

On Eagles' Wings Pt 206

by Don Courville

Don Courville's sermon emphasizes the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers as depicted in the Book of Acts.

Duration: 40:19

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:4, Acts 10:17, Acts 13:2-4, Acts 16:7, Acts 16:25-26

Topics: "Radio Show"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the power of sharing the message of Jesus with others, as it can lead to significant transformations in people's lives. The Holy Spirit is highlighted as the one who guides and empowers believers in their mission. The boldness and wisdom of Peter and Stephen are cited as examples of how the Holy Spirit can work through ordinary individuals to impact others. The sermon also mentions the importance of being prepared for what is to come, as there is a universal witness of the Spirit indicating that something significant is on the horizon.

Transcript

Acts chapter 1. We're going to go through these and take, um, not too long, and then we'll, then we'll share what the Lord has showed us as we go through the book of Acts. I want you to ask the Lord to teach you things, then we'll come back as a body when we're done and share with each other what the Lord showed us this evening. So I'm going to try, hopefully, to take us through the book of Acts in not too much time.

We're pretty familiar with the book of Acts, I assume, and a lot of these things. So we'll start off in chapter 1 after I give you this introduction of something that Oswald Chambers said about our being co-crucified with Christ in relation to the Spirit of God. First, let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we, we ask you to teach us now by your Spirit. We thank you, Holy Spirit, that you're present, you indwell us, if we're your child. We thank you that you guide and teach us, and we ask you to do that tonight.

We thank you now with Satan bound, with no spirit working, but the Holy Spirit, that you will teach and direct. In Jesus' name, amen. Now listen to this statement.

Romans 6, 5 says, For if we've been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. The proof that I have been through crucifixion with Jesus is that I have a

decided likeness to him. The incoming of the Spirit of Jesus into me readjusts my personal life to God.

This is what the Spirit of God does. The resurrection of Jesus has given him authority to impart the life of God to me, and my experimental life must be constructed on the basis of his life. I can have the resurrection life of Jesus now, and it will show itself in holiness.

The idea, all through the Apostle Paul's writings, is that after the moral decision to be identified with Jesus and his death has been made, the resurrection life of Jesus invades every bit of my human nature. It takes omnipotence to live the life of the Son of God in mortal flesh. The Holy Spirit cannot be located as a guest in a house.

He invades everything. When once I decide that my old man, for example, the heredity of sin should be identified with the death of Jesus, then the Holy Spirit invades me. He takes charge of everything.

My part is to walk in the light and to obey all that he reveals. When I have made the moral decision about sin, it is easy to reckon, actually, that I am dead unto sin, because I find the life of Jesus there all the time. Just as there is only one stamp of humanity, so there is only one stamp of holiness, the holiness of Jesus.

And it is his holiness that is gifted to me, God puts the holiness of his Son into me, and I belong to a new order spiritually. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. This evening, just before y'all got here, I finally was getting a little time maybe to prepare, I thought, and I was sitting down and been praying.

Lord, you direct me about this evening. I'm just open to you. I heard this noise outside my window.

It went, putter, putt, putt, putt, pout. I said, that sounds like a car I used to drive. No, not really, but I thought, this guy, somebody's out my window out on the street, got a problem.

Sure enough, I looked out the window, and this kid with this old beat-up Subaru truck, one of them old things, was out there having trouble. His truck just happened to stop right out there. Immediately, the Spirit of God, because I've had this happen so many times, said, this kid didn't stop just for any reason.

And I thought, well, Lord, he'll probably get it going and take off before I get out there. So I'll just listen to see what happens. I listened to him crank and crank and crank and crank on that thing until finally I could hear the clicking.

Click, click, click, click, click. Oh, he's running his battery down dead. And the Lord said, you might as well go on out there.

You know you're going to have to go out there. And I said, okay, Lord. So I grabbed me a track, and I went out there.

I said, you got a problem. He says, yeah, I'm exercising all my mechanical experience. You know, I told him a few things.

I said, I used to have a car that would do this. You know, it sounds like maybe you got a vapor lock or something like that. I had a Volkswagen like that.

So I pattered around with him. I told him how to get it started. And he cranked it right up.

And then it went plop. It quit. And the Lord is saying, okay, I want you to talk to this kid.

He ain't going anywhere. You talk to him. So I said, maybe we ought to push it off the road.

So we pushed it off the road, and he told me the details of what was going on. And we came back over to the church to call for help and why we was coming over. I began to talk to him about Jesus, found out a little bit about his church and things, and asked him if he knew Jesus.

He said, no. And I hand him a track. You ever seen one of these? He says, oh, yeah, I've seen something like this before.

And we made the call, and we kept talking to him a little bit as we went. And then he left, and that was it. He had to get back.

His boss was mad because he was a pizza delivery kid. And at the time, that was it. So I pray for him now.

I said, if you ever need some help, you come back. To learn to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit is not easy because the flesh does not like the things the Spirit of God brings into our lives. It invades our private zone.

But until the Holy Spirit invades our private zone, we're never really comfortable with our Christian life because we always got our plans, and we're always sort of upset. And I'm continually having to learn this. I have to die daily.

The day I forget to die or the moment I forget to die, the Holy Spirit doesn't get to look at me. Now, let's go through the book of Acts quickly and just ask the Lord to teach you as we go through this evening, just teach you anything that he would like to show you. And then when we're done, we'll have some open time for discussion.

I think it's very important that we begin. We keep interacting. I like the way we have interaction.

And Sunday night has been a really good time for this and our Sunday school time. And then even in our morning services this morning, God was really working. It was good.

Okay, in Acts 1.8, the first thing we learn about the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts is that he gives power. Back up in verse 2, Jesus had told them that, it says, until the day in which he was taken up, after that he, through the Holy Ghost, 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 forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining unto the kingdom of God. And Luke is recording this for Theophilus.

He brings this down to verse 8 then. Verse 4, they were to wait for the promise of the Father, which saith, Ye have heard of him. And this was the Holy Spirit.

And verse 5, for John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. Jesus had commanded them to wait. Don't go out and try to do anything yet until you have the power to do it.

Well, we've received the power because in verse 8, ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me. First thing we notice is that he gives power. Power for what? Power for witnessing, also power for living, power over sin.

He gives power, the Holy Spirit empowers us for every need that we have in our life. I was looking back over at 5.17 and we'll get there in a second, but I'll jump over there because in verse 32 it says, We are his witnesses of these things and so is also the Holy Ghost. They said, We're just not giving you a witness, but the Holy Spirit has given you a witness through us of the things that they'd seen.

And of course, the church, they got in trouble because they were manifesting God. And those that didn't want God, didn't like it, would come after them. And then right in that same area, if you come to chapter 2, one of the things the Holy Spirit does is he gives ability to do unusual things.

He gives ability to meet needs in sometimes some unusual situations. Well, the situation at this time was historically Jerusalem was full of Jews from all over the world. And they didn't all speak the same language.

It must have been quite a mess. Guys going into motels trying to get rooms and trying to get communicated and this. But God was going to get the gospel out into the world quick.

So he empowered them to speak in known languages. These were known languages. Look at chapter 2, verse 4. And they were all filled when the Holy Spirit came.

And Acts 2 is when the Holy Spirit came. It was a wonderful thing. They were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. And it filled all the house where they were sitting. This is the Holy Spirit.

He came. There was a visible sign in verse 3. There appeared unto them cloven tongues, like unto fire, and it sat upon each of them. And then they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

And this is part of the book of Acts. As you go through the book of Acts, they had this divine ability to speak in known languages. Tongues was always a known language.

When it's recorded in Scripture, when it was used, it was a known language. And it was used to break down marriage, not marriage barriers, but language barriers. As a matter of fact, tongues might, if they got in the right control, could prevent some marriage barriers from coming up.

But anyway, it was a very practical thing. And we don't have time tonight to get into this, and sometime later on we'll cover the Holy Spirit in relation to the gifts and how he gifts us for different areas. But it met an unusual need at that time, a very practical, powerful need.

As we go down through here and you know how they were just astonished they could hear in their own language somebody preaching Jesus to them. It was a wonderful thing. You come over to chapter 2, 33, when Peter was up preaching, he told them that the Holy Spirit had been promised, therefore being by the right hand of God exalted and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he had sent forth this, which ye now see and hear.

They told him God had promised that he would send his Spirit. Jesus had said, wait for the Spirit. And it was a wonderful thing.

Now they were empowered to go out and do. You know, Peter now, instead of being a so-called chicken that would deny Jesus at his resurrection, now he's going to stand up before thousands. What made the difference? It was the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit makes all the difference in our lives. It's made all the difference in mine. So he gives power, he gives ability to speak in other long tongues.

He was promised, as a matter of fact, in John 1, 33, it was promised that ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. We'd be baptized. And then as he's preaching, if you look at 2, 37, as Peter is preaching, now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart.

This is the Holy Spirit. He's the one that pricks in their heart, and sometimes he not only pricks, he just drops a brick on you. Man, you're just overwhelmed.

Sometimes you're just, like this morning when it was shared, how the Holy Spirit had woke one of us up at 5 o'clock in the morning and had us go through our sins for a whole hour in the past. That was the Holy Spirit working, and not only for one, but for all of us to do this. That was a message.

This is wonderful when we learn to see how the Holy Spirit uses one of us to encourage the whole body. So he pricks and drops bricks on us. Sometimes he might just drop the whole house in on top of us, like maybe out in California.

The Spirit of God, God doesn't shake a nation just to be shaking a nation. He's shaking our nation like a rag, and we probably maybe haven't even seen anything yet because we've turned from God. Our nation was founded on biblical principles, on the Bible.

Most all of our Constitution is built directly from Scriptures, but yet we're turning from God, and now God is beginning to shake our nation. Will we listen to the Holy Spirit as he hits different areas of the country? He shook California with an earthquake. Will we listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying as a nation? We're in trouble if we want, because I believe God's on the countdown on us.

This prick, by the way, is just like a prick in the finger. It might just be a little jab at first. One of the things about it is we can sear our conscience as the Holy Spirit would speak to us about something over and over.

I try to listen to all of you. I learn continually. It may be several times the Lord might have to run something back and forth across me before I begin to see how he's trying to teach me something from you, but it's like a little jab here, but we can sear our conscience if we're not careful in an area.

And if we get seared in that area, pretty soon the Spirit of God can't speak to us through that area, and we're hardened, and that'll be maybe a spot where Satan can get in and have some ground in our life. And it might take something sort of drastic for God. He might have to do some major surgery on us spiritually, because we wouldn't listen to the Holy Spirit as he first started to prick us.

And going on in chapter 3, we've already covered this, how he gives us ability to see beyond the surface. When Peter and John went into the temple there and they saw the blind man, been there a long time, it was the Spirit of God that gave them ability to see this man. And boy, when they grabbed ahold of him and jerked him up, it just opened up a whole, I'd say, can of worms, you might say, according to Proverbs, but a whole can of opportunities to share Jesus.

As this man goes into the temple, hollering and shouting and praising God and got everybody's attention, giving testimony of Jesus. And of course, when the news got around to the hypocrites, scribes and Pharisees that didn't like Jesus, they ended up having some problems, and they began to get him into trouble. As a matter of fact, if you look over at chapter 4 and verse 8, then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, when he got a crowd, he knew what to do.

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole, be it known unto all of you and all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, and even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. Well, the Holy Spirit knows how to make you sensitive to opportunities that come along your way. And it might be just a little opportunity, when you think about somebody dropping down, breaking down outside your window on the road, but who knows what might happen from one person.

You sharing Jesus with them, they might go back. I've had and seen times when households would get saved from just one. Just one.

Whole households, maybe some families, maybe cities. Just one. So there's no little thing that the Holy Spirit might want you to do.

Is it getting warm in here? And then something else in 4.8. Well, 4.8 we cover that he controls, he delivers from the fear of man. That's the comment I had on Acts chapter 4 and 8 and down to verse 13. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter, they said, is this the fisherman? Is this the same guy? Is he the one that denied Jesus? Yep.

It's the Holy Spirit now operating Peter. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled and took knowledge of them that they had been to the seminaries. Is that what it said? No.

You don't have to go to the seminaries, cemeteries. You got to be with Jesus. You get with Jesus and you're plugged in with the Holy Spirit.

And so he gives boldness and power if you look at 33. 33 it says, and they, when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost. And they spake the word of God with boldness assured this morning.

By nature, I'm timid. It's from the flesh. It's not my nature to speak publicly or talk with people.

But as God has been able to conform into me, the image of Christ, there comes the ability for the Spirit of God to work through just a yielded instrument. So we come back. It's not me.

It's Paul said, I'm dead. I'm crucified as we are dead to self. Then the Holy Spirit is able to live the resurrected life of Jesus through us.

One of the reasons we won't speak sometimes when the Spirit of God gives us opportunity is because we're not dead in an area that maybe we should be. And then something else there, slipping on down to chapter 5 and verse 3. He can be lied to, but you won't get away with it. You know the story of Ananias and Sapphira.

They've been watching different ones, bringing stuff, bringing money, giving houses away. And they said, boy, this looks like a pretty good thing. And so let's do it too.

They sold their, what they sold, some property, was it? And then the Spirit of God put something in their mind, put an eye, a thing in there. Hey, nobody knows how much we sold this for. Let's just give half of it, pretend like we gave all of it.

Well, who told Peter that they did that? Huh? Verse 3, But Peter said, Ananias, why has Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? The Holy Spirit had clued Peter in on what was going on. Oh, Peter, being gifted as a prophet, spiritual gift of a prophet, perceived in the Spirit what was going on. You can be very perceptive in your spirit what's going on.

He said, hey, you lied to the Holy Spirit. Come down in verse 4. He said, you didn't, you wasn't just lying to men. You were lying to God.

By the way, this is a good passage to show that the Holy Spirit is God. He said, you were lying to God. You come over to verse 9. Then Peter said unto her, how is it, you know, they did one at a time.

Husband did it, then the wife did it. Then Peter said unto her, how is it that you have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which had buried your husband are at the door. You know, her husband dropped down immediately dead.

She came in, tried the same thing. Peter already by now knew what was going on. Gave her a fair trial.

She's dead. Lie unto the Holy Spirit. What would happen to us today if we did that? If we, if our lies were revealed day by day, probably, you know, in our churches we might really have a lot of extra room for growth.

If God just came in and just cleaned the house by knocking off and killing all the Christians that were lying, their lies were a lie. Sanskrit teachers, preachers, pastors' wives, deacons' wives, their lies were a lie to the body of Christ because they were not on the, they were not inside in the church when they were around with their grins and everything. They were not the same in the church as they were at home or at work.

That's lying to the Holy Spirit. And if we have a church that's pure where the Spirit of God is working, we won't get away with it in a church because the Spirit will bring it out. Be sure your sin will find you out.

Then something else. In chapter 3, we've seen this, we've talked about this, that it's a requirement for, it was a requirement for the deacons in verse 5. And the Satan blessed the whole multitude and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. And that was the requirement in verse 3. They were to get one that was full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.

This should be a priority in seeking out spiritual leaders. So many times we say, well, does he have a doctor's degree? We need a new pastor. Let's get one.

This goes on a lot. Never ask if he's a spirit-filled man. But they look for the degrees.

I've seen this done so many times. Degrees? I mean, you can have all kinds of degrees. But if you're not filled with the Spirit of God, it doesn't make any difference.

The way is a man. This is what we're getting into. He gives, in 8 and 9, as you're going down there, he gave Pyrrha, you know the story about Stephen.

And he gave Stephen wisdom in verse 10. And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spoke. Here's Stephen, tangling in with the men of law, the doctors and lawyers in the Jewish system, religious system.

Here he is, just Stephen, just plain old Stevie. Tangling in with all these guys and they couldn't resist him. So what did they do? After he got done giving them probably the sermon of their life, it was the old version of Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God, Stephen's version.

Jonathan Edwards came along with it later. Boy, they couldn't stand it, what they do. They stoned him.

This is the Holy Spirit, might get you stoned. But it doesn't matter if you yielded to him. So he can be lied to.

It's a requirement to be filled with the Holy Spirit for the elders. He gives power, 8 and 9, and Stephen full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. And then he had the wisdom.

And then you come over to chapter 8 and verse 19. We come into an interesting little story about the Holy Spirit on how you can't use him for your own personal gain. The Lord moved into this one area of Samaria and one fellow was watching what was going on.

He saw people getting saved. He saw them getting filled with the Holy Spirit. And he supposedly got saved.

And so he came around to the disciples and said, Hey, I'd like to have this. In verse 18, when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands, the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money. You can't buy out the Holy Spirit.

You know what? You can give money and all you want into the church. It's not going to buy you any kind of power with God. And so you can't just use him.

But I wonder sometimes if I try to get God to come around the way with my way, you know, God bless my efforts. Bless all my plans. He said, Come around, Lord.

Here's my here's my plans and my efforts. Would you redirect me? Would you show me if there's something here that's not really according to your will? I've got my desires. But you said for me not to lean on my own understanding and all my ways to acknowledge you.

You direct my past. So Holy Spirit, would you like to change my plans? One of the reasons we get frustrated and been out of shape so many times is because the Lord comes along. He wants to change our plans, but we're not wanting them changed.

And so just as this fellow here, Simeon might have wanted to buy off the Holy Spirit, use him for his own personal gain, his personal means. We might want to do that, too. We just have to continually check with him and be open to him.

Then something else. And in that same passage in twenty nine, it's just a little note in how the Holy Spirit will lead you. And then the spirit said unto Philip, Go near and join thyself to the chariot.

You know, here's a case where in twenty six, the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise and go toward the south. And here he's being led by the Holy Spirit. This is an exciting thing when God begins to put together in your life, making you have contact with people as the Holy Spirit brings you in contact.

And you know the story about the Ethiopian, how he received Christ and he stopped the chariot and and he was baptized. And and by the way, a little interesting thing right there on that note in thirty nine after the Lord was done with him, it says when they were come out of the water, the spirit of the Lord caught Philip away. I don't know if they just really raptured him away and plopped him down in another place.

If he did, boy, that's quite a travel agent to have as a Holy Spirit. You know, it's really neat if you're traveling and and if you I don't travel the way I used to, I used to travel in some and I used to hitchhike airplanes when I fly places in the Air Force. And that's fine as long as there's an airplane that comes around.

But if the airplane doesn't come around and you're hitchhiking, you can sit places for days when I was in the Air Force. And I got stuck like that one time. One time I came back from Israel and I got stuck in Athens and I've been in Athens a lot because it was sort of a pivot center whenever I go anywhere.

And I got stuck there. I come back from Israel. I was almost done on my leave and been there four days.

Well, Lord, I've been waiting. I was only 100 miles away from home. I might could have hitchhiked on around probably, but it would have taken me months going around through Greece and Turkey like that.

But I just laid out my heart to him and I come up that fourth day. You're a great God. I can't remember what all I prayed on.

I'm sure I prayed because I was didn't have a lot of money. And I come in that last that fourth day and and God just abundantly provided my need of an airplane. I come in that day and he says, hey, we got you an airplane.

We can get you home. You know, here I was coming in every day and God just was really neat the way he did that. He provided me an airplane.

No, sir. And he provided me that airplane to fly home. He provided me another airplane to fly home on two airplanes.

And here's how this other and I was standing there in the lobby and in walks my army buddy, the guy that Bill Stewart that discipled me. He said, hey, what are you doing here? I said, I've been stuck here. I just got me a plane to go home on a plane to go home on.

Well, we just brought the general over here and we're flying back and his plane's empty. Once you come on, hop in the general's plane. The general's plane.

Sure, man. So I went back and God got me back in the general's plane. First class.

When we go with the Holy Spirit, we can go third class or we can go first class is really neat and just all kinds of little things. So there I don't know if we if we plop them down to a different place or you just say, come on, let's go and took off. But it was his travel agent need to have the Holy Spirit, your travel agent.

Now, let's see. Look at nine chapter. Seventy is a chapter nine, verse 17, I had something there, I think.

OK, this is when Saul, when Saul had got saved and he'd received his sight in 17 and Ananias went his way and entered into the house. And, you know, Ananias is probably afraid because he'd been Solomon, come around, killing all the Christians. But the Holy Spirit had told him to go in and pray for Saul.

And so he was obedient to what he was told. You know, in 13, he said, Lord, we've heard a lot about him. You sure? I don't want to go and get hurt.

And the Lord was was sure. And so he he he went in and 17 and Ananias went his way and entered into the house and putting his hands on him. He said, Brother Saul, the Lord, you and Jesus that appeared into the in the way is how came this has sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

It was very important to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And God, in the book of Acts, has the record of the Holy Spirit filling the believers. And he had visible signs by as we go through there by the speaking in tongues.

For some there there was that sign they spoke in tongues and known language is what that is. And we'll get into that in a few minutes as we look at some of those passages. But later on, we'll cover the gifts of the spirit and verse 20.

And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues that he is the son of God. No one does that unless he's filled with the Holy Spirit. I've seen many people pray to receive Christ, but those that have got plugged into the Holy Spirit and understood to be filled with the Holy Spirit would give a testimony to Jesus.

And nobody told him. I just went by and heard the conversation out of the side of my ears. I walked by and I said, Lord, that's a good fruit.

Nobody told him to do that. OK, in chapter 10, just to go through some things maybe quickly here, he gave Peter a vision. The Holy Spirit gave Peter a vision in verse 17.

And when Peter doubted in himself what this vision which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which are sent from Cornus had made inquire for Simon's house and stood before the gate. And you know the story, how God was trying to get the Holy Spirit, trying to get Peter to see that God was going to reach Gentiles, too. So you have a special working their special visions that they had because of the transitory time at this time.

But the Holy Spirit did different things to get them to work. So he had to work on Peter's old-fashioned way, the hard way, and get him out of this legalistic system and get him over on reaching out to the Gentiles, too. And one neat thing about the Holy Spirit in 38 is the testimony about how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil.

For God was with him. And by the way, when we're filled with the Holy Spirit, we can go about with power, we can go about doing good, and we can go about helping those that are oppressed with demons also. God can give us the power to help set them free.

We can have tremendous ministry just being yielded to him in our giftings as God has gifted us. And then in 44 through 47 is the testimony of how the Gentiles were saved and the Holy Ghost fell on them when

they heard the word. Tremendous.

In verse 11-28, to slip on down through here a little quicker, in 11-28, there stood one of them named Agabus, which signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth. The Holy Spirit used those with the gift of prophecy to warn the church. The church could know what was going on in the future because of the Spirit helping.

I believe the Spirit of God today is warning through those in the church. They're filling what the Holy Spirit is trying to tell us. There's something coming.

Get your act together. Be ready for what's coming. This is a universal witness of the Spirit of God in our country that something's coming.

So he spoke through the prophets. You come over to 13 and 2 through 4. He appoints, 13 and 2, and as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work wherein to I call them. So it's the Holy Spirit that directs in the work.

He appoints and directs those that are to do things. In verse 52, the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost. You can't fake joy.

You can't wing it. You either have joy or you don't. You're defeated or living in victory.

But they were continually, it says they were filled with joy and the Holy Ghost. And things weren't easy for them. 16.7, slipping over a couple chapters, 16.7, he directed there.

And after they were come to Mysia, they say to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not. Here they were trying to go in one certain area on a missionary journey, and the Spirit of God would not, absolutely would not let them go. Just like the testimony shared this morning, how the Spirit of God led to the right place, to the school that was needed to find.

So the Spirit of God directed on missionary efforts. And the Spirit of God directs us as missionaries comes in. We've just been trying to help out a missionary family.

We heard about a need, so we're pitching in. Where the ladies are pitching in, trying to do a practical need of making a quilt for the cold weather. And we've pitched in to help financially.

The Holy Spirit leads in missionary efforts. And so we may not all be able to go to the mission field, but we may be able to support those. Maybe God might want to raise up somebody from here to go to the mission field.

As we grow, it would be a tremendous thing, wouldn't it? The Holy Spirit would say, this brother, this sister, this family needs to go. And they need to be sent out. Tremendous when the Holy Spirit does that.

And in 18.5, the Holy Spirit can press in on you. This means he can press to the point that he will hold together things that are tight. In 18.5, when Silas and Timothus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the Spirit, testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ.

You ever had that pressing in of the Holy Spirit upon you that you needed to say something? And you were going to bust if you couldn't say it? This is what, he can really put some pressure on you on the inside. And oh, you ever felt the grief that he puts in your spirit when you haven't obeyed him? This is why

we need to be very careful that we listen to one another. That the Lord give us big ears to listen to what the Spirit of God is saying through different ones of us.

As he presses in on us. That's almost the same idea as 2 Corinthians 5.14, where the Holy Spirit constrains us, the love of Christ constrains us. Just has a hold on you, a tight hold.

Then 19.1-6, the Holy Spirit gives evidence of new birth. He gives evidence of new birth. And I won't spend a lot of time on this, but Paul, you remember he came up to Ephesus and he found some disciples, I would say professing disciples.

They had heard about John, John's baptism preaching, but they really never had got saved because in 2, Paul asked them this first question. He said, do you know about the Holy Spirit? He said unto them, have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed? And they said unto him, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, unto what then were you baptized? And they said unto him, John's baptism.

So they were in on John's baptism. They hadn't even heard about the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. But as far, they had went as far as they had had light.

And you know, this is what the Spirit of God is doing. He's getting us to those that are at different stages of receiving light. This is why some you just say a word, some you just give a tract, some you're able to lead to Christ because they've had that much light, they're ready.

Well, this is an amazing thing. They came and then, of course, Paul preached Christ to them and they believed and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. Beautiful thing.

But the Holy Spirit is an evidence of the new birth. Because it says in Romans chapter 8 that the Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we're the sons of God. We're joint heirs with Christ, Romans 8. So he bears witness.

Chapter 20, 22, just a couple more things to mention on it. Paul was bound by the Spirit. He knew he had to go to Jerusalem.

The Holy Spirit witnessed to him in chapter 20 and verse 22. The Holy Spirit had told him and he said, Now behold, I go bound in the Spirit into Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there. Say that the Holy Ghost witnessed in every city, saying that bonds and affliction bind me.

Every place he went, the prophets are coming out of the corner saying, Paul, I want you to know the Spirit of God is just putting a message in my heart that you're going to have some real trouble there. And God was giving Paul plenty of opportunity. If he wanted to back out, he could.

But he was filled with the Spirit. He was receiving the witness of the Spirit that he was going to really receive some tough stuff there. And we know the story.

He was bound in the Spirit. And 21, 4, 11, just a little bit more on that. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days, who said to Paul through the Spirit that he should not go up to Jerusalem.

In other words, be very sure that you know what you're doing. Now, they wouldn't tell him he shouldn't go in the sense that they're commanding him. But it's being made very clear to Paul that his life is going to be on the altar of sacrifice.

And ultimately he went to Rome, and many believe that's where it was laid out. And 11, again, said the Holy Ghost, so shall the Jews that Jerusalem bind the man that Jerusalem. He had an object lesson that was given to him by one of the prophets.

So he will hold you. Actually, the Holy Spirit, though, was holding Paul into the will of God. He was the one that was holding Paul.

He said, don't try to discourage me by your tears. I'm ready to die for Jesus. That's the ultimate sacrifice of a Spirit-filled believer, to die for Christ.

To fulfill the afflictions of Christ in our body, as Paul taught. You see, the afflictions of Christ were not finished at Calvary. They continue on as we receive the beatings that come actually to Christ through our body, into our spirit, as demons will attack us.

If you're going to be filled with the Spirit, don't think it's strange, considering the fiery trial that might come upon you. It is normal to receive attack on your person if you're filled with the Holy Spirit. In other words, we're to rejoice, consider it all joy, my brethren, when you fall into various trials.

This is just an evidence of God living through us, through His Spirit. Amen, amen. Let's pray.

Father, thank you for the wonderful testimony of your word through the book of Acts about the Holy Spirit. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for coming in to us when we were saved. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for dying for us on the cross.

Thank you for illuminating our eyes and mind tonight about you and your work in the book of Acts. Help us to see how you are working in our lives. In Jesus' name, amen.

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