

# (Acts) a Promise of Power

by Brian Brodersen

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*The Book of Acts provides a model and establishes principles for ministry, demonstrating the continuing ministry of Jesus through the Holy Spirit.*

**Duration:** 54:17

**Scripture:** Joel 2:28, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 24:36, Acts 1:1-3, Acts 1:8-12, Acts 2:17-18

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Great Commission"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of spreading the gospel to those who have not heard it. He mentions that predicting the time of the second coming of the Lord is not our task, but rather we should be actively engaged in sharing the message of salvation. The speaker explains that the disciples were commissioned by Jesus to be his messengers and were promised power through the Holy Spirit. He highlights the Greek word 'dunamis,' which is translated as wonderful works, mighty works, miracles, and strength, emphasizing the supernatural abilities that come with the baptism in the Spirit. The sermon concludes by reminding listeners of the Great Commission to go into the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

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## Transcript

All right, let's turn tonight to the Book of Acts, so let's begin with looking just at the title itself, the Acts of the Apostles. Now, this title, as we sort of alluded to over the past few weeks and mentioning several times the Book of Acts, this title does not necessarily describe the contents of the book. This title was tacked on to this portion of Scripture in about the second century.

And so it's a title that's been with us for quite some time. But it's really not an accurate description of the contents of the book. Some acts of some apostles might be a more accurate description.

We have primarily two apostles highlighted in the Book of Acts, and that is Peter and Paul. But apart from that, with just a few mentionings of John and just a brief mentioning of the martyrdom of James, none of the other original apostles are mentioned in the book after chapter one. And there in chapter one, as we'll see as we get to it, they're just listed as those who were there in the upper room waiting for the promise of the Lord.

So a bad title, I think a better title could be some acts of some apostles. But then again, I think that still misses the mark. The acts.

Recorded here in this book are the acts of the risen Christ by the Holy Spirit through some apostles, as well as through other believers, not just apostles, but prophets and evangelists and deacons and just regular old Christians. They are mentioned and their activities are chronicled in this book. So a more accurate title.

Of the contents would be the book of the continued doing and teaching of the living Christ by the Holy Spirit through his body, which is the church. You know, the great thing about the book of the acts here is that it's an incomplete book. And we are really still contributing to this volume.

This is just the beginning of the history of church. We of the church, we are, you know, I think pretty close to the end. But we've got a 2000 year gap between the beginning and the end so far.

But this is just the beginning. But the work of the Lord has been going on since then. And the work of the Lord is going on tonight.

He's working. And that's why we're here this evening, because he's worked in each and every one of our lives. And he's still working in our lives tonight.

Now, the author of the Acts of the Apostles is Luke, and we know that. But yet it's interesting that Luke is never mentioned by name in the Acts of the Apostles, nor is he mentioned by name in the gospel, according to Luke. Yet we are certain that he is the author.

Luke is mentioned three times in the New Testament, each time by Paul in Colossians 4:14. Paul says, Luke, the beloved physician. Greets you.

So how do we know that Luke is the author of the book of Acts? Well, there are several things that convince us that Luke is indeed the author. First of all, we know the author of Acts had a medical background because he uses medical terms in describing diseases and healing. Luke, as we just read in Colossians, there was a physician.

We know the author of Acts was a traveling companion of Paul's because on many occasions he speaks in the first person plural in Acts 16:10, for example, we read. And after he, Paul, had seen the vision immediately, we endeavored to go into Macedonia. So Luke is Paul's traveling companion, and that's clear.

We know that the author of Acts was an educated man because of his use of the Greek language and his accuracy as a historian. Luke, as a physician, was obviously an educated man. So Luke is the undisputed author of the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

Now, just exactly who Luke was. We don't know really anything more about him. Some people speculate that he was a proselyte.

He was not a Jew. And interestingly, he is the only Gentile to write a New Testament book. And he wrote two.

And believe it or not, Luke wrote the majority of the New Testament. His two books, Luke, the gospel, according to Luke and Acts, make up the give him the majority contribution to the New Testament. An interesting thing, considering the fact that he was a Gentile.

Now, some people speculate that he was a proselyte, that he had converted to Judaism and that he actually met Paul when Paul was traveling. And when Paul spoke in one of the synagogues, Luke was one who heard what Paul said and responded. That's all speculation.

We really don't know anything about Luke, apart from the fact that he was a physician and that he was Paul's traveling companion. And it seems that he met up with Paul in the city of Troas. Now, interestingly, some people have speculated as well that Titus was the brother of Luke and they speculate about that because in Second Corinthians, chapter eight, Titus is being spoken of.

And then there is a mentioning of the brother of Titus, but his name isn't given. Now, here's another twist in it. Titus, who plays obviously a pretty major role in Paul's life, is never mentioned in the book of Acts.

Luke does not mention his own name. And if Titus was indeed his brother, then Luke probably wouldn't have mentioned Titus by name either. So, again, that's speculation.

But it's just interesting stuff to think about. Perhaps Luke and Titus were brothers. Luke, as a historian.

Luke was. A first class historian, there was a time in church history when the Bible really came under attack back in the eighteen hundreds, a school of higher criticism arose in Europe and then came eventually to the US and infiltrated the seminaries and so forth. And the school of higher criticism basically was just an attempt to undermine the authority of the Bible.

And they began to challenge the authenticity of the Bible. They began to challenge things like the authorship of various books. And they said that there was a lot of mythology and a lot of historical inaccuracy and all kinds of accusations were brought forth by the school of higher criticism.

And they really criticized Luke. They said this guy didn't know anything about the geography or the the the culture or the practices of his time. You know, and they really came down hard on Luke as a historian, as the writer of both the Gospel of Luke and Acts.

But, you know, it's interesting as time went on, Luke actually, through archaeology and other things, has been proven to be probably now this is coming from secular sources. Definitely, I would say, as a Christian, but from secular sources, probably the most accurate historian of antiquity, Luke, our Luke right here, the one who wrote the book of the Acts. Listen to a quote from A.N. Sherwin-White, professor of ancient history at Oxford University.

He strongly affirmed the accuracy of Luke's background knowledge. Let me quote from him. He said the historical framework is exact in terms of time and place.

The details are precise and correct. One watch the streets and marketplaces, the theaters and assemblies of first century Ephesus or Thessalonica, Corinth or Philippi with the author of Acts. The great men of the cities, the magistrates, the mob and the mob leader are all there.

It is similar with the narrative of Paul's judicial experiences before the tribunals of Gallio, Felix and Festus. As documents, these narratives belong to the same historical series as the record of provincial and imperial trials in epic, graphical and literary sources of the first and early second centuries A.D. For acts, the confirmation of historicity is overwhelming. Any attempt to reject its basic historicity, even in matters of detail, now appear absurd.

Roman historians have long taken it for granted. So Luke, a first rate historian and definitely positively, unquestionably the most accurate historian in ancient history, because Luke was writing history not simply out of his own intellectual capacities, but he was writing history under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. So, you know, he got it all right.

He is antiquities greatest historian now. To begin, we read the former treatise. Have I made of theophilus like the gospel of Luke? This is addressed to a person named Theophilus.

Theophilus means it's made up of two Greek words, which means lover of God. Now, some have speculated that this wasn't really written to a to an individual, but actually it was just written to, you know, Christians in general, lovers of God. But it does seem more likely that it was written to an individual in Luke's gospel.

He refers to this man, Theophilus, as most excellent Theophilus, and because he uses this title, most excellent Theophilus, it could be that Theophilus was a Roman official of some sort who had become a Christian. Paul uses the exact. Same term when addressing Felix and Festus, both of them being Roman governors.

So it's highly likely that Theophilus was some sort of a Roman official. And of course, we know that there were many Roman officials who embraced the gospel at that time. As we go through the book of Acts, we'll find Paul and Barnabas ministering in Cyprus to the pro council, Sergius Paulus, who became a believer.

And so Theophilus, I believe, was. A Roman official of some sort, and Luke was writing to him, evidently he had a personal relationship with him, but whatever the case, God, of course, was providentially guiding Luke to write. An inspired account of the apostolic church.

God was moving upon Luke, whatever his personal motivation was, God was providentially moving upon him to write an inspired account of the apostolic church in order to provide a model and to establish principles for ministry for successive generations. This brief history, approximately 40 years, probably not quite 40 years covered, but close to it gives us the picture of what life and church and ministry are to look like as we await the return of the Lord. So acts is really a critical book.

Some people sort of dismiss the modern. Relevance of it and say it wasn't really meant to speak anything to us today, it was just really to give us some information about how they transitioned from the Jew to the Gentile and how the whole thing got going. But it doesn't have much personal application today.

I completely disagree with that. I think that this is the place where God has laid out for us the model of what ministry is all about. We look at the book of Acts and we find that.

As we've already mentioned, the Holy Spirit is prominent in the book of Acts, over 50 references to the Holy Spirit's activity, and so that shows us that the Holy Spirit is the one who's to be leading the church. And that's something that the church has forgotten. And every church that forgets that gets into trouble.

Every church that holds on to that fact is blessed and prospers. This book shows us the kind of people that God uses. You don't have to go off and become a seminarian.

You don't have to go off and get your Ph.D. to be used by God. God uses all kinds of people. He uses people that are educated.

He uses people that are uneducated. He uses ordinary people. And we see that all through the book of Acts.

We see that God loves all people, not just one particular group of people, as they originally thought. They sort of thought initially that God's message of the gospel was just to the Jew. But we find out in the book of Acts that God's message is to all people.

And that encourages us today to keep taking the gospel to all people. And so we have so many things here in the book of Acts that are principles and become for us the blueprint for how we are to be conducting ourselves as Christians, how we are to be conducting ourself in relation to the life of the church and how we're to be conducting ourself in the ministry again as we wait for the Lord to return. So he says, the former treatise have I made out theophilus of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach until the day in which he was taken up after that he, through the Holy Spirit, had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen to whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them 40 days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

So I want you to notice this Luke tells us that acts. Is going to be a continuation, a record of the continuing ministry of Jesus, the gospel of Luke that he refers to was the record of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach acts. Shows us that the ministry of Jesus did not cease with his ascension, but the ministry of Jesus continues on and even in a greater capacity since the Lord ascended and sent the Holy Spirit.

You know, sometimes we we say things like, man, if I could have only lived back at the time of the apostles. If I could have only been here when Jesus was here, or we think, well, you know, if Jesus was here today, how much better off things would be. But Jesus actually said himself that it would be better for us if he went away.

He said, in essence, as long as I'm here, it's not as good as it can be. And of course, we understand why that would be the case, because Jesus, when he was here, he was limited to a certain location. He was limited by his humanity.

And so if Jesus had never ascended and sent the Holy Spirit, then in order to be with the Lord, we would have to go find him wherever he happened to be that particular week. If he remained in Judea, then he couldn't be here with us. If he was here with us, then he couldn't be with somebody else somewhere else.

But because he ascended and sent the spirit and in a sense came back to us in the person of the spirit, he's able to be everywhere all at once. And so every congregation of Christians that gathers wherever they are in the world can have the absolute assurance of the presence of Christ with them. Every Christian, no matter what your particular location might be or the particular circumstance you find yourself in, every single Christian can have the assurance that Christ is present with them because of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

And so Jesus is working. He began working when he was here in the flesh, but he continues working now by the spirit through his people, having ascended into heaven. But it says concerning him in verse three that.

He showed himself alive to his disciples by many infallible proofs, you know, one of the things that sets Christianity apart from every other religion is the historicity of it, the historical aspect of it, that we're not talking about, you know, just sort of mystical, intangible, non factual kinds of things. We're talking about

historical events. And Luke was, as I already said, the great historian in his gospel, he gives the exact timing of the ministry.

Of John the Baptist and the beginning of the ministry of Jesus in the 15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate is governor of Judea, and he goes and he lists all of these officials who were in power at that particular time. And he gives us a date in history. And Christianity is a historical religion.

The other religions don't have that historical basis to them, they cannot be proven historically, many of them don't even seek to be proven historically because so much of what they deal with, you know, doesn't really pertain to time as we know it or, you know, it's just such a such a mystical sort of a thing. But even a religion like Islam that would tend to be more of a historical kind of religion, all kinds of problems with Islam historically. But not so with Christianity, Jesus, he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, if you want proof.

God's given it. You know, when we talk about. Believing by faith in the gospel, that doesn't mean that there are no evidences for the Christian faith and we just have to believe against all of the evidence.

That we take a blind leap. It doesn't mean that at all, as a matter of fact, God has given us so much evidence, he's given us an overwhelming amount of evidence and really the amount of faith that must be contributed is relatively a small amount. I would say that God has given us about ninety nine percent evidence and then he says, OK, I want you to contribute one percent of faith now.

I mean, really, there's so much evidence for the historicity of Christ and not just the fact that he lived and he died, but that he rose again. And so here Luke refers to the many infallible proofs being seen of them 40 days. So what were the proofs that Jesus gave for his resurrection? The many infallible proofs? Well, he appeared to all kinds of people.

He appeared, first of all, to Mary Magdalene. You remember, she thought he was the gardener and she tried to cling to him. And Mary said, don't cling to me.

Or Jesus said, don't cling to me, Mary. I've not yet ascended to my father, but go tell my disciples that I'm ascending to my God and to their God. And then later on that day, he appeared to the apostles.

Thomas was not there with them, but he suddenly appeared to them in that room where they were hiding for fear of the Jews. And he revealed himself to them. And they were all amazed when they saw the Lord.

And Thomas came a little bit later and they told him Jesus was here. We saw him. He's risen from the dead.

And Thomas said, I'll never believe it. I don't believe it. You guys are making this up.

I won't believe it unless I can take my hand and put it in the wounds on his side and in his hands. And a week later, that same group of people was assembled and Thomas was there with him at that time. And suddenly Jesus appeared in the room and he said, Thomas, come here.

Thomas, touch me. See that it is me. Put your hand in the wounds and Thomas, don't be unbelieving, but believing.

And Thomas was convinced he fell down and he said, my Lord and my God. And then Jesus appeared to the disciples back in the area of Galilee. And over this 40 day period, he would he would just, you know,

appear suddenly and then he would vanish after some time and he would just kind of keep coming and going.

He, of course, being risen from the dead, had a glorified body in which he was able to do that. And so there they are. They're fishing on the Sea of Galilee.

And suddenly there's a man on the shore calling out and saying, have you caught anything? And no, we haven't. You know, and Jesus tells him to come in. And there is they come in, they find that he's made them breakfast.

He's made them some broiled fish and he has a honeycomb and they sit down. And they eat together with him. So he ate with them.

Showing them that it was he himself and and it actually says that no one dared ask him who he was, knowing that it was the Lord. And then we read in First Corinthians 15, Paul writing, he said that the risen Christ was seen by over 500. People.

At one time, and so many infallible proofs. The person who says, you know, I don't believe that gospel stuff, I don't believe in Jesus Christ, I don't believe that he ever lived. I've had people tell me that.

Well, you are. Part of the minority, if you don't believe that he ever lived, you are ignorant, willingly of the facts, it's a historical fact that he lived, it's a historical fact that he died. It's a historical fact that he rose from the dead and there were hundreds of eyewitnesses to his resurrection.

And so many infallible proofs. And during those 40 days, it says he was speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. So for 40 days, Jesus would just sort of, you know, come in and out of fellowship with them and speak to them about the things pertaining to the kingdom and being assembled together with them.

He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem. Now, you notice what Luke is doing. Luke is going back in his gospel.

He gives us the account of the ascension of Jesus. But now, as he picks up the story, he goes back a little bit because the main emphasis that he's going to make here is on this whole matter of the gift of the Holy Spirit. So he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the father, which he said, you have heard of me, for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

John baptized with water, Jesus. His particular mission, apart from his mission to save us through his death and his resurrection, his particular mission apart from that was to baptize us not in water like John did, but to baptize us in the Holy Spirit. Now, the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the word baptism, it means immersion.

That's the actual meaning of the word. So that gives us a picture, doesn't it? And baptism itself, literal, physical baptism gives us a picture, too, because what happens when you're baptized, you're immersed in the water. So when we're talking about the baptism in the spirit, we're talking about an immersion in the spirit, being immersed in the spirit of God.

What a glorious prospect to be immersed in the spirit. But that's the promise of the New Testament. That's the very thing that Jesus said to these guys that they were to wait in Jerusalem for.

Now, remember, he has given them what we call the Great Commission. He's commissioned them to go into the world and to preach the gospel to every creature. But yet he says, wait, don't go yet.

Why couldn't they go yet, because even though they had been with Jesus for three years, even though they had received what you might call their seminary education, their theological training, and even though they had a little bit of hands on experience, they still needed something that would enable them to accomplish his commission. They needed the spirit of God to empower them. And so he told them to wait in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the father for John, truly baptized with water.

But you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. And when they therefore were come together, they asked him, saying, Lord, will you at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? Now, remember, this is something that they had. Been wondering about all the way along, as you go through the gospels, they were always anticipating that the kingdom was about to be restored.

They really had no concept, as we see from studying the gospels of what Jesus had come to do. They had only that one side of the messianic mission, that side of setting up the kingdom. But they failed to see completely that the Messiah was to first lay the foundation for the kingdom, a righteous foundation by giving his life for sin.

So they're always completely clueless when it comes to the true mission of Jesus. Well, finally, they got it. I mean, they couldn't have missed it.

It happened. And now he's died, he's risen again, he's proven that he is alive to them and he's meeting with them and teaching them still for those 40 days he's instructing them. And so they're thinking, all right, now must be the time.

Now must be the time to restore the kingdom to Israel. But Jesus. He said to them, it's not for you to know the times or the seasons which the father has put in his own authority.

It's not for you to know the times of the seasons, you see, they still at this point, although they knew obviously that the plan of Christ was different than what they originally thought, they still didn't get the picture. And they were thinking, OK, he's gone to the cross. We didn't know he was going, but he went.

He died there on the cross. We didn't anticipate that, but he did die. But he's risen again.

He's truly the Messiah. No question about it. So now must be the time to establish the kingdom, because after all, the scriptures promised that.

The Davidic kingdom would come back into power and that the Messiah would sit upon the throne of David and rule over the house of Jacob forever. So they were figuring this must be the time and who could blame them. But you see.

The Lord had a completely different plan, one that they were not aware of at this point, it was a plan to take this gospel and now to spread it all throughout the whole world and to bring the salvation that he provided upon the cross, not just to Israel. But to all of the nations, and so he says to them, it's not for you to know the times of the seasons which the father has put in his own authority, you know, just a quick word

on the subject of prophecy. Bible prophecy is an exciting thing, and I think it is our duty to study Bible prophecy and to understand the times in which we live.

But I do think it's possible to have a preoccupation with Bible prophecy to the exclusion of other things and to lose the balance. You see, Jesus is going to come again. God is going to set up his eternal kingdom based in Jerusalem with Jesus Christ upon the throne of David.

But you know what? That is the Lord's work. That's his job. That's not really our job.

We have another job to do. And that job is to get the gospel to people. And I think sometimes with prophecy, people get so wrapped up in just all of the speculation and all of the possibilities and, you know.

Any new thing that comes along, trying to find some scriptural reference to it, like, for example, when the Twin Towers were destroyed. You know, there are people that search through the Bible and found places where towers were referenced and said, look right here. The prophecy of what happened in New York City on September 11, 2001.

No, I'm sorry. That was not prophesied. But sometimes people get caught up in these things and they spend all of their time searching for some obscure thing that nobody else has seen.

As a matter of fact, a while ago, perhaps you remember there was a big craze about the Bible codes and there are hidden messages in the Bible. And if you can crack the code, you can find out about things like, you know, the assassination of John F. Kennedy or Martin Luther King or John Lennon. John Lennon, you think? Come on, give me a break.

You think that God would put something like the assassination of John Lennon in the Bible? I don't think so. But I mean, that's the kind of stuff people are coming up with. And everybody's going wild about these Bible codes.

Hey, let's just learn the Bible for what it says. If we would just do that, that would take a lifetime. We don't need to try to find some secret code.

But, you know, in the secret code, there are prophecies that are given and people get off and they you know, they just get all wrapped up in this prophetic thing. And they get into all of these kinds of conspiracy theories. And they've got a theory on, you know, everything about, you know, what's going on in the world and, you know, there are these families in Europe and they're controlling everything and the Habsburgs and the Bilderbergers and, you know, all of this stuff.

And you know what? That's not what we're to be preoccupied with. It's not for you to know the times of the seasons that the father has put in his own authority. But here's what we're to be all about.

Verse eight. But you shall receive power. After the Holy Spirit is come upon you and you shall be witnesses to me.

You see, Jesus had a completely different plan. It was a plan to get his message out to the world. And these guys were going to be his messengers.

And, you know, I believe that we're living close to the time when the Lord is going to return. But I don't know how long we have. But I do know this.

We're not to be sitting around trying to predict the time of the second coming of the Lord. We are to be busy. We are to be doing the same thing these guys were commissioned to do.

We are to be getting the gospel out to people that have not heard it. And so he said, you shall receive power after the Holy Spirit has come upon you. Now, the word for power, the Greek word is the word dunamis.

And let me give you a number of ways that dunamis is translated into English from our Bible. Dunamis is translated wonderful works, mighty works, miracles, mighty deeds, strength. These are all various ways that dunamis is translated in our New Testament.

So Jesus said that you shall receive wonderful works, mighty works, miracles, mighty deeds, strength. When when the Holy Spirit shall come upon you, you see, the Lord. Has supplied us with a dynamic power, the word dunamis is the word from which we get our English word dynamic or we get our word dynamite.

That's the kind of power that God has made available to us as servants, a dynamic power. And what is that power to be? It's power to be a witness for the Lord. Now, he says that you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you.

Now, this is an important point. The Holy Spirit has different ways in which he ministers to us different things that he does with us in John, chapter 14, verse 17, Jesus said regarding the spirit, he said he dwells with you and he shall be in the future in you. Now, he's talking to his apostles at that moment and he says to them regarding the Holy Spirit, he's telling them about the coming of the spirit, he's telling them about this new experience they're going to have.

But then he says to him, he says, now he dwells with you presently. So they at that time. We're being helped along by the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit was coming alongside of them.

The Holy Spirit is actually referred to as the helper, the Greek word, the paracletus and that word, those two words together mean one who comes alongside to assist you. And so Jesus says to them at that point in time, he said the Holy Spirit is helping you. He's come alongside to assist you.

He's with you. And then he said, but he shall be in you. And after Jesus died.

And rose again. The spirit then. Began this new relationship with man of residing in us, the Holy Spirit being in us is something that is the direct result of the death and the resurrection of Christ, the glorification of Jesus.

So he's in us now he dwells in us. In John, chapter 20, Jesus has risen from the dead. The disciples are gathered together.

We already mentioned that they're gathered together in that upper room. He appears to them. And it says there that.

He commissioned them. Who's ever since you forgive, they are forgiven. Who's ever since you retain, they are retained.

He gives them that apostolic authority, and then it says this, and he breathed on them and said, receive the Holy Spirit. And I believe that at that moment they were born again. The spirit of God took up

residence in them.

Remember, he had been with them, Jesus said already. But now, as Jesus breathed on them, he said, receive the Holy Spirit and they received the Holy Spirit in the indwelling sense. The Holy Spirit came and then indwelt them.

But here in Acts, chapter one, verse eight, we're introduced to a different yet another relationship between the believer and the Holy Spirit, and that is the Holy Spirit shall come upon you. The Holy Spirit shall come upon you. And so the idea is that the spirit of God would come upon us, you know, back in the Old Testament, you find those men who were the servants of God, the various prophets.

Like Samuel, for example, or even going back further to Samson, Gideon, people like that, or or then ahead to to David. And the various prophets and all, and you see them doing exploits, you see them doing mighty things, great power. Think of Samson, the power of God demonstrated in Samson's life as the spirit of the Lord would come upon him and he would slay the Philistines, a thousand with the jawbone of a donkey.

You think of David, the spirit of God comes upon him and he slays Goliath or as he goes out to battle against the enemies of God. He's victorious. Why? Because the spirit of God is upon him.

Now, that happens back in the Old Testament to just a few people. It wasn't the experience of every Israelite to have the spirit of God come upon them. There were just a select few.

But what happened with them was a foreshadowing of what would come upon those people who would believe in Jesus after he was glorified. And so when we're talking about this power, the spirit coming upon us, we're talking about that same kind of dynamic, the dynamic we see in the lives of the judges and the prophets, these men who had the power of God mightily demonstrated in their life, the spirit of God coming upon them and really equipping them to serve Christ. And so Jesus said, the spirit will come upon you and you will be witnesses, you will be witnesses to me.

Now, what Jesus is saying? Is this he's saying that when the spirit comes upon you? You shall then live and act and speak in such a way as to convince people of my resurrection. My grace and my Lordship. And you will do that beginning in Jerusalem and then you'll go to Judea and then you'll go to Samaria and then you will go in that power to the uttermost parts of the earth.

And that's exactly what they did. That's exactly what they did. Now, here's the amazing thing.

And we will get to the actual event itself as being promised here in a couple of weeks. But here's the interesting thing, that prior to that baptism with the spirit, prior to the spirit coming upon them, although they were godly, although they love the Lord, although they had an amount of understanding and an element of wisdom, they did not have what they really needed to get the job done that the Lord had given them. And you see, here's the reality.

We can be Christian people. We can be godly people. We can be people who know the Lord and have an amount of wisdom in our lives.

But we can be lacking the power of God to really be able to impact our world like he wants us to. And we need that. But here's the wonderful thing.

He gives it freely. This isn't something that. The Lord, you know, sort of just withholds and reserves only for a special few that happened in the Old Testament, the promise of the New Testament is that I will pour my spirit upon all flesh, your sons, your daughters will prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.

You see, all of us are to be empowered to be his witness. All of us are to have the spirit of God upon our lives so that we're living and acting and speaking in such a way as to convince people of the resurrection and the grace and the lordship of Jesus Christ. And we start right in our own home.

And then out from there, we each have a Jerusalem, we each have a Judea, we each have a Samaria, we each have an uttermost part of the earth, each local congregation has a similar sort of thing. And the Lord wants to empower us to get his message out to people now. They were told to wait, and the reason for that is because the appointed day for the spirit to be poured out was still in the future.

You see, Jesus was with them 40 days. The spirit was to be poured out 10 days later on the day of Pentecost. So they had a 10 day period from the time Jesus ascended until the time the spirit was given, there was a 10 day period.

And so Jesus said to them, wait in Jerusalem. But you see, that day when the spirit was poured out has long since come and gone. We today no longer need to wait for the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

We simply need to receive it by faith. You see, it's available to us today. We don't have to wait for it.

It's available to us so that if we sense that we don't have that dynamic power operating in our lives. We simply say, Lord, I want to receive that power. I ask you to impart that power to me.

And, you know, you receive it really just like you received Christ for your salvation. When you heard the gospel, you knew that you were a sinner. You knew that you needed to get saved.

What did you do? You said, Lord Jesus, come into my life. And then what did you do? You believe that he did and you acted accordingly, right? Now, for some, there might have been a great emotional experience. Some of you might have felt the presence of the Lord, some of you might have been so broken that you were shedding tears, maybe even sobbing, just so touched by the presence of God and a feeling of the love of God and his mercy and all that.

But yet for others, although you were just as born again as those who had the great emotional experience, you didn't really have much of an experience at all, except for the fact you know that something happened in your life. You know that your life changed. You know that you're not the person you used to be.

Well, you know, the same thing happens with the spirit coming upon us. Some people have a great emotional experience and they just sense, oh, the Holy Spirit. I'm filled with the spirit.

Oh, I felt that. I just felt that presence of the Lord come upon me and oh, I felt the love of God and I felt so warm and, you know, I had all these feelings. And that can happen, but other people, they don't have that sensation, they don't have that experience.

But yet something indeed happens. What happens is there's a new sense of commitment to the Lord. There's a new passion for the things of God.

There's a new hunger for his word. There's a new desire for the things of the spirit. There's a disinterest in the things of the world.

You see, that's the spirit coming upon you, working in your life. Now, the primary evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not speaking in tongues. It's not prophesying.

It's not doing those kinds of things per se. The primary evidence of the baptism of the spirit is power to serve Christ. Power to serve Christ.

Suddenly you're just swept up in the power of God and you find that God's opening doors and you're stepping in and he's supplying you the ability to do the things that he's putting before you. Not everyone becomes a Peter or a Paul or a John Wesley or a Dwight Moody or a Billy Graham or some other great evangelist. Not everyone becomes that.

And as we go through acts, we'll find that there are those few leading figures like Peter, like James, like Paul, Barnabas, people like that. But then there are just a large number of ordinary Christians, but each and every one empowered by the spirit serving Christ in their realm, serving Christ according to their capacity in the power of the spirit. And so that's what the Lord had not only for them, that's what the Lord had for us tonight as well.

And let's just read from verse nine through verse 12. It says, And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up in a cloud, received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, You men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven.

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is from Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. And so there it is, the Lord is ascended and they are waiting to receive that power. And as I said already, they had to wait because the day had not yet come, the appointed day.

But here we are tonight and we don't have to wait. And if you sense a lack of the power of God in your life, then just ask him tonight as we close in prayer. Just ask him to fill you with the spirit, to fill you in a fresh way.

Perhaps you you know, you've been filled with the spirit in the past, but it just doesn't seem like that that dunamis is there in your life presently. Well, we need to be refilled. We need to be filled over and over again.

And I think as often as we sense that we're not filled, we ought to ask the Lord to fill us again. Maybe you've been a Christian for a long time. Maybe you love the Lord.

Maybe you believe his word. Maybe you're very devoted and committed, but you've never really sensed the power of God. And you don't really have a sense of a calling of God upon your life and an area of service that he's designated for you.

That can be the result of not being filled with the spirit. Remember, those guys, they were breathed on and received the spirit. They were born again, but yet they needed something beyond the born again experience.

They needed the spirit not just to be in them, but to come upon them. And so perhaps you're in that place tonight and you can just ask the Lord, say, Lord, I want that fullness of the spirit. I want to be that witness.

I want my life to be a life that is lived with you as my focus and that my life is a reflection of yours. Ask him and he promises that he will give. Let's pray.

Lord, we do pray tonight as we talk about this dynamic power. Lord, we don't want to just talk about it. We don't want to just read about how it happened to other people at other times in history.

But Lord, we want to know it in our lives. And so, Lord, in Jesus name, we pray tonight that you would fill us with your spirit. Lord, we pray that the Holy Spirit would come upon us.

And empower us once again in a fresh way to be your witnesses, Lord, that we would live and act and speak in such a way as to convince people. Of your resurrection, your grace and your Lordship. Oh, Lord, we call upon you tonight just as your children, acknowledging, Lord, how desperately we need you.

And we ask that you would fill us. Up once again in Jesus name and for his sake, for the sake of getting the gospel out, empower us, Lord, we pray. Amen.

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