

Electricity / The Coming of the Spirit

Tammy: Electricity is dangerous! I learned that when I was a small child. My brother and I were playing with some metal spoons. We wondered what would happen if we pushed a spoon handle into the power socket on the wall. We found out; there was a huge bang! Then smoke and sparks came flying out from the power socket. We both jumped back in fear; we were afraid of the sparks, and more afraid of what our mother would say when she found the burnt socket!

Hello! We're here again with you on Women of Hope. I'm Tammy.

Carol: And I'm Carol; it's good to be together again. I wonder if you have electricity in your home? Do you have a power point where you can connect a light or a TV? Electricity can make your life easier in many ways. But have you ever thought about the dangers that come with that power? We'd like to talk about electricity today, and how to use it safely.

Tammy: Yes, electricity is wonderful. It makes our lights work. It makes our fans or heaters work. We can use it to cook our food or run huge machines. But this power can also injure or kill people, so use it with care!

Carol: Have you ever wondered what electricity is? It's something we can use every day and yet we don't really understand it do we? Electricity is a form of energy, like the sun, or fire, or wind, but it's in a form that we can control. Electricity is made in a power station, or through solar panels or a generator or a wind turbine. The power then travels through wires to our homes to make things work. It can be stored in a battery too.

Tammy: Let's think about some of the ways we can be safe with electricity...

We know that electricity travels through wires. So we need to make sure these wires or power cords are safe. Do you have any power cords around your house? Your power cords must be fully sealed so that you can't see any of the wires. Power cords have a plastic covering. Inside are smaller plastic tubes that contain the copper wires. These wires carry the power. You can get an enormous and painful shock or burn if you touch these wires when they are connected to the power. If you can see the metal wires poking through the plastic, this is very dangerous. You must *not* use these power cords until they have been fixed by an electrician.

Here's another important thing: never pull out a plug by its cord; instead take hold of the plug itself. And don't carry an appliance by its cord. You could weaken the cord and break the seal. And always turn off the power before unplugging an appliance.

Carol: Electricity can sometimes cause *fires* in our homes. Do you use power boards in your house? They are plugged into the wall socket, and they have multiple places to plug in electrical appliances. I've even seen two or three families all getting their power through one power board! That's really dangerous! If the power boards have too many things plugged into them they have to carry too much power and they can get hot and start a fire.

Tammy: So we definitely should *not* connect more than one *heater* or *cooking appliance* into one power board, because those appliances use a lot of power and get very hot.

Here's another rule to be safe with electricity. Make sure that the power wires never touch water. Electricity can travel through water very fast, so you can get a shock from the water. You need special, sealed cords if you use them outside the house where they may get wet or damp. Make sure there are no power cords or appliances near you when you are washing dishes, or doing anything with water. I heard about a baby who was killed when a power cord fell into the tub of water where he was being bathed. The switch had been left on.

Carol: That's terrible! It's worth taking extra care, isn't it? If ever a power cord or electrical appliance falls into some water or gets wet, don't try to pull it out. Turn off the power *switch*, where the cord is plugged in, then remove the cord or appliance from the water. Turning off the main power switch makes it safe to touch.

Tammy: Electricity travels to our homes through power lines, which carry *many* wires. Have you seen the warning symbol? Often it looks like a yellow lightning bolt, with words like: 'Warning: high voltage lines'. These big power lines are very dangerous to touch. People can get hurt if they try to connect their own wires to the power supply. We've said many times today; electricity is dangerous and so only an expert electrician should connect or disconnect your house to the power lines.

In big storms, trees or branches can fall onto power lines; have you seen that? These power lines can still be carrying electricity and can hurt you. Make sure that you and your family stay away from these wires until you know the power has been turned off.

Carol: Electricity can be especially dangerous for children - like that poor baby you told us about. An electric shock might seriously hurt an adult, but an electric shock can kill a small child. Children want to know why and how things work, so they want to explore electric appliances. We need to make sure they don't hurt themselves. You may be able to buy plastic plugs that fit into a power socket and stop children poking things like spoon handles into them.

Tammy: My friend has a little girl called Polly, who's 3 years old. Polly decided to see how the lamp in her room worked. She pulled it apart and put her finger into the part where the bulb usually goes. My friend didn't know what was happening until she heard screams. Polly was crying; she showed her mum her sore finger. "I just wanted to see what would happen..." she sobbed. Thankfully, the shock was only a small one. But my friend told me, 'I realised that I must teach my children not to play with electrical appliances! It's for their own safety.'

Have you taught your children not to touch lights, fans or other appliances? This is important. They can get electric shocks, or burn their fingers. I have another friend whose baby, Benny, liked to chew or suck on any sort of power cord. They had to start teaching Benny straight away that this was not okay. A loud "No!" and sometimes a small smack on the hand were needed to make him stop.

Carol: I guess Benny's parents didn't want to scare him, but they had to teach him not to chew cords so that he would grow up safe. I hope they also turned off power switches and unplugged appliances whenever they had finished using them!

Have you checked all your electrical appliances to make sure they are safe? Check these things... Is the plastic cover on the cord fully sealed, so that no wires can be seen? Do you use the appliance in a safe place, away from water and away from the reach of little children? Do you turn it off, then

remove the cord, when it's not in use? Do you remove it by pulling only the plug itself and not the cord. Can you hear, smell or see anything that seems wrong? When appliances start to smell like smoke, or send out sparks, or makes a crackling sound, then there's something wrong. Turn the power point off, and get them fixed by an expert, or replace them. Don't risk a fire or an electric shock.

Tammy: We've talked a lot about how to use electricity safely. Don't be frightened - electricity is a wonderful thing to use. But do take good care, and teach your family how to be safe. They are too precious to take risks!

Jesus Christ came to live on this earth 2000 years ago. We've heard lots of stories about Jesus on Women of Hope, haven't we? Do *you* have a favourite story?

Carol: I have *so many* favourites! I love the stories about Jesus' teaching...the people he healed...the time he stopped the storm at sea...and the way he showed such love. No wonder people followed him. Many people were sure Jesus really was God in human form.

Tammy: But I think the most important story is about how Jesus, God's son, died for our sins...

Carol: ... and how he came back to life, and then returned to heaven.

Tammy: You know that *we* follow Jesus, like many other people around the world. But have you ever wondered what happened in between then and now? How is it that there are millions of people following Jesus today...2000 years after he lived here on earth? Fran's going to tell us some true stories about those first followers of Jesus, and how God showed them what to do after Jesus had gone back to heaven. Welcome, Fran.

Fran: Thanks Tammy. And it's so good to be with you again. Yes, in God's word the Bible, there's a part called 'The Acts of the Apostles', which answers that question, 'What happened next?' I'd like to tell you the *next* part of the story from God's word. You've been talking about electricity...power that we use though we don't really understand it. Well, listen for another kind of power that's more than we can understand!

Story music

After Jesus was taken up into heaven, his friends waited in the city of Jerusalem, as Jesus had told them to do. He said, 'You will receive *power* when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will speak my message here in Jerusalem, in the surrounding areas, and to the ends of the earth.' (Acts 1:8) Remember those words!

About ten days later, they were gathered together, when suddenly there was a noise like a strong wind blowing, filling the building. Then they saw something that looked like tongues of fire, which spread out and touched every person. They were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to talk in other languages, as the Spirit helped them to speak God's word. Hearing the noise, a large crowd of Jews gathered, who were there for a special festival called Pentecost. Those friends of Jesus spoke many languages from all around the Mediterranean Sea and the East. The crowd was amazed, saying, 'How is it that each of us can hear in his own language the great things God has been doing? What

does it mean?' But some laughed, saying they must be drunk. (Acts 2:1-13)

Carol: May I interrupt, Fran? Would you explain more about the Holy Spirit?

Fran: Sure Carol. You might have been wondering about that too. It's a bit hard to explain. The Holy Spirit is how God is present, loving and powerful in our lives and in the world today. But he's not just a form of power. In God's word, sometimes he's called 'the Spirit of Jesus' (Phil 1:19) ...other times he's called 'the spirit of God' (1 John 4:2). Jesus had gone, in his physical body, but God was still there, in the person of the Holy Spirit. Jesus' friends couldn't see him - he is Spirit! But Jesus had told them that the Spirit would come, and live inside them. He would teach them about Jesus and show them how to live. This was the first time the Holy Spirit came in this new way, and it was an amazing event. They knew for sure that this was *God* at work. So let me tell you what happened next, from God's word.

Fran: Peter was one of Jesus' closest followers, and he was a leader in the group. He stood up with the others and began to speak loudly to the crowd, using the power given by the Holy Spirit. Listen carefully to his words.

'Let me tell you what this means. No, we're not drunk! This is what God's prophet Joel wrote about long ago, saying: "God says, 'in the last days I will pour out my Spirit on all sorts of people, men and women, young and old, and they will tell out my message' " '... Listen!' continued Peter, 'Jesus of Nazareth was a man with God's authority. This was clearly proved by the miracles and wonders that God did through him. You all know this, it happened right here. God knew and planned it before it happened. You killed him by letting sinful men execute him on the cross. But God raised him up from death, setting him free from its power...we all saw this happen. Jesus has been raised now to sit at the right side of God his Father, and he has poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit on us. It's certain: the one who you put to death on the cross is God's promised one, the one that God has now made Lord.'

The people were deeply troubled and said to Peter and the others 'What shall we do, brothers?' Peter replied, 'You must turn away from your sins, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God's gift, the Holy Spirit. For God's promise was made to you and your children, and to all who are far away - all whom the Lord God calls to himself.' Many believed the message, and were baptized to show their change of heart. About 3000 people became followers of Jesus that day. (Acts 2:14-41)

And that's all I'll tell you today.

Tammy: Wouldn't it have been amazing to be there that day?! This was a unique event, when the Holy Spirit came in power to the believers in Jesus. This swept away any doubts they had.

Carol: Imagine all these followers of Jesus, these ordinary people, talking at once, in languages they didn't know! Yet all the listeners could understand the message in their own languages. No wonder they wanted an explanation! What did Peter say?...

Fran: He said that this had been foretold long before by their prophet Joel. Joel's words were in their holy book, part of the Bible. Joel called God's people to turn from their sins, and promised them that one day God would give his own Spirit to *anyone* who wanted to follow him.

Carol: I noticed that this gift was for *all sorts* of people - old and young, women and men. They knew already that God could speak to them through priests or prophets, but God said he would give his Spirit and his message directly, to ordinary people.

Did you know, *we* are part of that foretelling...that prophecy? Since that time, God has promised to give his Holy Spirit to anyone who puts their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. If you've believed in Jesus and asked him to be your saviour and Lord, you can be sure that he has given you his Holy Spirit to live inside you. He'll change you from the inside out, he'll give you the power to live and speak for him.

Fran: That's so wonderful. Sometimes I can feel how the Holy Spirit gives me strength, or words, that really don't come from myself. That happened for Peter in the story didn't it? Suddenly he was able to speak God's words with great power, like Jesus had promised.

Tammy: So Peter explained how God had brought Jesus back from death, to show that he really was the saviour who had been promised. Then he told the people to turn away from their wrong behaviour and thoughts. They should put their faith in Jesus, and be *baptized*. You might wonder about what it means to be baptized... It means to be...specially washed. They would dip a person right under the water, in a river or a pool. Some people today baptise like that; others just sprinkle water.

Fran: But what did it *mean*? ... It meant that they had turned their back on their old way of life, and wanted to follow God in new life. Those Jewish people understood this, so it became a sign for the new believers. It meant that they had decided to follow Jesus as their Lord, and start a new life with him. It still has that meaning today. It's not being washed in water that makes you right with God - no, being washed is just a symbol that you've decided to follow Jesus. *That's* the most important decision you could ever make.

Carol: If you want to follow Jesus, you just need to pray and tell him that you're sorry for the wrong things you've done, and ask him to forgive you and help you to live in his way. Jesus promised to give you his Holy Spirit to help you, and keep reminding you that you truly belong to Jesus, that you are part of God's family forever (Rom 8:16).

Tammy: If you know people who follow Jesus, maybe you could talk to them, or you could write to TWR Women of Hope and we can help you. The address: TWRWomenofHope.org

We do hope you will be with us again. Have a great week filled with God's blessings.