



## Life Group Study Notes

### "Outpouring: Life in the Desert"

Ps. Kore Bendix - November 26, 2017

#### Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

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

- What is one of the most special gifts you've ever received?
- What makes a gift special for you?
- Do you normally plan way in advance or at the last minute to get gifts for others?

#### Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at [www.bethelworld.org](http://www.bethelworld.org)

The Spirit of God was involved in the creation of this world, hovering over it in its formation. He is the one who brought forth humanity as is described in Scripture as God breathing or imparting his Spirit into the dust of the ground.

Tragically, human rebellion forfeited the Spirit's immediate, intimate presence. In spite of this, God worked throughout human history and especially in the life of Israel to prepare for the day when his Spirit would be restored to humanity on a large scale. For this to happen it would be necessary to atone for humanity's sins. God himself did this in the sending of his Son into this world. His perfect life of obedience as a human qualified him to be our substitute, taking our sins upon himself on the cross and receiving the just punishment due to us. In exchange he has legally given us his righteousness, which now qualifies us to receive God's gift of his Spirit. Through Jesus God is restoring his Spirit's intimate presence and power in the lives of all who come to him.

*Acts 1:3-8 ESV [Jesus] presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

Jesus promises the Holy Spirit to his disciples. His promise is for all who call upon him, just as Peter preached on the day of Pentecost after the Spirit had been poured out upon the disciples. Jesus said that his intention is not merely to bless his disciples, but to bless others through their witness. God wants to do the same through us.

*John 20:21-23 ESV Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."*

Jesus said these words shortly after his resurrection. Again he makes clear that his desire is to fill his disciples with God's Spirit, so that they in turn would go forth and extend God's forgiveness to others through the message of the Gospel. God wants to do the same through us. He wants to fill us with his Spirit, so that we might tell everyone the story of Jesus and God's offer of forgiveness and reconciliation.

*Ephesians 5:17-18 ESV Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit...*

Paul is telling the church that God's Spirit is available on an ongoing basis to those who trust and follow Jesus. The Greek language in which this letter was originally written is rich in its implications. It makes clear that we are commanded to go to God again and again to receive the presence and power and person of the Holy Spirit in our lives. God is willing and desirous of giving himself to us again and again.

### **Discussion (10-15 minutes)**

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

- Describe a recent time the Holy Spirit filled you and worked with you and through to be a witness for Jesus.
- Describe your relationship and reliance upon the Holy Spirit.
- What can we do to receive the Holy Spirit's presence, power, and person in an ongoing or increased way in our lives?

### **Prayer (10-15 minutes)**

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

- Thank God for Jesus' willingness to atone for our sins and to make possible God's gifts of righteousness and the Holy Spirit.
- Ask God confidently for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- Ask God for the leading and counsel of the Holy Spirit to be an effective witness for Jesus.