

Yateley Baptist Church, Sunday 1 November 2020

Opening Prayer

Hymn: Praise! 517

Breathe on me, breath of God:
fill me with life anew,
that as you love, I too may love,
and do what you would do.

2 Breathe on me, breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until my will is one with yours
to do and to endure.

3 Breathe on me, breath of God;
be all my heart's desire,
until this earthly part of me
glows with your heavenly fire.

4 Breathe on me, breath of God;
so shall I never die,
but live with you the perfect life
of your eternity.

Edwin Hatch (1835-1889)

Reading: Acts 18:18-9:10, ESV

¹⁸ After this, Paul stayed many days longer and then took leave of the brothers and set sail for Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila. At Cenchreae he had cut his hair, for he was under a vow. ¹⁹ And they came to Ephesus, and he left them there, but he himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. ²⁰ When they asked him to stay for a longer period, he declined. ²¹ But on taking leave of them he said, "I will return to you if God wills", and he set sail from Ephesus.

²² When he had landed at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and then went down to Antioch. ²³ After spending some time there, he departed and went from one place to the next through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

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²⁴ Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. ²⁵ He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and explained to him the way of God more accurately. ²⁷ And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, ²⁸ for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

19 And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. ² And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." ³ And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." ⁵ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. ⁷ There were about twelve men in all.

⁸ And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But when some became stubborn and continued in unbelief, speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

Hymn: Praise! 539

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;

break me, melt me, mould me, fill me;

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Daniel Iverson (1890-1977)

Sermon: Acts 18:18-19:7 – The Missing Piece

Abraham Lincoln is said to have asked someone, "If you call the tail of a dog a leg, how many legs does a dog have?" "Five, of course", came the reply. "No", chuckled Lincoln, "it still has four legs. Calling the tail of a dog a leg doesn't make it one!"

"Even the demons believe that – and shudder!" (James 2:19b)

"In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me, that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." (John Wesley)

"Did you not receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" (19:2)

1. The Teacher who needed Teaching

"Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord. And being fervent in Spirit, he spoke and taught accurately concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John."

"He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately" (26).

"And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus." (27-28)

"What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth" (1 Corinthians 3:5-6)

2. The Disciples in need of the Spirit

"And it happened that while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. And he said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' And they said to him, 'No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.' And he said, 'Into what then were you baptised?' They said, 'Into John's baptism.'" (19:1-3)

"And Paul said, 'John baptised with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.' On hearing this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying. There were about twelve men in all."

“If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’ Now this, he said about the Spirit” (John 7:37-39)

3. The Believers who need to keep on growing

“For in one Spirit, we were all baptised into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Colossians 2:6 says, “Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.”

Revelation 2:5, “Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first.”

Prayer

Hymn: Praise! 811

O for a closer walk with God,
a constant, heavenly calm;
a light to shine upon the road
that leads me to the Lamb!

2 Where is the blessing that I knew
when first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
of Jesus and his word?

3 What peaceful hours I once enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But they have left an aching void
the world can never fill.

4 The dearest idol I have known-
however much adored-
help me to tear it from your throne
and worship you as Lord.

5 So shall my walk be close with God,
my mind serene and calm;
so purer light shall mark the road
that leads me to the Lamb.

William Cowper (1731-1800)

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