

Sketches – Pentecost

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Intro

The Day of Pentecost was an incredibly significant day in the life of the church. We believe and know that the Holy Spirit lives and works in gentle and powerful ways in the life of the believer today. At Pentecost, we celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit into the church, as Jesus promised he would in John 14 and John 16. It's exciting to know that God is working out his plans in and through our lives by the power of the Holy Spirit in us.

Guide

As usual, this is a (hopefully) amusing sketch, but with a serious side that is brought out in the humour..

There are 4 characters (all male, sorry. But you could change names except Peter). You'll also need a dice and a kind of award statue / medal.

If you have access to sound effects and someone else who can use them, you can use a sound of wind for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, let acting skills take over and imagine the wind, or get someone in the background to blow into a mic.

Pentecost - the location is the house of believers

(There are 3 of the believers together. Peter, James and John)

Peter - *(normal tone and actions)* Ladies, gents. We've got to make a choice about a new disciple to fulfil what the Scriptures said. Unfortunately, Judas is no longer with us. He has the reward for his wickedness. Now we must choose someone who has been with us the whole time Jesus was with us. They must be a witness with us of Jesus' resurrection. Any ideas?

James - *(loud and slightly angry, like 'Rick' off 'The Young Ones' if you remember or know of that!)*. Judas was a traitor. *(Bangs fist on table)*. Death to traitors!! We should make sure that whoever joins will stay. One for all and all for one!

John - *(quite gentle and calm, like 'Neil' off 'The Young Ones')*. Chill out man. I mean, what happens just happens. It's in the past, drop it.

James - I shoulda dropped Judas, with a left hook..

Peter - Er, yes. That's probably not what Jesus would have done. I do remember a certain teaching about loving your enemies. Anyway, the choice is between Barsabbas and Matthias. Any opinions? I'll open this one up to the floor..

John - They're both really chilled out guys, man. Very Godly and have been solid. Barsabbas is really good with animals and kids. Matthias has a strong prayer ministry. Talking of which, we should pray about this.

James - I agree. But, I think we should put them through some tests first..

Peter - Tests? What were you thinking of James?

James - I was thinking of a gladiator style assault course.

Peter - Er, yes.. I see.. I ask this tentatively, but what kinds of ideas do you have..?

James - Well, we could go to a hill outside Jerusalem and first we do climbing. Then it's down to Lake Galilee for some rowing trials in the fishing boats. Next up, we have a preach-off, where the best speaker wins. Then it's into Jerusalem with a sign around their necks saying, 'I'm a Christian' and we see how long it is before they're chased out by an angry mob. Whoever lasts longest wins..

John - I know man, we could have a sort of 'Disciple Idol'. We'll get everyone together and get Barsabbas and Matthias to sing a Christian classic, like Amazing Grace. We can be the panel of experts. James, you can be Simon Cowell.. Then everyone can vote on their stone tablets and

the winner gets a Disciple Contract.

Peter - *(pauses, unsure of how to respond)*. Well, all these things are possible. But maybe we should pray about it and discern what God is actually saying, rather than set up trials. Let's pray..

"Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs. Amen."

Now, how are we going to decide?

James - I vote that we have a boxing match between the two.. *(aims a few jabs..)*

John - That's ridiculous, man. I say that we have a clean political campaign, each side is allowed badges and stickers and a short promotional marketing drive.

Peter - I don't think either sounds great. I vote that we cast lots and allow God to guide our hand as we always do. Here are the dice. Numbers 1-3 it's Barsabbas. Numbers 4-6 and it's Matthias. *(rolls the dice)*. It's number 6. Matthias is the choice.

(Calls out to Matthias). Matthias, could you come in here?

(Matthias enters room).

Peter - Matthias, God has chosen you to become one of the disciples. This is an immensely privileged position, but God knows your heart and has chosen you. Welcome brother. *(Gives Matthias the award statue / medal)*. Is there anything you'd like to say?

Matthias - Praise God. This is amazing. I can't believe it. *(Looks down at award statue / medal)*. First of all, I'd like to thank my family for bringing me into this world. I'd like to thank my lovely wife, Mary for her support..

James - *(butts in)*. Yeh, yeh. Enough already. Gimme five homeboy..

John - Hey man.

Peter - Come on guys. This is an amazing day. Matthias has been chosen and Jesus told us that he would send his Spirit of truth to us. The Spirit will guide us into all truth, speak what he hears from God and what is to come. He will bring glory to Jesus by taking what is God's and revealing it to us. He will be in us, as Jesus promised and be the counsellor. Jesus told us to remain in Jerusalem until he send his Spirit. Maybe today is that day..!

James - Come on guys, no time to lose. Let's get praying and get some spiritual warfare. *(Starts throwing punches)*.

Matthias - *(to John)*. What's he doing?

John - Don't worry man. He's just fighting demons. It's just the way he prays.

Matthias - What's your favourite way of praying John?

John - Well man, I just kinda get chilled out, listen to a bit of ambient music, light a candle, have some nibbles and just start chilling out with God. What about you man?

Matthias - Well I'm just going to praise God for all he's done. You know, through song, prayer - everything.

James - *(as he's throwing left and right hooks)* - just don't start singing Shine Jesus Shine or I'll land one of these left hooks on you..

Matthias - *(looks shocked)*

Peter - Don't worry. He's only joking. I hope. But seriously, don't start singing Shine Jesus Shine.

(They all start praying. After a moment or two, play the 'wind' sound FX noise or start looking around).

John - Man, what's like that really crazy noise? It's really heavy. It's kinda putting me off my praying.

James - John, did you leave the window open again? I keep telling you to shut it so we don't get burgled.

(Wind noise continues. Disciples increasingly looking around).

Peter - Guys, this is from God. This is something amazing. Something awesome. Something spectacular is going to happen.

(Wind noise gets louder. The next set of dialogue must be fast paced to give impression of motion).

Matthias - I see fire.

James - Get the fire extinguisher out you muppet..

Peter - No, this is God. This is the promised Holy Spirit.

John - Fire? I might, like, totally get burned, man..

James - Bring it on! I want fire!!

Matthias - Come Holy Spirit!

(Wind noise stops and disciples drop heads, staying motionless).

Peter - (*Steps forward and reads Acts 2: 17-21*):

"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Read - Ephesians 5.18-20

"Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Questions

1. What does it mean to be filled with the Holy Spirit?
2. Can we be 'filled' with the Holy Spirit and yet have other bad stuff in our lives?
3. Can we grieve the Holy Spirit? If so, how?
4. How do we make sure we're continually filled with the Holy Spirit?
5. What kinds of qualities did Matthias have to make him one of the apostles? What about you in your life?

Answers

1. In the Greek, the text in Ephesians talks about being continually filled - as Creflo Dollar put it, 'be being filled'. This is a constant state, not just a passive, one-off experience.
2. No, Ephesians makes this quite clear. It tells us not to get drunk, but **instead** be filled with the Spirit. Sin such as being drunk is mutually exclusive with the Holy Spirit. The two cannot co-exist. I choose to be filled with the Holy Spirit! What about you?
3. Yes, we can grieve the Holy Spirit. The Bible is very clear that the Holy Spirit is a person ('He') and can be grieved. Ephesians 4:30 warns us, "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

Derek Prince made a very insightful point on this, pointing to John 1.32-34 which says, "Then John gave this testimony: 'I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God.'"

So, the dove came down on Jesus, symbolising the Holy Spirit. The dove is a gentle creature. RT Kendall tells this story: a preacher and the preacher's wife lived in a house in Israel. When the couple arrived, they found a dove living in the rafters of the house. They loved having the dove live there. But, whenever the couple would argue, the dove would fly away. One day, the preacher talked to his wife and said, 'either the

dove adapts to us, or we adapt to the dove.' They decided to adapt to the dove, by not arguing. It changed their life. The Spirit is a dove that will easily fly away if we offend Him. So let's not grieve the Spirit of God.

4. We know that we can be continually filled. But as one illustration tells us, we need to be like a field being prepared to grow crops. Gradually, all the elements like stones, bad soil, trash - need to be removed so that the field is 'optimised' for growth. Same with us. Our hearts need to be obedient and holy before God before we can be filled. If you need to forgive, do so completely and keep doing so. If you need to repent, do so and turn from your sin. The Bible talks about being filled as an active process. So make Biblical choices to actively be filled with the Spirit. Your public and private life, with family and with friends must match up and be Godly.

Ephesians 5 also says this: *"Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Fill your heart and mind with Psalms, the Word of God, Christian music in whatever genres you like. Continually pray and spend time with God. Pray in tongues if you can / are able / feel it's appropriate. Sing to God. Write worship tunes, lyrics, raps, poems. Read the Bible out loud, proclaim it and believe it, remember it. Be thankful in your heart, for everything God has done. Be really thankful for what God has done. I'm so thankful to Jesus for what he's done for me. Praise you Jesus. But let's keep this attitude in all times. "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

5. Acts 1.20-22 gives us a clue: *"May another take his place of leadership.' Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from John's baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection."*

We also find a clue in Acts 1.24-25: *"Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry."*

So we know that Matthias had:

- 1. Strong leadership qualities as he was going to take a place of leadership. There are many qualities of leadership and we are all developing all the time, or should be.**
- 2. He had been with the disciples all the time Jesus was on earth. He was a servant, faithful, loyal, devoted to Jesus, committed.**
- 3. He would be a witness. So he was trustworthy and with a clear mind. He had integrity.**
- 4. His heart was true, as Jesus would have looked into his heart and chosen perfectly.**
- 5. He had apostolic gifts and potential. An apostle is someone who gets out there and does God's work in new ways, builds up people and churches, leads and empowers, supports and keeps people strong in God.**

So, what about you?