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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A2069 ~ Many Added to the Church.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

During His ministry time here on earth, the Lord Jesus often spoke of the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven. After the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus' disciples at Pentecost, God's redeeming rule created a new group of people known as 'the Church'. God's kingdom works in and through the Church for the benefit of all people by the blessings of Jesus' divine reign.

The Church of Jesus Christ is part of the kingdom of God and His kingdom will never be shaken or taken over by any other. Jesus said in Matthew, Chapter 16: "I will build My church and the gates of Hades [or hell] shall not prevail against it." It's important to our faith that we are convinced of the present personal sovereignty of Christ, and not just of the eventual triumph of His cause. He is seated right now on the throne in heaven!

The new fellowship of believers in Jesus Christ started thinking through their doctrinal position about their new faith. They were trying to assess what was important in the new covenant position Jesus had introduced, and what was different from the way that they had lived in the past. In this *Bible Adventure*, two men who had travelled a long way to attend the Temple festival celebrations and had heard the disciples preaching in their own native language, are having a serious discussion about it.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound.](#)

These two Jewish travellers wanted to understand the division that had come between the ceremonial law and the Ten Commandments. The big difference seemed to be in a new way of loving God and loving fellow believers in Christ through the Holy Spirit. In comparison, they started wondering if the rulers and chief priests loved God and showed it in the way they carried out their duties. The whole religious system seemed to be operated to make the rulers rich in money, rather than rich in love and full of mercy towards the ordinary, less uneducated people.

As long as the chief priests and rulers held onto their positions of outward power, they could never be part of a new group with inward power from the Holy Spirit. To get the Church started, the Holy Spirit gave special gifts to the new believers. The Apostle Paul gave instruction on these spiritual gifts in 1st Corinthians. They included: the ability to heal sickness, perform miracles, teach truths already revealed, speak new revelations of divine wisdom, and discern the spirits as to whether a person is speaking by the Holy Spirit or demons.

The main one of interest at the beginning of the Church was the ability to speak in various languages, or else known as ‘tongues’, but not all the new believers were given that gift by the Holy Spirit.

Possession of a spiritual gift didn’t always mean that the believer is spiritually mature. Study of the Bible trains the mind to God’s way of thinking and for those committed to Jesus Christ, all fruit, or evidence, of the Spirit are developed in a believer’s life over time. In Galatians, Chapter 5, it says: “The Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility and self-control. There is no law against such things as these. ...The Spirit has given us life; He must also control our lives. We must not be proud or irritate one another or be jealous of one another.” Such attributes are more important and desirable for spiritual maturity than having other spiritual gifts seemingly evident within the church.

Some people who study languages say most of the speaking in other tongues sounds merely like babble, because real languages have patterns not apparent in those instances. There have also been proved that many cases of supposedly ‘miraculous healings’ were found to be unhealed again the next day. God doesn’t work in deceitful ways. As we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us as we pray, He still heals many people and gives them wisdom in taking good care of their bodies. However, improvements in health tend to be gradual, rather than spectacular.

When Peter was preaching in the Temple after receiving the Holy Spirit, he came to the point where he told the crowd of listeners that they had crucified Jesus, the person whom God had made both Lord and Christ. As a result, they were deeply troubled and they asked what they should do. Peter told them: “Each one of you must turn away from your sins and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God’s gift, the Holy Spirit.”

Peter urged them to take action. He said: “Save yourselves from the punishment coming on this wicked people!” Many of them believed his message and were baptized, and about 3,000 people were added to the group that day. They spent their time learning from the disciples filled with the Holy Spirit and now called ‘apostles’, taking part in the new Church fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and prayers of the believers. And so the new Church in Acts was started!

Although in these days we see troubles like earthquakes, rumours of war and the prospect of food and water shortages around the world, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit gives believers a core of calmness and poise that nothing can shatter. If we’ve lost such inner peace, we need to start praying and seeking God to forgive us and give us a fresh trust in our spiritual life.

As we draw near to the end of the Church Age in the world and we see all the anti-Christian works being supported at government, community and family levels, we need to pray that God will save as many as possible. God is slow to judge so that more will turn away from their evil deeds and be saved by Jesus with eternal life.

With the Biblically predicted ‘great falling away’ being seen in many countries around the world, is it too much to ask God for revival in churches and individuals? God is not willing that any should perish in the fires of hell. Yet what does it take to get a revival started?

Revival is needed when there’s a lack of brotherly love for fellow Christians. When there are disagreements, evil speaking and gossip, believers in Christ need to remember the passage on love in 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13: “Love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up; and its faith, hope and patience never fail.”

Revival is needed when the church is filled with a worldly spirit. Some people say they are Christians, but have never experienced the joy of full salvation in their hearts. They maintain moral conduct without any spiritual conscience. They are secretly more interested in pleasure and entertainment than to go away alone and spending time reading God’s Word and praying to Him.

The Church needs revival. When the wicked triumph over the Church, social activities triumph over the spiritual. Many nations now have an agenda to bring in different family relationships which God’s Word soundly condemns. We are to pray expectantly and persistently in all matters, so that God will answer with a mighty work to change the hearts of many people who are spiritually lost and sliding closer to hell every day.

How can we be the ones to start a revival? Let us get right with God and confess our secret criticisms against others, asking them for forgiveness. This needs to be followed by much prayer. We then need to make ourselves available to God to do whatever He has planned for us to do. Is revival possible this close to the end of the Church Age? Of course it is, if we pray and intercede!

In a way, the giving of the Holy Spirit was a spiritual revival for many of the priests and members of the Sanhedrin in the early Church days. These men had spent their entire lives not understanding the Messiah passages in the Old Testament.

Not too long ago in 1995, spiritual revival broke out on many college campuses in America during springtime. One characteristic of this outworking visitation from God was students dealing with sinful habits that they'd previously let linger in their lives. A journalist recorded one student's story. He said: "I was a leader on campus. We had invited some Christian students to come and share. At first, I was praying for other people, but then I began to think about my own struggles."

"How could I get up and admit that I'm less than perfect? But I also realised that being on a Christian campus isn't protection from the world. I have really struggled with lust. I found I wasn't alone. It was an issue for a lot of others too. Personally I wanted the chain to be broken; I wanted that stuff out of my life. If it meant no magazines, no television, I was willing to eliminate them. A number of us signed a paper stating our desire for purity. I'm still accountable to other people. My deepest desire is to be pure in my heart and thoughts."

As this student showed, the desire for purity is the beginning of purity. Purity comes when we pursue it actively, relentlessly and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let us not forget what Jude wrote in the 3rd verse of his epistle: "... I found it necessary to write to you, exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith, which was once for all delivered to the saints."

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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