



Life Group Sermon Study Notes

“Let’s Talk: God’s Heart”

Dr. Rice Brooks – February 2, 2020

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- Do you have a favorite sports team and how did it become your favorite?
- Do you have a memorable experience to share from participating in a sport or another extra-curricular activity?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Acts 2:1-13 (ESV)- ¹ When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested^[a] on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. ⁵ Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven. ⁶ And at this sound the multitude came together, and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language... ⁸ And how is it that we hear...in our own tongues the mighty works of God... ¹³ But others mocking said, “They are filled with new wine.”

In Acts 2, Luke records this significant historical event occurring in Jerusalem on the 50th day after Jesus’s crucifixion. One hundred twenty disciples made up the first Christian church. They were of one accord together in a house, waiting to be baptized with the Holy Spirit as Jesus had promised them a few days prior. (Acts 1:4-5).

This day was Pentecost, a Jewish festival celebrated by offering to the Lord first fruits of new grain. The festival brought devout Jewish men from every nation to Jerusalem, and then a commotion brought them to the house of the disciples.

Upon hearing the disciples supernaturally speak in languages from every nation and knowing they were Galileans, the Jewish men were amazed and supernaturally heard the mighty works of God. However, not all believed. Some mocked the miraculous event, missing the opportunity to be blessed by God.

Just as with this first church, the Holy Spirit meets us wherever we unite as believers. We are to dedicate our homes, our offices, our coming and going, etc. to God. We must be intentional at breaking down barriers, and fighting to develop and maintain relationships with one another. Effectively reaching the nations with the truth of the gospel includes praying for the nations rather than a narrow self-focus. It also means sharing the gospel in a way that is inclusive of all people, speaking in their language and accommodating their cultural construct.

To hunger and thirst for God calls for keeping an open mind with diverse experiences and holding scripture up to who we are and how we practice our faith. In doing so, opportunities to be empowered by God for his mission will not be forfeited. God showed up in a miraculous way on the first Pentecost after Jesus' resurrection. Not necessarily for the ecstatic experience and edification of the believers, but so they could bear witness to people of all nations for his glory. Pentecost would now celebrate God's goodness with more than just an offering of the first fruit of new grain, but with the first church of the coming harvest. As we do life together, let's bring in that harvest!

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the points below and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.

- Practically speaking, what can we do to participate in the mission of God?
- At Pentecost, God's timing was very effective to spread the gospel to the nations. What does that say to us about prayer, obedience, and expectation regarding our part in his mission?
- Did the disciples need this miraculous event to know they were changed and empowered by the Holy Spirit? Based on your answer, what are the implications to us?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as other requests you may have.

- Thank God for his undying faithfulness and his sovereign mission of redemption for all people.
- Ask God to clearly reveal what he is calling you to do in bringing the nations to him, because he deserves ALL the glory!
- Ask God for the Holy Spirit's empowerment to worship him in truth and spirit.