

The Baptism of The Holy Spirit

by Eric Kleinsasser

Transcript

I'd like to introduce Eric Kleinsasser as the one who's going to bring the message this morning. Got to know Eric in Greece six years ago in 2016, and his wife Kate is with him. Their son Raphael is also here, and it was Kate and our daughter Abigail, who were some of the first ones on the ground in Greece back in October, November of 2015.

And those two young ladies, full of zeal and vision and purpose for to give life, three life givers, just somehow were there at the beginning at I-58. Eric came a little bit later there, I'm not sure, maybe December, maybe January or February, but that first year we spent months together there in Lesbos, and Eric was a very major part of vision and giving life there. And so we've asked him to preach this morning, and I know he wants to be a life giver.

So blessings to you, brother Eric. You come, I'll pray for you. Let's stand together, and if anyone wants to fill these front seats and press in, if you're hungry and thirsty, come on up.

If you don't come up, still doesn't mean you can't be hungry and thirsty, but Father, we thank you for this new day. Lord, we're so excited that you have called us to be life givers, and I pray for Eric that that you might flow through him by the Holy Ghost, breathe life upon these dry bones, these hungry and these thirsty souls today. Father, we give you the glory.

We look to you, Lord, and we are hungry and thirsty, and we ask you to give us life, fresh and new, in Jesus' name, amen. Now, well, thank you, Emmanuel, for the introduction, and greetings to everyone here this morning. You are so high up here and so big.

I'd rather just come down here where you all are at. Is that okay? Can I move this, like, somewhere over here so I'm closer to you all? Because I like to speak to people. And so my first experience here at Charity was 11 years ago when I was, when I signed a little paper about going to ScentOne, and so I remember this basement.

We were packing totes and then remember going up to JFK and flying over to Ghana, and God did something there in Ghana in my heart that transformed my life and called me to give my life to serve Jesus among those who never heard the gospel. And so that's what we're doing, my wife and I, today in Athens, Greece, serving among refugees. And so I want to thank this congregation for the, I mean, Charity Missions is an extension of that and how that's impacted and transformed my life and set me on a path and a calling that I am still walking in.

And so, yes, bless you for that and the way many of you are serving faithfully in that way impacting people's lives. What I want to speak about this morning is about the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the fullness of the Spirit. You know, why do I want to speak on this topic this morning? It's because this is the one thing that has transformed my life more than anything else.

Now, to give a little bit of context, I spent the first formative years of my Christian life in a charity-type church in Canada, and that's where I grew spiritually. And, you know, if I would try my best to explain to you just what our expectation of the Holy Spirit was in that setting, it would go something like this. So when we gathered together for services, what we expected the Holy Spirit to do is, as we were singing, the Holy Spirit's presence would come, and we'd lift our hands a bit, and the Holy Spirit would come and fill us with this feeling and the sense of the presence of God.

And that happened at times. It was beautiful, and I learned there in that, in the services and in the singing, to experience God's presence. And I learned to have a hunger for the Holy Spirit, and it was beautiful.

Now, there's another way that we maybe expected the Holy Spirit to work, and it was this. It was that we expected Him to work in convicting us. Yeah.

And so when we got together, there was, you know, what was the main important part of the service was the person, the brother coming up, bringing the word. And so the hope there was that this brother would hear from the Lord and deliver a word, and then the Holy Spirit would speak through that word and touch our hearts. And my expectation was it would touch my heart, and then I thought, well, okay, maybe what's going to happen through that word is I'm going to, something's going to be shown in my heart that I can change just a little bit, and I can be a little bit more, to be more effective, to help others and to win others for Jesus.

But what I, but that was great, because those are works of the Lord Jesus. Those are works of the Holy Spirit working among us, right? Conviction. But, you know, I want to say something this morning that is not the entirety of the work of the Holy Spirit in the church and in the life of the believer.

There's much more that the Holy Spirit wants to do in our lives than just show up in our singing and manifest His glory in His presence. That's sweet. It's precious, okay? There's also more than just convicting us of sin that the Holy Spirit wants to do.

How precious it is to be convicted of our sin and turned from our sins. Amen? All right? And so, but there's more that the Holy Spirit wants to do. So the reason I share some of that little bit this morning is I don't know, in this entire congregation here, what your expectation of the Holy Spirit is in your life and in the life of this assembly.

And so what I want you to do this morning is ask yourself, what do you expect in your Christian walk with the Lord, in your walk with Jesus, from the Holy Spirit and His minister in your life? Ask yourself that question. And it may be, because all of us, we're church people, right? We know this book, right? We know it inside out. We have so many, a lot of it memorized.

These ideas, the concepts, scriptures, and everything. Now think, what is it when you read this book about what you read in the scriptures about the work of the Holy Spirit that's missing from your life? Does your expectation of what you expect the Holy Spirit to do align with what it says in this Word about all His working? Now, what I want to do here this morning to help you understand some of this a little bit more is

share part of my story and testimony of maybe coming into a more spiritual life and how that's impacted our life and our ministry today. I would say it this way, about maybe eight years ago, you know, in this atmosphere back in Canada of this church, in the church I was a part of, there was an acceptance and openness to the Holy Spirit, right? And so I would listen to preachers like David Wilkerson, Leonard Ravenhill, and others, and I would hear something about this idea of the filling of the Holy Spirit, this baptism of the Spirit that empowered and gave power to the believer to live a righteous life and to do the work that Jesus sent us to do.

And so I remember thinking, well, how do I receive this? What do I do? And so I thought, you know what I'm going to do? I'm going to fast and pray for three days. And then the Holy Spirit's going to come and fill me. And I'm maybe going to speak in some heavenly language or maybe some other experience with the Lord, I don't know.

And then I'm going to have power to do what Jesus tells me to do in His Word. And so that's what I did. I fasted and prayed for three days.

And as I was fasting and praying, the Lord ministered to my heart during that time. I still remember this clearly. He put in my heart to go down the street and pray together in this little Pentecostal prayer meeting with some of my Eritrean and Ethiopian friends.

And I remember, you know, in prayer, I remember distinctly where I was and the Lord putting that in my heart and said, no, God, no, no, no, I'm not going to do that. Don't you know those people, they have television in their homes. They don't believe the same things we believe.

They don't practice the same things we believe. I can't go and pray with them. And I didn't say, no, I'm just going to pray to Jesus by myself.

And Jesus, you just give me whatever you want. You know, I'll tell you something. There's a word, there's words for that attitude.

And it's called spiritual pride. It's when we think we're better than others. And so therefore we can't receive everything God has for us.

In fact, there's scripture about that. And we know the scripture. God resists the who? The proud.

And he gives his grace to who? The humble. And so I believe what God did at that point in my life was put like a big pause button. He said, Eric, pause here and you just go on living your life in your own strength and power.

Go ahead. And that's what I did for many years. And if I fast forward eight years later, I remember, you know, I had served in the interstate admission for years of migrants and refugees in Canada.

I ended up in Greece. I ended up in Asia, some places, different places. But if I would summarize the feeling of all those experiences and years of serving, I would summarize it this way.

I think at that point I had begun in my soul to lose the hope of the gospel. Now, I never articulated that to anyone or said that to anyone, but I questioned deeply if this actually works. Does this word actually work? Does this Christian life actually work? And I said all the right words.

I said I knew all the scriptures, everything, but deep inside of me something was dying. And I recognized it. And I said, Lord, I don't know what's, but I asked questions in my heart to the Lord many times.

I remember being in Winnipeg when this was about five, over five years ago. And I, um, my background is Hutterite. And so I had decided to meet with one of my Hutterite friends who was still living that lifestyle.

And I wanted to bless him and encourage him. So I said, I'm praying for him, you know, ministering to him. And so we met at this coffee shop.

And, um, and it was interesting because we had a wonderful time of fellowship. But at the end, he shared, he said, Eric, I, something happened to my life that I want to share with you. And he shared with me, um, that he, um, there had been this man who had come to visit the community and had shared with them the gospel and had prayed for a little group there.

And as, um, he was praying, he turned to my cousin and said, listen, there's two things in your life that God is calling you to give up. And then he wants to set you free from tonight. And he named two things.

And so two things, my cousin had struggled for most of his life. The only two things. And he fell on the floor and started repenting, crying out to the Lord and saying, Lord, forgive me.

And then this man went over and prayed for him and laid hands on him. And my cousin said, I began to pray in this language I didn't understand. And Eric, I changed my life so much that I've never struggled with those two things before or afterwards ever again.

And I listened there. I was like, oh, that's really strange. That's a little scary.

I remember the Lord putting in my heart, taking me back on a rendezvous eight years before and saying, Eric, have, have him pray for you. And I said, no, no, Lord, don't, you know, I'm here to bless him and pray for him. You know, he's still in this life of bondage over here and I'm free.

I've left this a long time ago and I'm here supposed to bless him. He said, no, no, Eric, have him pray for you. And it was very, that was, if I look back years, it was one of the most difficult things I ever did.

And it was like bricks out of my mouth, literally. To my cousin, would you pray for me? Why? Spiritual pride. That's right.

I was too proud. I thought, what could he give me that I don't have already? And that day, nothing happened except for that spiritual pride was broken in my heart. I'm going to put it down here somewhere in the steps.

That's best place. Okay. So, you know, I remember, um, that doing something in my heart, um, and being to change something in my heart where I realized I need to receive from others.

And, the next, um, experience that dramatically impacted me, um, in this journey was this opening of my heart to more from the Lord. And I was in this, um, prayer meeting. I found myself in this prayer meeting with some young people who had just experienced revival and the outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit among them.

And I was there observing and I saw there was an obvious love for the Lord in their hearts as they were praying and crying together, uh, out to the Lord. And I came among them and I said, Hey, would you guys

mind praying for me, laying hands on me, praying for me to be filled and baptized in the Holy Spirit? I said, sure we can say that they prayed for me, prayed for me in tongues. And then at the end, someone gave a translation of the last tongues that were prayed over me.

And that translation of tongues hit something deep in my heart. One strong, there was one stronghold that was in my heart for two years that nobody knew about that I never shared with anyone and that I have been struggling with and I couldn't get it out. I'd read the scripture and read the scripture about that again and again and again, and it kept coming back and again, again, I didn't know what to do anymore.

I was getting frustrated. And that translation spoke exactly to that need in my heart and it broke me free. Something broke inside spiritually.

And I walked out of that meeting and said, what is this? I said, Jesus, how have I lived my entire Christian life without experiencing the power of your Holy Spirit? I cannot do it any longer. I don't want to anymore. Now it was not just Lord, I need a little bit more from you.

I can't live this Christian experience with life without everything you have for me, Jesus, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And I thought to myself, I could have lived a large portion of my life struggling in this particular issue for years and not be free. And the Lord set me free in a second through the power of the Holy Spirit ministering.

I thought to myself, how many others are there around me who are facing the same things? Not being able to be free, reading the scriptures, doing everything they can, but ignoring and not receiving from the Holy Spirit, ministering in their lives, freedom that Christ wants to bring. You know, I spent the around that time, entire Saturday, or Saturday morning, and I read through the whole book of Acts in one sitting. And I became aware that the particular things that are missing in my life were associated with the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit, particularly his miraculous manifestations.

You know, I remember reading Acts 19 and saying, Jesus, I don't understand, because, you know, I've saw many people baptized, but I've never seen people baptized and afterwards people laying hands on them, then people start praying in tongues and prophesying. I said, I've been in church many years and I've heard all kinds of stories, but I've never seen this. Why? I mean, if the Holy Spirit is genuinely, powerfully among us in a genuine way, we should probably have 100 out of 1 baptisms, 1 out of 100 baptisms.

We should see this happening, maybe, at least a little bit. But why nothing? And that's the kind of questions I started having. And I realized what God was beginning to show me is that it's particularly in this area where I was lacking and missing things in my life.

I don't know, is there, can any of you identify with some of what I'm saying a little bit? Now, we ended up in Greece, this is over three years ago, and we ended up to get our visas. We ended up in this evangelical Presbyterian Bible College. Now, if you guys know anything about Presbyterians, you know that it's Reformed theology.

Now, if you know anything about Reformed theology, it's very much a cessationist. The gifts have ceased with the time of the death of the apostles, right? That's Reformed theology. Well, the first professor in that environment was a spiritual believer, and he was teaching to the book of John, chapter by chapter, verse by verse.

It was expositional teaching, and that's what I love. I love expositional teaching of the text because you can't twist the scripture in the wrong way if you're, it's very difficult to do it if you're expounding the scripture verse by verse, right? And so he was teaching to the scripture, and he insinuated in his teaching the continuation of the gifts of the spirit. And this really touched my heart.

And so I talked to him afterwards, and he explained all these questions I had from the text of scripture, stoked me in the scripture. And I said, brother, can you pray for me? He's this old man, 70 years old. I said, hey, would you pray for me to receive everything Jesus wants to give me to the Holy Spirit? And he prayed for me.

And then later, he prayed for my wife and I a second time. And it was that evening, for the first time in my life, where I, as I was praising God and worshiping Him, thanking Him, where I started praying in a language I didn't understand from heaven. And something switched in my heart at that time that I can only, maybe I can describe it as a switch of faith, where I believed now the same Holy Spirit that came upon Jesus at His baptism was now living in me.

The same Holy Spirit that came on Pentecost and baptized these early believers in the Lord Jesus and gave power to the church to spread everywhere is now in me. And so I could do the same things then. And so my response to that was going, it was, as soon as I got back to Athens, was go out in the street, and everywhere I found sick people, just walking over to them, sharing them about Jesus, and then praying for them to be healed.

And you know what happened? Nothing. Thank you. That's exactly right.

Now, you didn't expect that, did you? Nothing. I prayed for a bunch of people, and I thought, okay, but this doesn't work. Like, I thought, you know, I read Acts 3, and people are supposed to jump up.

They're like people paralyzed from birth. Like, this is supposed to be like what you see in everything in the Scripture, right? And I remember someone calling me right at that time, and I was resting in my heart. How is this supposed to work? And I said, brother, I don't know.

You know, this is what I see in the Scripture, and this is what I'm seeing. It's not working. Maybe it's the gift of healing or something for someone else.

And he said, Eric, you're not doing anything wrong. Just keep praying for the sick. That's all I need to hear.

And so the next day, I came back to the park in Victoria, and we saw this young man who had fractured his leg had a cast on. And so I stopped and shared the gospel with him again, laid hands on him, and he was miraculously and powerfully healed. I took his crutches, and he walked up and down the park and moving his foot normally, and there was no pain.

And the next morning he came, and we prayed again together and shared the Scripture, and he had his cast off completely. He was completely healed, normal. He was made normal.

And then that night previously, because there was a bunch of Iranians sitting there and seeing everything that was going on, they were like, what is going on over there? So I came there, and we had a tremendous opportunity just to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to them. And so we began to see in our life this power of the Holy Spirit at work in healing the sick, and tumors being removed, and broken limbs being healed, and every form of sickness being healed in the name of Jesus. Just simply by laying on

hands and praying in faith, and the healing of the sick was happening.

And this led to many who are Muslims repenting of their sins and turning to Jesus, being baptized, and also receiving then the fullness of the Holy Spirit and being baptized in the Holy Spirit. And so what we began to see in our lives, and in the lives of those around us, is that they began to receive the same gifts of the Spirit, the same power, and our ministry became more fruitful and effective. And so now there's many, many stories I could share with you that have resulted, that results of some of the things I'm speaking about.

From as, you know, I could go back to a two weeks ago with, you know, I could just share stories. I could do that and that would be very good this morning, but I wanted to do is take you to the scriptures. And I want to share with you just what the Word of God says in regards to some of these areas.

And we know many of us were very familiar with the Word of God. And so, but I want to bring some of these texts to our, to help us to look at them again and just reconsider them in light of the fullness of the scripture teaches in the subject of the work of the Spirit, and in particular the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And so in John chapter 1, there's the first mention of this idea of being baptized or filled, overflowing with the Holy Spirit.

And it's in relation to, if you look at verse 33, it's there in the context of John saying that he heard from the Father that the person who would come down as he was baptizing on whom the Holy Spirit would come upon and remain, it would be that same person that would later baptize others in the Holy Spirit. So the first thing we have to understand about this idea of being baptized in the Holy Spirit, it's not a person who does that for you, okay? It's not somebody who does that on your behalf. It is the Lord Jesus's responsibility.

It is the Lord Jesus's work to baptize us and to fill us with the Holy Spirit. And it was John who prophesied that this coming Messiah and Christ would do this for those that would believe on him. Now, later on in the book of John, Jesus alluded to some of this in John chapter 7, and he did, in verse 38, he said, he who believes in me, as the scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

And at this he spoke concerning the Spirit whom those believing in him would receive, for the here Jesus explained this Spirit-filled life that results of the outflowing of the Spirit and this life-giving Spirit into other people's lives. And the scripture explains that the Holy Spirit could not be given because Jesus was not yet glorified. You see, in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit came upon believers, empowered them for certain tasks, and then left again.

And so what had to happen is Jesus had to come from heaven to earth to suffer and to die and to be raised in newness of life and to make atonement for our sins so that we could be set apart and made holy and cleansed from our sin so that the Holy Spirit could indwell us as believers. Because the Holy Spirit is not just any spirit. He's the Holy Spirit.

And so he dwells and lives and abides and baptizes and fills those who've set themselves apart for God. And so Jesus had to finish his atoning work before and be glorified in heaven before he could send down the Holy Spirit. This is what Jesus spoke about in John chapter 16 or John chapter 14.

And in John 16 verse 7, Jesus said that it is better, it would be better for us if he would leave because if he would not leave and go up into heaven, then he could not send down the Holy Spirit. Now, I don't know

about you, but I've read this scripture many times, and I remember thinking distinctly, Jesus, I do not understand what you mean here. Because I cannot conceive of what would be better if God in human flesh was among us, touching us, healing us, setting us free, speaking words to us, teaching us with his own mouth.

Like, what could be better than that? Has anyone else thought that thought reading that passage? And if, let me say, let me say it this way, if that's what you've thought about, it's okay, but it just probably means that there's an incomplete understanding of the work of the Spirit in the life of the believer today. Jesus said it's better. And it's in context of John 14, when he said that the same works that I do, you will also do, and much greater, probably referring to quantity.

Now imagine this, if Jesus takes these believers who have been saved and sanctified by his blood, and he dwells them by his Spirit, life-giving Spirit of God, and all, and they go out bearing witness everywhere, and do the same works that he did, and they do that everywhere. What's more powerful than that? That's better than one person, one place doing that. What if we, as Spirit-filled believers are going everywhere, healing the sick, setting people free, oppressed by the devil, setting people free from strongholds and lies, and leading people to the Lord Jesus, baptizing them, laying hands on them to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

They're excited about following Jesus, and they go do the same thing for their neighbor, and the same thing, and the same thing. Is that powerful? That's what Jesus is talking about, the same works that I did. And look at the life of Jesus, what works did he do? All of it, we do as believers.

Now, I'm referring this morning, I'm teaching out that the Spirit's baptism is power, but there's other things Jesus also did. And so, all of that life, the comprehensive nature of that is what the life of the believer is like, right? And so, now, in Acts, there's a disciple profile. And one of my favorite phrases in the book of Acts is in Acts chapter 9, and that's where we go next here, and it's, there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias.

Now, the reason I want to read this portion of Scripture, and just briefly expound on it, is because we have all kinds of wrong ideas about the Holy Spirit. We think the Holy Spirit should be given to us so we can have some nice fuzzy feeling in my prayer closet with the Lord, and that's nice. And I've had times of great, you know, presence in my private prayer life with the Lord.

But there's more that the Holy Spirit is given for. Now, let's read this here, and let's understand that the Holy Spirit is not just for my own personal experience, but he is to empower us to do the work that Jesus sent us to do. Okay? So, it says here in Acts chapter 9, verse 10, it says, now, there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias.

And to him, the Lord said in a vision, Ananias, and he said, here I am, Lord. And the Lord said to him, arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas, for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. And in a vision, he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him so that he might receive his sight.

And Ananias answered and said, Lord, I've heard so many things about this man, how much harm he has done to your saints at Jerusalem, and he has authority from your chief priest to bind all who call upon your name. And the Lord said to him, go, for he's a chosen vessel of mine, and to bear my name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel, for I'll show him how many things he must suffer for my name's

sake. And Ananias went his way and entered the house, and laying his hands on him, he said, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me to you that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight, and once he just stood up and arose and was baptized. And when he received food, he was strengthened. And then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

Now, what I want you to understand here, and why I love that phrase, there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias, is sometimes we read Acts, or we read other scripture, and we think, well, that life in there, what I read about, is just for some special people. You know, some people pray really hard, or some people who are like really spiritual, or worked hard for God for many years. But wait a minute, it says here there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias.

You know, Ananias, he was not a pastor. Ananias was not a prophet. He was not an apostle.

He was not an evangelist. He was not a deacon. He was a what? He was a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that's it.

And that's all you need to be to do everything he did. And see, you know what's so powerful about that? Because that makes everything he did accessible to every single one of you. Do you understand what I'm saying? And that's why I love that little phrase, there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias.

And look what he did, he does, right? The first thing you notice in the passage is he hears the voice of the Lord. He hears God's voice, right? The next thing you see is that he surrenders to the Lord, everything. The next thing you see is that Ananias is willing to walk in obedience to what God shows him.

And the next thing you see is that he's willing to walk the path of suffering, even if it means to the point of death. So some marks of being disciples of Jesus, of being a disciple of Jesus. Then you see Ananias, he goes to the house of Paul, and what does he do? He lays hands on him and says, the Lord sent me that you might receive your sight.

And immediately Saul is healed. So disciples lay hands on others and they're healed. Then he takes Paul and he leads him to the Lord and baptizes him.

Disciples of Jesus lead others to Jesus and they baptize them. And then he lays hands on him and says, be filled with the Holy Spirit. And Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit and look at Paul's life.

You know, if you look what happens in this passage, it's everything that Paul goes everywhere doing for everyone else and much more. You see, sometimes we get the wrong idea. We think, I can't do this.

How? You know, the spirit for life is available to every disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. It's not just available for some super spiritual people up here. It's not just available for your pastors or leaders or some gifted people or some people who've worked very hard or some prayed themselves into some spiritual place where they're so spiritual that God gave them some particular gift.

Now, to help us understand some of this, let's go back to Acts chapter 1 and the words of the Lord Jesus in verse 4. Jesus said, you have heard from me for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now. So that was Jesus going back and referencing the

prophecy of John, the prophetic word in John, chapter 1 verse 33 saying, look, it is now the time for this to happen. And this is after Jesus' death, suffering his death and his resurrection, the atonement for our sins.

And now it's time for him to view his church with power and the anointing of the Holy Spirit to equip us to do the works that he sent us to do. Right? And he said, this would happen not many days from now, which is approximately 10 days before Pentecost, 40 days after his death and resurrection. And so he told his disciples, go and wait in Jerusalem and you will receive this fullness of baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Now in Acts chapter 1 in verse 8, Jesus says, you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall become my witnesses. And you will do that in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. Now we know the word there is *dunamis*.

It's this idea of dynamite power that comes upon the believer. And I often picture it this way. It's like if you see this, if you picture it as a massive mountain and you have a hundred men with pickaxes and they're all there at the mountain, just picking away at the mountain, how many years would it take them? Hundreds of years and they wouldn't even get a small chunk of it done.

But a stick of dynamite can do in a second what people can't do in hundreds of years. That's the *dunamis* power of God that's available for the believer. God can do it in seconds through you.

But you can't do it in your own strength, working that way for the rest of your life. And so Jesus promised this *dunamis* power upon the lives of his disciples. Now, what was that going to look like? Well, you turn to Acts chapter 2 and it says, when the day of Pentecost had fully come.

Now what's Pentecost? Pentecost means it's 50, right? It's 50 days after Passover and it's the day of the first fruits and so the first fruits of the harvest. And so Jesus, through the father, pours out the Holy Spirit on the day of the first fruits to bring in the first fruits of his church into the fullness of the gospel that he preached about from the beginning. And what happens in that upper room? Well, there's a wind that comes in and there's a fire that comes in and settles on these disciples' heads.

It's the tongues of fire. Well, what does that mean? Well, it should remind us of the God of the Old Testament, of Yahweh, who's there with Moses and sends this wind to split the seas, who's there in Exodus 3 with a fire that burns a bush that doesn't consume. It should remind us of the God who takes Elijah, Elijah, up on this whirlwind, in this chariot of fire that's not consumed.

You see, it's Yahweh, the God of the prophets of the Old Testament, Yahweh, the initiator of the old covenant to Moses and the law, the Mosaic law, who is now here in this upper room baptizing and filling and anointing his church to do the things that he sent them to do. It's the same God doing the same thing, working in the same powerful ways and much greater ways than he did in the Old Testament, but it's Yahweh. It's the true God of heaven who's here among these disciples.

Isn't that powerful? Now, what happens? They start, it says they start speaking in other languages or tongues as the Holy Spirit gives the utterance, and there's people outside that start hearing this and say this is something. There's actually two responses. One is, this is weird, like these people are crazy.

They're drunk. Another response is, well, we're hearing them speaking our own languages. Well, there's 120 disciples in the upper room, and there's only 12 different languages listed, and so it's very plausible that some spoke in earthly tongues and others in heavenly tongues, and there's the response of the two crowds.

One can't understand anything that's being said. They're saying that these people are crazy. The other understands some earthly language, and they're saying this is miraculous, and then Peter stands up and says, look, this is the fulfillment of the scripture of the Old Testament prophet from Job chapter 2, and this promise of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit in the last days.

Now, Peter explains that and preaches the gospel with authority and boldness. Now, remember Peter, back a few chapters, in John chapter 21, had decided, John 20 and 21, he decided to go back to fishing. In fact, Jesus in John 20 had breathed on his disciples the Holy Spirit, if you remember that.

After that, John 21, the disciples go back to fishing still. You see, they had received a work of the Holy Spirit that brought life and brought some life to them, maybe some regeneration, newness of touch of the Lord, but it wasn't the fullness that Jesus talked about. And still after that, in John 20, they go fishing.

Peter's not going back anymore. He stands up on Pentecost, and he boldly declares the gospel with authority that is unusual and power that's unusual. And his Pentecostal sermon leads to thousands of people being convicted, and they ask, there's this crowd in front of him, they're asking, what should we do? And Peter's response is, repent, be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you, for the remission of your sins, for the forgiveness of your sins, and then you will also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and that gift of the Holy Spirit is available for you, and for your children, and for everyone who's afar off.

You see, there's the fullness of the gospel, repentance, baptism in water, and the filling and pouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives. And that's what happened, 3,000 people came forward and baptized and came into Christ that day. Now, the Holy Spirit kept, according to Hebrews chapter 2, everywhere the disciples went and proclaimed the gospel, the Holy Spirit was poured out, and the gifts of the Spirit, and signs and wonders were worked.

That was the apostolic gospel. Everywhere the gospels proclaimed, these same things happened. And you can see this in Acts chapter 8, and some of us, like myself, the understanding I had of the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit in my life is that when I believed Jesus, that time when I knelt and confessed my sins and believed in the Lord Jesus, at that point I received everything that God had for me in the Holy Spirit.

That's what I believed, I thought, and that's the way it's supposed to work, because maybe that's what people around me told me. And so, there's an interesting passage in Acts, it's Acts chapter 8. How many of you know what's happening in Acts chapter 8? It's the story of Philip, and Philip is, through the scattering of the persecution of what happens in Jerusalem, he's going down to Samaria. And the context of the response here is John chapter 4, right? So you have to read John chapter 4 to realize why the Samaritans are so excited.

But the same Jesus who was working in a powerful way in John 4 to reveal himself is now being declared by Philip, suffering his death in the resurrection of this Messiah. And the Holy Spirit is working to Philip to heal the sick and to work miracles. And many of the Samaritans believed in the preaching of the gospel.

They believed in the Lord, the scripture says, and it says they were baptized, many of them. Now, what's fascinating about this passage, as it relates to the work of the Holy Spirit, is that when Peter and John heard about this, they did what? What does it say in verse 14 and 15 and 16? It says, the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that the Samaritans had received the word of the Lord, they sent Peter and John

to them, who when they had come, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not yet fallen on any of them. Wait a minute, I thought the Holy Spirit comes in all his fullness when we believe in Jesus.

How did they know? It was a little bit audacious for them to assume that they had not received the Holy Spirit yet, or for Luke to record this, that he had yet not fallen on any of them. How did Luke not know that maybe the Holy Spirit accidentally slipped into one of the lives of these new believers? Like, that's a bit of a thing to record, that's very unusual. Presumptuous, I would say.

So, what happens? The apostles come down, and they laid their hands on them to receive the Holy Spirit. And this is where you see the apostolic pattern in Acts, in which the Holy Spirit is poured out through the laying on of hands in the prayer of faith. Now, I've often wondered, why does God do it that way? Well, we talk about the body of the Lord Jesus, how important our brother is, and our sister, and everyone else around us, how the arm is necessary, and the leg is necessary, every part is necessary.

But you know, when the gifts of the Spirit are functioning in the body in the appropriate way, we actually learn about that in a much healthier way. We don't just give lip service to each other, we actually need each other. And I could share testimonies of that in my own life, and I don't have time this morning, but it actually helps you to understand the genuine need that we have of each other.

As the Spirit is working and moving among us, each person participating in that, it makes each part become indispensable as the Spirit's gifts are at work among us. But here we see that Simon the sorcerer saw that the gift of the Spirit was given through the laying on of hands. And so what does he do? He says, I want that too.

Okay, wait a minute here. What did he see? So if there was a prayer, and there was nothing happened, how could he see anything? Because there was nothing to see. He saw something.

There was a manifestation of the Spirit that came without pouring of the gift of the Spirit. You understand what I'm saying, right? So Luke uses the phrase in verse 16, for he had yet not fallen on any of them, right? So if you go to Acts chapter 10, it's the story of Cornelius and what's going on with this centurion, this Italian soldier who has an encounter with God, and he wants to understand more. And so Peter also is instructed by the Lord, and they end up in the same house together, right? And Peter comes in, he starts preaching about Jesus and about the gospel.

And this is Acts chapter 10, and it says, while Peter in verse 44 was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit, there's that same phrase, Luke is the same writer, same writer writing chapter 8 and chapter 10, it says, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word, and those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as had come with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also, because they heard them speaking in tongues and magnifying God. And Peter said, okay, we can't, we must have to, we have to baptize them. You see, the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to these Gentiles, and it was difficult for the Jews to understand this, that the Holy Spirit would just fall on the Gentiles, and they would begin to function the power giftings of God, like tongues and other gifts that would flow afterwards.

Because in the Jewish mind, they had achieved a certain level of holiness with God to their works, and here are Gentiles who did none of that, they surpassed the entire Mosaic law, and all of a sudden, boom, the Holy Spirit's falling on them. That's like, it's not understandable, what is going on here. And that's the

context of the entire letter of Galatians, and what unfolds from here to Acts chapter 15 is understood in that light of this experience here.

And so, the Holy Spirit, it's understood by the church here, is given to those who hear, or those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. It's not connected to works, or keeping parts and segments of the Mosaic covenant, or any kind of earthly work. So, we see later on, in Acts chapter 19, another encounter in which the Holy Spirit is poured out on disciples who believed in the Lord.

And so, we see this is the account here, where Paul comes to Ephesus, and he finds some disciples, and they're disciples of John. And so, what's going on here, it's they were back at the Jordan River, they had heard about John preaching about the Messiah to come, okay, and they believed in the Messiah, but they had not heard the rest of the story. His suffering, his death, his resurrection, all parts of the gospel, the Holy Spirit, baptism in Jesus, or into the name of the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, they didn't understand those things.

They just believed John's preaching that Jesus was the Messiah, amen, we believe it, and they end up in Ephesus. Paul comes there, he finds the disciples of John, and he asks them, did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? Verse two, and they said to him, we have not as much of even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit, what is that? Are you talking about the Holy Spirit? And he said to them, into what were you then baptized? Into John's baptism. And so, Paul explains and says, John indeed baptized with the baptism unto repentance, saying that people, that they should believe on him who would come after him, that is on Jesus Christ.

And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied, and there were about twelve men in all. And so, here we see that the Holy Spirit is poured out. The same day, these people, these disciples believe fully in the Lord and were baptized, the same day the Holy Spirit, the gift of the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit poured into their lives.

And so, we learn something again that's very valuable. It's that the baptism of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit are given dependent on someone's faith. Okay, that's where you see the text.

It's the same thing in Acts chapter 10. That's a very important thing to understand. Okay, and the mention this is because that we often convolute the idea of the fruits of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit, right? The fruits of the Spirit are produced how? In our life.

If you read Galatians 5, Paul uses the terminology, walk with the Spirit or be led by the Spirit, say, and step with the Holy Spirit, right? And that's going to produce the fruit of the Spirit in your life. And fruit, by definition, take time to develop in a person's life. They're not instantaneous.

Whoever planted a seed in a garden, and the next morning they came out, there's a full mature orange tree bearing oranges. It's not the way fruit emerges in a person's life, like instantaneous, like it just happens. No, it takes time to mature.

So, this idea of walking with the Lord, walking with the Holy Spirit, being led, guided, prompted, and learning to listen to the Holy Spirit is prompting, not yield to the flesh. It's how fruits, the fruits of the Spirit happen and become to fruition and mature in our lives. Love, grace, patience, joy, kindness, these things, yeah? They come from this maturing process with the Lord.

Now, the baptism of the Spirit is not how the fruit happen in our lives. The baptism is associated with the power of God entering our lives, and the manifestation giftings of the Holy Spirit coming into our life. These are different.

These are two different things. They're received in two different ways. And so, if we convolute the two, it'll bring confusion, and we won't be able to walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, in the fullness of the Spirit, and the gifts of the Spirit.

Does that make sense? Now, you might say, Eric, okay, this idea of being baptized in the Holy Spirit, or this outpouring of the Spirit, and always coming with gifts, is not necessarily recorded in every instance in Acts. For example, Acts chapter 18. If you go to Acts chapter 18, you read the whole chapter, and it's Paul's working in Corinth, right? It's how he evangelizes in Corinth, and how God speaks to him, and how there's this people who come to the Lord, and all that is recorded in Acts 18 is that people believe in the Lord, and are baptized.

There's no mention of the Spirit's working, his baptism, or his gifts. Okay, so you have to understand that it is Luke who recorded the book of Acts, right? And he's writing, and Luke isn't trying to be redundant all the time, recording everything that's happening, just like in a systematic way. He wants us to understand that some of these things are assumed, and that's what Hebrews 2 helps us to understand, right? And so, what was going on in Corinth that is not recorded in Acts 18? Well, read Paul's letter to the Corinthians, chapter 1. Paul writes and says, there is no spiritual gift that's lacking among you.

Read chapters 12 and 14, and you realize all the gifts of the Spirit are functioning in Corinth, even though nothing is recorded in Acts 18. Now, if you read Paul's letter to the Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 1, it says there, in Paul's introductory statements to the Ephesians, that you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit. I remember someone saying, telling me, Eric, look, there's no mention of the Spirit's baptism, or gifts, or power, and that there's a stamp and seal of the Holy Spirit in the Ephesians' lives, and so it's not necessary to ascribe the baptism with power and the gifts flowing with believers in the sense that when they believe in Jesus, they receive, they're sealed, and they're full of the Spirit.

Well, okay, so Ephesians chapter 1 is written in the context of what? A passage we just finished reading, Acts 19. Acts 19, how does the Holy Spirit fall on these disciples in Ephesus? And then Paul, from that experience, then writes the letter of Ephesians. One of his opening statements is to remind them that they've been sealed with the Holy Spirit in context of their experience in Acts 19.

Are you following with me? So, one thing about the epistles in Acts is that it should be read together, because the epistles are being written in congruence, in alignment with the book of Acts as it's developing. Paul is writing letters as he's doing the work that he's doing in Acts, right? And so we read and interpret those together, what is happening, and the terminology in both. And so, what I want to say to you this morning is that the fullness of the Holy Spirit, his baptism, that is accompanied, like we see in Acts chapter 2, with the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit, manifestations that some of us are a little bit afraid of, like tongues, or prophecy, or words of knowledge, or healing of the sick, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, these are the manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

These have been poured upon the church through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And these, if you read from Acts 2, you can see in every page that these gifts are functioning. And so those are available for the church today.

And not just for the church in general, they're available for you to walk in. And they're meant in a healthy way, and if I had time this morning I would explain, we go to 1 Corinthians 14 and 12, they're meant to be exercised in the context of the body. And you know, let me say this, I remember going back to my church setting years before, there were some people who functioned in some of these gifts, but it's very private, okay? It's like, you know, I found out some of these years later, and some of these men were some of the most faithful men I knew.

But I got this subtle impression from their teaching and their preaching that, you know what, you see, I lacked that experience that they had, this vibrant experience with the Lord and with the Holy Spirit. And so my interpretation of what they were saying was just try harder. And so what I want you to understand this morning is that it's not what I'm telling you.

I'm not telling you to go home and try harder to follow Jesus, or try harder to do something, okay? The Holy Spirit's baptism in His power is supposed to empower you to do the things that He's calling you to do. And so what does Paul say in his letter to the Galatians, in Galatians chapter 3, he says to the Galatians, let me ask you this only one thing, how did you receive the Spirit? By the works of the law or the hearing with faith? Now picture this, what Paul is trying to say, he's saying, look, did you go into the, did you go somewhere and offer up a little lamb and kill it and sacrifice it, and as the smoke was arising, boom, the Holy Spirit baptized you and filled you, and you started experiencing the manifest gifts of the Spirit. No, you didn't receive the fullness of the Spirit through keeping the Mosaic laws.

Did you keep the kosher rules for a week, and on the seventh day, on the Sabbath, as you were, you know, being very observant of the Mosaic law, boom, the Holy Spirit fell on you, and you experienced the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, because you kept the kosher rules for a week, on the Sabbath. That is not the way the Holy Spirit is poured out. He is poured out because people hear about Him, that's why Paul says in Acts 19, have you, have you received the Holy Spirit? They said we've not even heard of such a thing.

You know, you hear about the Spirit, you hear about what's possible because you have faith in Jesus, and then you receive by faith that, and how is, what is the apostolic example? It's laying on of hands in prayer of faith, and that's what Paul writes to Timothy, to stir up the gift of God that was given to him. How? For those of you who know, you know that passage. What does Paul say? And prophesying of the elders, so all the gifts the Holy Spirit poured into our lives.

Now, what I want to say this morning is, look, I understand that some of us might have reservations. Yeah, like who here is, like if you're honest, who has reservations about what I'm speaking about? Some of us, like one honest person here. You guys are all so wide open to everything I'm saying.

No, like honestly, like raise your hand if you're a little bit reserved. Now, if you're trying to be honest, okay, what is making you reserved? Can somebody just share, like just share, like what is, yes, exactly. So how many of us, how many other people are thinking counterfeit in this room? Quite a few of you, because we've seen things like this guy called Benny Hinn, and he's like, he's got his white jacket, he's like, boom, boom, and people are falling everywhere, doing crazy things, and having these strange, weird manifestations all over the place, acting like animals on the floor, and we think that's the Holy Spirit.

And then we see the counterfeit, we go, no, we don't have anything to do with that. The people who do these things and pray in tongues and do this, that's what they do. Counterfeit, exactly.

Thank you, brother. Because of the counterfeit, but here, let's think a bit. Counterfeits are always based on what? The real thing.

So anytime there's a counterfeit, you must understand that there's always a what? The real thing. Now, other reservations and fears. Yeah, so disappointment, so maybe like, God's not going to do this for me, because, you know, maybe I'm, it's not for me, or these gifts are not for me.

Yeah, so I'm not even going to try. Or maybe other thoughts that come to your mind. Now, yeah, so one of the hindrances to receiving everything Jesus has for us is a works-based mentality in our mind, okay? It's this idea that if I do A, B, and C, then God's going to do this for me, right? So by, look, the way the Holy Spirit is described and his gifts, they're called gifts of the Spirit.

It's called the gift of the Holy Spirit. Gifts, by definition, are given out of the goodness of someone's heart to someone else, right? Because that person loves you. He cares about you.

Now, as soon as you try to earn that gift, it becomes what? A wage. And it's, do you? Not a gift any longer. Imagine if you're the kind of person who ever, if I was the kind of person, and put myself in this position, that every time you came to me and said, Eric, here's a gift for you.

I said, no, no, no, brother, no, not for, that's not for me. I'm going to give you 25 bucks, 25 bucks for this gift. No, no, Eric, I'm going to give this gift to you, because I appreciate you.

No, no, 25 bucks, and I'll take it. Like every time someone would come for a gift, they're like, no, 50 bucks, 100 bucks, 25 bucks. Is that the way gift giving works? No, soon, probably nobody would try to give me gifts any longer, right? As soon as we earn, if we're working for something, it's no longer a gift.

It's a wage that's due us. And so even by the terminology that the Holy Spirit's working, his gifts are, but it's used in the context of gifts. Gifts are received how? Believing that someone wants to give it to you.

And that that giving is based on the goodness, not you, because often people give us things we don't necessarily feel like we deserve them. And I've been given some extravagant gifts in my life by other people, and I have felt at times I do not deserve them. So it's not based on what you feel about yourself.

The gift is given because of the goodness of someone's heart, their love towards you, okay? So one of the hindrances to the Holy Spirit working in our lives and for us to receive is a works-based way of thinking about God, like this tint of legalism, right, that wants to earn something from God, have to do something, instead of just believe. Jesus said, you know, there's people that came to Jesus and asked him what are the works that we must do or what we should do to do the works of God. And Jesus said, believe in the one that God has sent.

You know, that's sometimes hard work, to just believe. Other thoughts? What is it that, like as you're hearing about the fullness of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Spirit, his gifts being poured out into his church, into your life, and you're thinking counterfeit, you're thinking that God might not give that to me. What else? Yeah, yeah, that would not be nice.

That things would get out of control. Now, what I want to say about this is there's one particular fruit of the Holy Spirit. What is that one that speaks into that one? Yeah, so when the Holy Spirit shows up, it's always going to be done in a way that's controlled.

It's the fruit. So if you see environments where there's a lack of that, you should probably question what's going on, right? Because that's not the fruit of the Spirit. There might be evidence of something else going on, or it could just be the evidence of carnality, right? People chasing after experiences, that could also be the case.

But yeah, we think if the Holy Spirit shows up, it's going to cause us to lose control in the service, for example. Or maybe people ask to do random things that make everyone uncomfortable, right? That's part of the thing of self-control, or like this idea of being out of control, is that then things happen people we're not comfortable with, right? Right? And we want to be comfortable. Everyone wants to feel comfortable, right? In coming to church especially, you know? We're used to controlling ourselves.

We're used to controlling our posture, our words, you know? Everything about ourselves, right? You know, I had this idea. I don't know where I got it from. I remember thinking, praying, God, would you baptize me in the Holy Spirit? And I had this impression.

It's kind of funny, so I'll share it with you. I thought when the Holy Spirit would touch me, it'd be kind of like, you know these paintings you see on the wall, and it's like the hand of God is reaching down from the sky in some majestic way, and it's got this finger extended. Anybody, you saw that picture? Yeah, and so I thought the Holy Spirit's baptism was kind of like that.

It's like God's finger literally touches you from heaven, boom, and it's like, boom, electricity, zap, and it's like something uncontrollable happens, like a bunch of gibberish comes out of my mouth all of a sudden. It's funny. I don't know where we get these pictures from or ideas.

Maybe we see them and we think, okay, attach everything together. Mind does interesting things, right? But that's not the way the Holy Spirit works. He doesn't make you act out of control of yourself, because his fruit is very fruitless, out of control, right? So he will always work with you, even in his gifts and his power to heal the sick or to speak in the language.

Paul says if you pray in another tongue, it's from your spirit, praying through your spirit, right? It's from in here, out here, not upon you and out of control, right? So other things, that's like reservations. I'm not sure about this. Yeah, yeah.

What would others think, right? It's like the fear of man. You know, Peter was a very anointed with the Holy Spirit, right? He was used by the Lord in a powerful way. And if you look at the Galatians, there's one thing that derails Peter.

Paul's letter to the Galatians. What's that one thing that derails Peter and makes him cower? The fear of men, but particularly the fear of who? Okay, the religious people, but his own brothers and sisters from Jerusalem. Peter is up in Antioch, and he does what? You know, there's a Gentile sitting over here.

He's coming in. Ah, I'm so excited to be with Gentiles, spend time with them, eating and drinking, and it's a fun time. And then he hears his brothers from Jerusalem are coming and seeing him do that.

That's going to be terrible. And so what does he do? Away from these Gentiles and not to touch them too closely, and I'm going to sit over here and eat with the Holy Jews. Yeah.

What does Paul do? He comes and observes that and says, you're being a hypocrite of the very gospel you're declaring. You know, the fear of what another person would think of us, or the fear of our brother or

sister, is one of the greatest fears the believer needs to overcome. It was even, in Peter's heart, a little bit bigger than the fear of dying.

He didn't cower unto death. He told the Pharisees and Sadducees, he said, you tell me if it's better to obey God or man. That's Peter.

And then when his own brothers are around, his nice, loving, kind brothers, he's like cowering under the pressure of what his fellow brothers and sisters would think of him. How many times you don't speak or do or certain things because we're afraid of what other people think of us, especially our own people, those around us. Right? So we are afraid of the Holy Spirit, maybe sometimes there's gifts, there's power, because we're afraid of what would our brother or sister think of us, especially the one right beside us.

That's the worst. Right in our church pews, right there, that's the worst one. Right? But there's grace, you know, there's grace for that.

You can overcome that. What else? Reservations, uncertainties. Some of us, we're just afraid, like generally speaking, we're fearful.

We just have a fear, like, anyone else ever felt that in relation to the Holy Spirit? Now, I want to talk about that a little bit because it's very important. God has not given us what? And of what? And what has he given us? I don't know what it is. Well, I know, I think I know what it is.

But when we talk about, if I would have come up here this Sunday morning, preach the sermon about that God is a loving father, he's so amazing, amazing God, and just talk about his character, his attributes. How many of you would be fearful? What if I came up here and talked about the Lord Jesus Christ, his atonement, his death on the cross, all his wonderful things that he did, his teachings, his Sermon on the Mount? How many of you would be, that's scary. But when we come up here and we speak about the Holy Spirit, his work, his power, what happens? Why? You should ask yourself that question.

And where's the source of that fear? God has not done what? A demeanor, a characteristic, a spirit, this attitude of fear. It's not from God. It's probably from the opposite of God.

And so, look, Jesus, when he died and rose and went to heaven, he is seated where now? At the right hand of the Father. He said, when he gave his last breath on the cross, he said, it is finished. His work was finished.

So his blood is shed for the remission of sins. And those who come and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ receive salvation. Now, what does he say in John 14, 15 and 16? He said, he's going to go away.

He's going to send the Holy Spirit. So, which being of the Trinity is now among his people, ministering, God's people? The Holy Spirit. So, if we can keep him at bay, over here, somewhere away from everyone, the power of God is missing among us.

We've responded in a way that we shouldn't. Why do we do that to the Holy Spirit? He's wonderful. Why are we afraid of him? Why are we afraid of his working? Where's that fear from? See, if the devil can get us to do that in the church, in our lives, what has he cut at the root of the church? It's right, power.

He's cut the power at the very root of the church. It's nasty. It's terrible what he's done.

It's unfortunate what he's done, I would say. And so, but we don't have to live that way as a church or as a believer. We don't have to be afraid of the Holy Spirit, because God hasn't given us that kind of heartened characteristic.

And so, even, I believe, as I'm speaking to you, that's probably been pulled from your heart in some capacity. You begin to realize you don't have to be afraid of the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is bearing witness here in this room that, no, he's not something to be afraid of.

He's to be embraced. He's the third being of the Trinity. And he's not going to come up up here in this meeting or show any one of us and do random things that make us uncomfortable or out of control or whatever else we have in our minds.

He's the Holy Spirit. He's in unity with the Father. He's in unity with the Son.

He acts the same way Jesus did when he was among us. Yeah? Sure, yeah. There's so many I can share with you this morning.

Let me show you one quick one that comes to my mind from like three weeks ago, right before we came here to the States. We, there's an Afghan family that we've been sharing, that our team have been sharing the gospel with for nine months. We'd actually, the wife, towards the end of that nine months, had come to the church meeting and we prayed over her and she had like numb hand that had been numb for a long time.

She couldn't function with the normalness. We prayed over her and she was healed. Now, they were strict Pashtun Muslims.

Do you know Pashtun? Do you guys know Pashtun people groups? Like the Pashtun people group, very strong radical Muslims, right? So, this family was, the husband was actually. And so, they saw Jesus working with power even in their lives, in their family, right? In that way. But the husband, towards the end of his nine months, he said, he thought to himself, well, I don't know if I want to do this Christian thing.

And so, I don't know if I can leave behind Islam. It was the fear in his heart to leave behind Islam, everything he knew, and turn towards Jesus. And he decided, you know, that's not for me.

And started taking his family in that direction. And so, we were praying for them as a group of leaders. And three weeks, four weeks ago, over four weeks ago, Saturday, Jesus came to this man in his dream and told him, repent.

You've been going the wrong way. And I want you to repent and turn to me and follow me. He came to the meeting the next morning and came around as leaders in the back, put his arms around us and said, here's what Jesus did yesterday.

He came to me and this is the way he spoke to me. And he asked us, what should I do? And we said, well, you should probably repent and you should be baptized and God would give you the gift of the Holy Spirit. And so, we had a meeting that week and there was a few of us together, some other Afghan families that had helped bring this family, like teach them.

And one of them, the people in the meeting had a brace on their neck that they had on for like 10 days because they couldn't turn their neck. And so, we said, okay, what we'll do is just pray. And so, we lay

hands on her, prayed for her and she was healed completely.

She took off her neck brace, she'd been to the hospital a few times, couldn't move her neck and she was completely healed normally. She can move her neck completely normally. In that context, we explained the gospel to this Afghan family, said they were ready and we baptized them around that time.

A few days later, the other Afghan families that were there took this family down to the river, to the sea, I should say, and baptized them into faith in Jesus Christ, along with some other Afghan young believers who had just come to the Lord. And so, that's a quick example. I could give some others, but that's an example of the power of God.

And this has become normative. It's not something that I sensationalize so much. It's just normative.

Mark 16, they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall be healed. They shall recover, right? It says they should speak in new tongues. We see many times as you lay hands on people and pray for them, they start speaking new tongues, just like the scripture says.

And that's become normative too. Maybe others have questions or just thoughts, maybe your own experiences. Maybe you want to share a testimony of what God has done in your life in this way, or just questions you've had or thoughts you've had.

I could share some stories from here in PA for the last, right here in your state in the last three weeks. Jesus, sometimes we think of Jesus just working overseas. When it's far away, it's all okay.

That's amazing. We can share lots of stories about that. But what about right here in Lancaster County? The same things about people being healed in Lancaster County.

Does that happen still? Has anybody here personally experienced that? Yes. Amen. That's right.

Has anybody here experienced when people laid hands and you start praying in tongues? Yes, it happens in our lives right here too, right? God does the same things right here as he's working all over the world because God is the same. Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. So what I want to say this morning is I want to maybe just give the service back to the leaders here and say, you know, however you feel like you need to moderate the service.

But my heart this morning for you is just to come in with grace and with love, share freely what the Lord is doing and what the scripture says and say, hey, look, this life is available for you too. And I'm not saying this in any kind of sense that I'm in any way better than anyone here. And I want to clearly say that in front of everyone.

It's not what I'm saying. And I hope that's not in any way, any attitude that is being projected. No, I want to say what I love about even Acts 9 is that there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias.

That's why I love it so much because that's us here, many of us, most of us, we're disciples of Jesus. That's just who we are. We don't have some special title, some special position, some special thing someone sent us to do.

No, we're just disciples. And that life is accessible for all of us. And so that's the hope that I want to give you this morning, that we can live that life.

We can receive that from the Lord. We can walk in that way. We can give, we can pray and lay hands on each other and receive those things also from the Lord.

And this, that this body here can become a living dynamic organism in that way. Now, the Lord will guide you in that, I trust. But I want to just encourage you that this life of the spiritual life is available for you today here.

And the reason I felt like I wanted to share this because I said this in the beginning, this is one of the things that's transformed my life the greatest, almost as much as when I came, you know, many years ago and knelt before the Lord and received him, believed in him, repented. And this congregation, this church here, impacted my life through St. One and sent me on this journey of reaching unreached people groups because of what God did in my heart in northern Ghana. And so, you know, thank you for that.

And a way of thanks in return is I thought, well, here's what God has done in my heart and I want to share that with you and just bring you, just, I know that many of us have experienced the Holy Spirit, but maybe there's a greater working of the Holy Spirit that we can receive if, as we open our hearts to the Lord Jesus. So God bless you and thank you this morning for giving an opportunity to share and just to stand in front of me publicly and teach the word for blessings. Let's, you know, let me just pray and then I'm gonna, I'm gonna go to, I'm gonna go to sit in the back.

So Lord Jesus, I just want to glorify you and thank you for your church, your people, your goodness in our lives. God, you're so good and you're so gracious, you're so kind, you're so merciful. And thank you that you sent your son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to earth to be among us and to suffer for us and that you gave your life on the cross to die for our sins and that we are set free from sin to your death on the cross and to bring our life in the water.

And that Lord Jesus, thank you that you have poured upon your church the Holy Spirit. We thank you for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for giving us gifts of the Spirit.

Thank you, Lord, that we can receive them by faith and we can believe and receive. And so Lord Jesus, I pray that in this congregation, the hearts of everyone here, Lord, that you shake our hearts in a good way and just bring this holy discontentment with where we're at and give us a hunger and a thirsting for deeper and more from you, Lord Jesus, because the, Lord, our nation, this nation here needs that. The world needs that.

There's a need of the nations to be healed like it speaks about in Ezekiel 47, that that living water that flows from your throne, God, would be for the healing of the nations. And so, God, we want that living water to flow in us and through us and to bring healing to all around us, Lord Jesus. And for that, we pray this morning.

For this church, we pray that, Lord Jesus, to become a church of ministering healing to the nations. And so, Lord Jesus, open our hearts to receive everything you have for us and just give us that cry in our hearts, Jesus, I am open to everything that you want to give me. I'm open to you.

Holy Spirit, work in my heart. Speak to me right now. Minister to you.

Minister to me. Fill me. Anoint me in a greater way.

Fill me with your Holy Spirit and minister to me, Lord Jesus, to your Holy Spirit. And so, Lord, we bless you. We thank you.

We worship you. We honor you. Thank you for every person here.

We know that you love each dear very much as your child. You've created each one. So bless them with your presence, your love, and your grace.

In Jesus' name, amen.

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