being a witness for Christ—doesn’t have to be difficult. And it doesn’t have to be awkward if we first build a bridge of friendship. As we are prompted and immediately lean into the Holy Spirit’s power, the Lord will give us the right words to say at the right time. We don’t have to worry about being eloquent. The apostle Paul said, “And my message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit” (1 Corinthians 2:4).

As with each appearance of our LORD throughout Scripture, He shows up to not only strengthen the faith of the individual, but also to convey a much bigger purpose—perhaps one that will transcend centuries of time.

4. One of the first persons to be set ablaze by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was Peter. He boldly stood to preach and about 3000 men “were baptized and added to the church that day” (see Acts 2:41). What fruit have you seen borne through your personal witness for Christ to another person?

What fruit are you seeing borne through the collective witness of His church?

“But it was to us that God revealed these things by His Spirit. For His Spirit searches out everything and shows us God’s deep secrets. No one can know a person’s thoughts except that person’s own spirit, and no one can know God’s thoughts except God’s own Spirit. And we have received God’s Spirit (not the world’s spirit), so we can know the wonderful things God has freely given us.” (1 Corinthians 2:10-12)