**Thursday 21th May**

Luke 24:45-51

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.

Today is Ascension Day, when we remember Jesus being taken up into heaven. It’s good news! Jesus told his disciples that it was better for them if he left, to which I expect they replied ‘Whaaaaaaat?’! Here’s why it was good:

1) the Fathers promise, the Holy Spirit would be poured out after Jesus return.

2) Jesus’ disciples would be clothed with power from on high.

3) whereas Jesus was confined to being in one place at a time, the Holy Spirit can be everywhere and we can all know the presence of Jesus with us. (Or as Nicky Gumble once said, ‘in the Old Testament the Holy Spirit came on particular people in particular places for a particular purpose, now the presence is permanent’).

4) He promised that He would be returning in the way that He left and that then all that know him would be with him for eternity.

5) it means that there is a man in heaven - Jesus - who understands what it is to life a human life with all its joys and struggles, and who intercedes for us before the Father.

Before he goes, Jesus opens the Scriptures to the disciples, summarising the reason that he came. As we join in the Thy Kingdom Come Prayer initiative starting today, let’s commit praying for ourselves, our friends and family and our community that all this Good News would be heard and received with faith.

*Lord Jesus, thank you that right now you are with the Father, helping us as we pray. We ask you to open our minds to understand your Word. We pray that you would clothe your church with power from on high. We ask that the Good News of Jesus would continue to spread across the Globe bringing forgiveness, freedom, new life and peace. Amen.*

If you haven’t already done so, why not download The Thy Kingdom Come App or search on line for some great daily resources to use in the run up to Pentecost.