

# Pandemic Times

Sunday 4 July 2021  
Issue 67

## Friends

*"Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me." – John 15:4.*

You'll see from the verse above that the theme from last week's sermon has lingered in my mind somewhat. I suppose I could have given dozens of sermons (maybe not all at once!) on the glorious topic that is the fruits of the Spirit and the character of God coming to being in our own lives through the work of the Holy Spirit. Here we are reminded that this language was employed by Christ himself as he shared it with his disciples on the night he was betrayed. His command seems simple: remain in him and the fruit will come. More of a challenge, we know, when one endeavours to live it out every day. But, as is often the case in Scripture, the command is coupled with a promise. As we seek to remain in Christ, through prayer, worship and fellowship in the Church, he comforts us with the fact that he will remain in us! It does not all rely on our own efforts. I don't know about you, but this truth makes me want to exclaim, Hallelujah!

We were so encouraged with our inaugural pop-up community café this week. Over the duration around 30-40 people joined us for a cuppa and some conversation. There were familiar faces as well as new community contacts. We met outdoors as the weather allowed us to. We'll be on all summer, every Thursday from 11-2. Please speak to me if you are able to help set up, serve, take down and bake cakes! Any help is appreciated.

I mentioned last week that we are beginning to think about children's ministries in preparation for the end of restrictions. As such, Debbie, Mikey and I are hosting a breakfast for families of children in the church this Saturday at our home at Nazarene Theological College, Dene Road, M20 2GU. It'll be from 10-12 and there will be space for the kids to play and the adults to have a conversation about crèche, Sunday School and the like. I've tried to personally invite all families via the details I have in our directory but please forgive me if you haven't heard from me and feel you should have. If you want to come please let me know on 07545 622 498.

Peace,

Mick



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## Prayer Page

### Church Family and Community

- \* For Ron, brother of Sylvia Finlay, who has been in hospital. His stay has been prolonged due to problems with his diabetes. Please pray for healing for Ron.
- \* We give thanks for the successful opening of our community café and pray that word would continue to spread and more would be blessed by this space of welcome.
- \* We pray for the Brenda Cawley (former regular at our Diner) and family as her granddaughter's partner, Owen has been diagnosed with cancer.

### Daily Reading and Prayer Guide for This Week

Date	Reading	Pray for
Monday 5th July	Acts 7:54–8:8	Sandra and Mike Pitt and family
Tuesday 6th July	Acts 8:9–40	Grant and Crys Pettitt
Wednesday 7th July	Acts 9:1–22	Fay Powell
Thursday 8th July	Acts 9:23–10:8	Matthew, Charlotte and Joshua Purves
Friday 9th July	Acts 10:9–33	Adriana, Philip, David, Joseph, Pete and Rebecca Richmond and Dona Zizinha
Saturday 10th July	Catch up	Mark, Rebecca, Charlie and Laney Rotheram
Sunday 11th July	Acts 10:34–48	Nick, Ada and Joshua Savu and family



## Holy Spirit Encounters (7)

1 Corinthians 12:27 – 14:1a

Mick Kane

The Gifts of the Spirit

4 July 2021

I wonder if you had part of that Scripture passage read out at your wedding? We did. It's beautiful, isn't it? But as beautiful as it is when it is read aloud at weddings as a description of love between a husband and a wife, it was not written with marriage in mind. It was written as part of teaching on the power and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

And so for the final time then, and with being in danger of becoming very repetitive – repetition does lead to retention, after all – we have been on a journey through Scripture, haven't we? A journey which has had us asking ourselves this question: who is the Holy Spirit, and what does he do?

And here is what we have learnt so far. The Holy Spirit is God. The Holy Spirit illuminates Christ in our lives. And the Holy Spirit empowers us for the mission of God. I reckon everything we have learnt thus far falls nicely into those categories. And for our final sermon as part of this series we are going to be looking at one of the more challenging aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spiritual Gifts.

John Wimber was a famous pastor and church leader whose teaching on the gifts of the Spirit remain some of the most influential teaching in the modern church still to this day. Churches that are connected to the movement started by John Wimber, a movement known as the Charismatic Movement, remain among the fastest growing churches in all the world.

And so what is it about Wimber's teaching that was so influential? Well John Wimber was irritated by the fact that when he read the Scriptures, and particularly the New Testament, and compared it to the reality of his Christian experience there was something of a gap. He lamented the fact that as he read the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles and the teachings of Paul where he heard of miracles and healing and divine intervention and God empowered conversions those encounters didn't appear to be a day to day reality in the way they were portrayed to be in the Scriptures. And so John Wimber dared to ask the question: is this power of God which was available to the Apostles and the Early Church still a possibility in the Church today? And he dared to believe that it is. He dared to believe that God's power, his miraculous power, remains available to the believer and one of the ways it manifests itself is through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, he would say, we are merely building a church on human effort.

But, it's also important to note that this conversation on God's power, and specifically the gifts of the Holy Spirit, is one of the most controversial and divisive topics in the church today. Churches have literally split over this topic so we need to exercise wisdom here. And so how do we avoid that same pitfall? How do we maintain a position that seeks to believe that God's power remains available to us whilst at the same time

## Sermon notes continued...

avoiding the controversy and the mess that it comes with. Well, part of the answer, I think, is found as we turn to Scripture and we ask the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth. Some of the best teaching you will find on the gifts of the Holy Spirit is to be found in 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14 where the Apostle Paul dedicates 3 whole chapters on the topic. That's where our Scripture text came from today.

And from those 3 chapters we can pull 3 truths regarding the gifts the power of God displayed through the gifts of the Holy Spirit:

The first gift the Spirit gives to every believer is that of faith in Jesus.

"Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:3)

Again this reminds us of our already established truth that the Holy Spirit illuminates Christ in our life. Paul here claims that one can't even make the statement, "Jesus is Lord" without the power of the Holy Spirit. And similarly, one can't make claims counter to who Christ is and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

And so if we ever find ourselves at odds with a brother or sister in Christ about anything really, but specifically this challenging topic of the Holy Spirit then it is good practice to bring ourselves back to our unity in Christ- and seek again to find a way forward from there.

Speaking of unity...

The gifts of the Spirit emphasise and celebrate both the diversity and unity in the Church and only always work for the building up of the Church.

"Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit." (1 Corinthians 14:12)

How ironic is it, then, that this topic has caused so much fallout in the church when Paul reminds us here that the gifts of the Spirit only ever work for the building up of the church in unity?

This protects us against any kind of Spiritual abuse that has taken place in the name of Christ or claimed to have been said in the Spirit. Paul says if God has gifted the power of prophecy or miracles or healing then their working should bring about the encouragement of someone and result ultimately in unity in the Church. Anything counter to these things is not done in the power of the Spirit.

The gifts of the Spirit should always, always be tempered with love.

"If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing." (1 Corinthians 13:1-3)

This is where Paul points us back to the character of God. We are reminded here that no power of God can be found where it does not reflect who God is at his very heart – a God of love.

We will share in communion in a few moments time where I believe this is all captured far more effectively but before we do I think that as we draw this series to a close it would be remiss of us if we didn't take some time to seek God's power for the building up of the church.

# IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT



Ellesmere College have cancelled our summer booking

New Venue: Ampleforth Abbey  
York, YO62 4ER

with a 1 day change of dates

New dates: Tuesday August 17th - Saturday August 21st

No price change

Full refund available for those for whom these changes are not possible

This year's Breakthru holiday, organised by the Nazarene church, has had a change of venue and a change of date. If you have booked to attend the holiday, or if you are still looking for somewhere to go this summer, the new details are above.

If you cannot attend the full holiday, day rates are available too.

Further information, including prices, contact details and booking forms, can be found online: [www.breakthruholidays.com](http://www.breakthruholidays.com)



## Created to Create Ladies Conference 11-13 February 2022

Something for your diaries ladies. The British Isles South District Ladies' Weekend is taking place next February, with the theme

'Created to Create'!

Information can be found by clicking the link here [Created to Create](#)



BROOKLANDS COMMUNITY

# Pop-up Cafe

*Thursdays, 11am-2pm  
Brooklands Church of the Nazarene*

*Donations only!*

BrooklandsChurch  
of the Nazarene



## Brooklands Church of the Nazarene

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Cheshire, WA13 9HX

At Brooklands, we are big enough to be part of a world-wide denomination, yet small enough to invite you to make our church your home. Please visit our website and contact us if you would like to get in touch or need more information on any of our events.

During the Coronavirus pandemic, we are holding weekly services on our YouTube channel, starting at 10:30 am each Sunday.

We look forward to welcoming you to our fellowship!

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