

was a mere fisherman, emboldened by the Holy Spirit, preached about Jesus to an audience including priests, elders and teachers of the law. *What was it about Jesus' resurrection that gave Peter the boldness to preach before these powerful men (Rom 8:11)?*

Romans 8:11 NLT - 11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

Peter knew from personal experience what Paul preached to the Romans. He no longer had to fear death because he had encountered the resurrected Jesus and God's Spirit filled him with the hope of eternal life.

Have you known a believer who was firm in their faith, that fearlessly faced death? If so, share their story with your group.

WRAP-UP

Having a personal encounter with the risen Christ was what created a spark in the disciples. When the Holy Spirit filled them, He fanned the flame and emboldened them to share the message of Jesus resurrection and redemption. They now had the same Spirit that raised Jesus living in them, and that freed them from the fear of death. The spark became a movement.

MEMORY VERSE

"God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this.
- Acts 2:32 NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life.

Challenge- If you have never had a personal encounter with the risen Christ, you can. Don't rely on the experiences that others have told you, experience Jesus for yourself. Fully surrender and embrace His lordship in your life, and trust yourself into His care. Then embrace the power of the Holy Spirit growing that spark into a flame.

"It Begins with a Spark" **Spark #1**

INTRODUCTION

The disciples gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the festival of Pentecost, a celebration of the first fruits of the harvest 50 days after Passover. But they weren't expecting the harvest God had planned. It was the harvest of new lives following the arrival of the Holy Spirit that was being unleashed that day. Jesus left the disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit, but they had to wait. And for 50 days nothing had happened, but then God sent a spark that began a movement that would spread to the ends of the earth.

Ice Breaker

What is the best method to start a fire? Are there any of these you would never use: Paper, kindling, wood, briquettes, propane, lighter fluid...?

Key Passage

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What does this mean?

Luke 24:46-49 NLT - 46 And he said, "Yes, it was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead on the third day. 47 It was also written that this message would be proclaimed in the authority of his name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.' 48 You are witnesses of all these things. 49 "And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven."

When Jesus spoke with His disciples following the resurrection, He set the stage for the events of Pentecost before He ascended to heaven.

What did He tell them was the message they would be proclaiming? (v 46-47)

What made them uniquely qualified to bring this message (v. 48)

What were they told would happen when the Holy Spirit arrived (v 49)?

In Acts chapter 2 we see the fulfilment of what Jesus had promised.

Acts 2:2-6 NLT - 2 Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. 3 Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. 4 And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability. 5 At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. 6 When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running, and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers.

What was heard and what was seen when the Holy Spirit arrived that would indicate His power? When does the Bible tell us God appeared powerfully with either with flames or lightning (ex. to Moses)? How did people react when God appears to them this way?

The crowd hear the arrival of the Holy Spirit as a loud noise and came running. They heard the disciples speaking in their languages and they were confused.

When God's Spirit moves in the Body of Christ, it doesn't match up with the "cultural norms" people have come to expect. How did the crowd attempt to explain what they encountered? When people see Christians behaving differently than everyone else, what kinds of responses does it draw?

2. Peter Preaches

In those final instructions Jesus gave his disciples he said they would proclaim the message of the Messiah and His salvation with the authority of his name, and that they were uniquely qualified because they were witnesses of the resurrection. As Peter preached, he confirmed that fact.

Acts 2:32 NLT - 32 "God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this.

The people had watched Jesus ministering, they'd seen miracles, but it was the witnesses to the resurrection that sparked transformational faith. And it was the power of the Holy Spirit that sustained the spark.

Acts 2:37-38 NLT - 37 Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" 38 Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The people responded to the witness of those who had encountered the resurrected Jesus. It wasn't a just a story, it was an experience that was being shared with them. Share with your group a memorable or recent, experience you've had with the resurrected Jesus.

3. No Fear of Death

Acts 3:15; 4:9-10, 13 NLT - 15 You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. And we are witnesses of this fact...4:8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of our people, 9 are we being questioned today because we've done a good deed for a crippled man? Do you want to know how he was healed? 10 Let me clearly state to all of you and to all the people of Israel that he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, the man you crucified but whom God raised from the dead.... 13 The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus.

When they encountered a crippled beggar in the temple, Peter and John healed him in the name of Jesus. Then Peter seized the opportunity to preach the good news. In verse 15 he tells the crowd that he and John were witnesses to the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead. Five thousand men, plus more women and children believed Peter's message. He and John were immediately arrested. Peter, who