

GROWTH GROUPS

May 27, 2012

Joel 2:28-30; Acts 1:4-8

Conversation Starter –

Have you ever been somewhere that you felt so caught up in the experience that you wished it could go on and on? What caused you to want to linger there? Name some situations that make you want to linger or tarry there?

Understanding –

Jesus was just getting ready to return to heaven and he said some final words to his followers and disciples. He told them, in Acts 1:4-8, to tarry and pray so that the promised Holy Spirit would come. The disciples then spent the next ten days lingering and tarrying in the upper room. They spent those hours praying, worshiping, contemplating the things Jesus said and did. Ten straight days praying...all day, all night; we don't know exactly what went on in that upper room before the day of Pentecost came and the Holy Spirit fell on them but we do know that these 120 people were different people spiritually than they were when they went in. The Old Testament experience of the Holy Spirit for people was that the Spirit would fall on prophets, priests, kings, judges or other special people but not on the average person. Their world was about to be turned upside down. The Church does not use the word tarry much anymore. It seems old fashioned.

1. What difference might ten straight days of prayer of concerted, dedicated, focused prayer make in an individual? In a group of people? Why did Jesus want these followers to tarry and pray like this?
2. The Lord gave them a promise and a reminder of a prophecy from Joel Chapter 2; The Holy Spirit would fall on all of God's people. Why was Pentecost so important for the people of God in the book of Acts? What difference does the Holy Spirit make in the early Church? Why?
3. Why has the modern Church turned more to church conferences and programs to grow the church rather than taking the time to invest in tarrying and praying to invite a move of the Spirit? Does God still use the same methods to prepare people for special spiritual awakenings today? What would that look like?

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