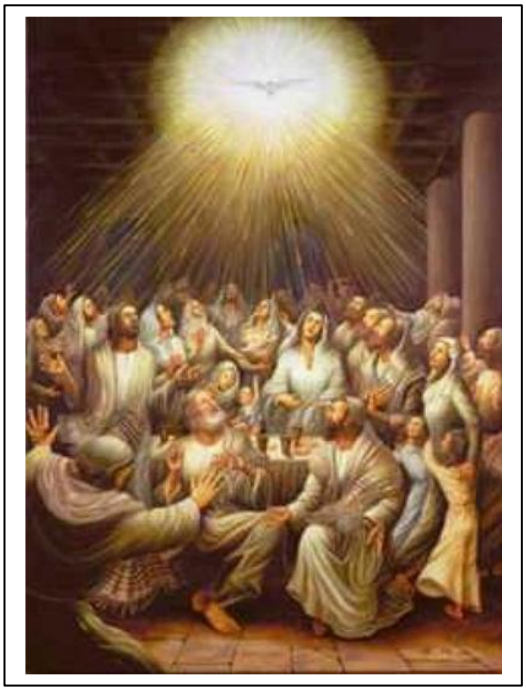
Notes for Life Groups: Series: 'Liminal: Living in the In-Between' Sunday 8 June 2025

LIMINAL # 7 'EMPOWERED AND SENT'

Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit, foreseen by the prophet Joel, confirmed and promised by Jesus. Delivered in a spectacular way.



Read Joel 2: 21 – 32 and Acts 2: 1 - 13

The disciples and followers had waited as Jesus had commanded for the 'gift of the Holy Spirit' but must have been surprised that it would come as they gathered together in the early morning (not in the upstairs room, possibly somewhere within the temple precincts) to celebrate Pentecost (50 days after Passover Sabbath). They would be familiar with the prophesy in Joel, but surely would have had many questions about what this would mean for them. *What was your expectation about this when you committed to follow Jesus? Indeed, was it even mentioned? What has been your experience? What changed for you?*

Our passage records that 'all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit … as the Spirit enabled them.' This purposeful enabling or **empowering** can be seen as an investment from which God expects a return. God has ambitious plans for all of us. By the Spirit's empowering, He plans nothing short of a total transformation. 'You will receive power … you will be my witnesses' (Acts 1: 8) was Jesus' last command before He ascended. Witnessing is a prime command and expectation. *How many different ways do you think it possible to 'witness'?* Whether the list of answers is short or long, there are two main points that should be drawn; 1 = you need not work alone, empowerment when weak, 2 = whole life.

(1) I suspect there were ways of witnessing your list identified that many would believe themselves to be unsuited or ill-equipped. You may well be, but the Holy Spirit is not. This is empowerment when weak. *Can you recall times when you were aware of witnessing opportunities but felt unable or afraid to engage? How often did that opportunity re-present itself?* Of course, there are situations when witnessing with words would be inappropriate. The challenge remains for us all that if we invite the Holy Spirit into the situation, are we willing to rely on/surrender to his leading and take the witnessing opportunity?

(2) Witnessing is a whole way of life. As followers of Jesus, we allow His teaching to direct every aspect of our living and lifestyle. We need to be aware and deliberate in our lifestyle, in our decision making, in every aspect of dealing with both minor and major challenges that life brings. Witnessing in lifestyle, how we follow Jesus, is a most powerful witness, something that any 'seeker' watching will find attractive. *Try an act of witnessing. Do one small thing, in all humility, that you know needs fixing/straightening/putting right in your street/community/group/club. Don't expect recognition for it, but see who subsequently talks to you about it, and take the opportunity.*

The power of the Holy Spirit is ‘immeasurably more’ than we can possibly imagine, but it is experienced in individual ways, just as God purposes for each individual; but gift it He will. Should you wonder whether or not you have received it, or simply wanting to be re-filled, then read Ephesians 3:14-19 and Luke 11: 11-13, believe what it says, and pray earnestly and expectantly.

Prayer: ***We need you, Holy Spirit, if we are to have eyes that see, hearts that love, minds that understand, wills that obey, and hands that work as God ordains. Come Holy Spirit! Amen.*** ***(Jamie Wallace)***

Bible used = NIV 2011 translation