

## Receiving the Spirit

by Travis Dean

March 20, 2010

Today is a day that Allen will remember for the rest of his life. It's a day that represents a new beginning – a new chapter in his life. We have heard from Allen's testimony how the Lord has been at work in his life. And today we celebrate that. But I believe that today is not only a celebration of what has already taken place in Allen's life. It is also a day in which Allen will be equipped and empowered for the work and ministry that God has chosen for him. For the next few minutes I would like us to consider this experience as described in God's Word.

Turn with me to Acts 2:36. (pg. 967) Peter is preaching on the Day of Pentecost. He has been explaining to the people that what is taking place is a fulfillment of prophecy. He quotes from Joel, regarding the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. Then he quotes from Psalm 16 regarding Jesus being the Messiah. Now, in verse 36, Peter is in the closing part of his message. We will read verses 36-39. (Read) Peter puts the responsibility of crucifying Christ on the house of Israel, not on the Romans. He speaks of "this Jesus, whom you crucified". This Jesus is both Lord and Christ. Well, the people are convicted. "What shall we do?" they cry. Peter gives them two things to do. First, he says, "Repent". In other words, "Confess that what you did was sin. And turn away from this way of living." Second, Peter tells the people, "Be baptized". What has happened here today in the Lancaster Seventh-day Adventist Church is a fulfillment of Peter's instructions. In Allen's life he has repented of his former sinful way of living. And today he has been baptized.

But that is not the end of Peter's response. What else does he say in verse 38? "You shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." He continues in verse 39: "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." He speaks here of a promise. What promise is he talking about? Turn back one page to Acts 1:4. We will read verses 4 and 5 and then skip down to verse 8. (Read) The promise Peter is referring to is the "promise of the Father" to send the Holy Spirit. According to verse 8 the Holy Spirit would bring power for what purpose? To be Jesus' witnesses. Peter says this promise is to "all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." Well, the call has reached Lancaster, Ohio. The Lord has called, and Allen has answered. And as surely as Allen has repented and been baptized, he will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The reason for this gift is to enable Allen to be a powerful witness for his Savior Jesus Christ. It's so that many more people in Lancaster might repent and be baptized. Then they will receive the Holy Spirit, and the experience will be repeated over and over again, until Jesus returns.

I have asked Allen to come up at this time. I would like to have a prayer for Allen, that as he leaves here today, he will be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be a mighty witness for His Lord and Savior. I've asked our currently elected elders to join me as we pray. And anyone who has

been a part of Allen's spiritual journey thus far is also welcome to come forward. Let's gather around Allen in a circle as we kneel and pray together.