

YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES - Lk 24:44-49 Acts 1:8; Acts 2:4

This past Thursday celebrated an important date in Church history. It was Ascension Day. As Jesus departed this earth He reminded His disciples for the fourth and fifth time of His commission to them to be His witnesses throughout the world.

This coming Sunday will be Pentecost. On that day, 10 days after the Ascension, just as Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit came down upon His disciples filling them with power and boldness to be His witnesses.

God has led us to look at this story today. I want us to learn that what He commanded them to do, He commands us to do. And the same Spirit He filled his disciples with then, He wants to fill us with today so that we can obey this command.

Luke 24:44-49

Vs 44,45 We need God to open our understanding of the Scriptures. They are HIStory. Jesus was the God-man who could open minds to understand what previously was misunderstood.

In John 20:22 Jesus breathed on them and said "Receive the Holy Spirit." He promised that when another like Him would be sent to the disciples, He would lead them into all the truth. Jn 14:26

I. THE PURPOSE OF GOD - the Son must suffer. 46,47

These Scriptures explain the purpose of His death and resurrection. Through this there is the basis to receive and then proclaim forgiveness of sins through His name.

The message of the cross must always remain front and center in our work for Jesus Christ. I Cor 2:1-5

II. THE PLAN OF GOD - you are My witnesses vs 48

This truth is to be sent to ALL NATIONS. 47 (These men were so provincial they had most likely never left the area around the lake where they lived until they met Jesus. Now He is telling them they will witness of Him all over the world. That must have been quite the surprise. Yet it came true just as He said and it continues to this day.

III. THE POWER OF GOD. Vs 49

I will not only open your understanding of Scripture but I will send the promise of MY Father. Stay in the city until you are "endued with power", ie. (thoroughly clothed completely covers you, immerses you. Until He comes and fills you with power.) Literally, wait until you become fully equipped with power.

This promise was the POWER TO WITNESS to ALL NATIONS through a PERSON just like Jesus Christ, who would never leave them.

VS 52 - they obeyed and went back and waited. But now after Jesus ascension they did not return with questions or with fear rather they were full of joy. A decision of faith.

Turn to: **Acts 1:4**. Jesus ordered them- ie - strongly commanded them to wait before going out to witness. **There is a preparation of the servant required before the doing of God's will. Jesus modeled this throughout his ministry.**

LEARN THE TRUTH, OBEY THE TRUTH, BE A WITNESS OF THE TRUTH BUT NEVER DO ANY OF THESE COMMANDS IF YOU ARE NOT LIVING IN ABSOLUTE DEPENDENCE UPON THE HOLY SPIRIT OF TRUTH TO ENABLE YOU.

This of course cannot be used as an excuse for not obeying this command!

We don't wait for the Spirit in the same way as they did. In fact when we receive the Lord Jesus Christ as personal Savior, we in turn receive the Holy Spirit. He comes to indwell us. Rom 8:9.

However that does not mean you are filled with the Holy Spirit! Don't try to do this job of being His witness without His SPIRIT'S FULLNESS! We receive all of the Spirit at the time WE ARE SAVED. Yet as is so often the case in our lives as followers of Jesus we often take back parts of our life we previously had surrendered to Him. We must YIELD all of ourselves to His purpose to experience His fullness and His power to witness.

THE REAL QUESTION IS NOT, DO YOU HAVE ALL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, BUT DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT HAVE ALL OF YOU?

Acts 1:8

You SHALL - an individual PROMISE from Jesus Christ

RECEIVE - a promised gift of grace from the Father. See Col. 2:6

POWER - dynamite, NOT AUTHORITY but explosive power.... Divine enablement!

Like we read of again and again in the book of Acts.

You will receive **POWER after the Holy Spirit comes upon you....**

Just as when you were baptized with water. (Vs 5) The water came upon you and covered you. So the Holy Spirit will come upon you and cover you. (Overshadow you). See vs 5

and then, **YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES** -

There are many benefits we gain for having received My Spirit of Jesus Christ in us. But what He wants us to MAKE A PRIORITY is the benefit of becoming BOLD THROUGH THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. The RESULT, the PURPOSE FOR THE PROMISE - **you will be witnesses of ME. in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and even the remotest parts of the world...**

IV. THE PRESCRIPTION FROM GOD (FOR THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT). Acts 2:4; Eph 5:18,19 (a continual command)

When one becomes intoxicated with alcohol that substance takes over the faculties of that man's body and mind. So too with the filling of the Holy Spirit. Another Power takes control of the Christian's bodily members. (see Romans 6- yield members to God)

Have you ever observed that,

*A shy man when he gets drunk suddenly becomes very friendly with people?

* A cowardly man suddenly becomes very brave?

* He is not easily offended?

* He won't take "no" for an answer?

* He can endure incredible pain?

* He is very generous?

As one invites by the exercise of his will, the influence of alcohol into his body, so a man must by a choice of the will invite the Spirit of God to have complete control, liberty over his body members and faculties. The result of being filled with God's Spirit? A totally different kind of man! - A man of courage who is enabled TO WITNESS.

So then what is the prescription for Holy Spirit fullness?

A. **We must ASK for the filling by faith.** Acts 4:24-30; 31,33 ; Lk 11:13; Col 2:6

B. **We must be OBEDIENT** . Acts 5:32

C. **We must become EMPTY**

Sin. - Dirt and (water) don't mix. Acts 5:32. Rom 6:12-19. 12:1,2

Self - oil and (water) don't mix Gal 5:25; Rom 8:4

D. We must be CLEAN. - *Therefore if a man will cleanse himself of these he will be a vessel unto honor. 2 Tim 2*

The Holy Spirit can be **quenched**. Letting the fire go out by not doing what we are supposed to do.

The Holy Spirit can be **resisted** - losing the filling because we say, "No God"

The Holy Spirit can be **grieved** - by doing that which we should not be doing.

E. We must have UNITY - 4:32

A hot coal left alone will die out quickly. A hot coal next to others will not only burn longer but it will burn hotter.

F. **We must be FILLED AGAIN AND AGAIN.** -

One indwelling, many fillings. Acts 2; 4:24-30

Filling of the Spirit (spirit same word as breath)°

G. We must desire the filling for the RIGHT MOTIVE

JAMES 4:3 - You ask but don't receive because you ask for the wrong reasons... You want to use it to satisfy your own passions....

I don't want the Promise of the Spirit to speak in tongues or do miracles or to wow people with my Bible knowledge. I don't want to be the special agent to lay hands on people to receive this gift so that people will respect me and I will have position and worldly power. I want the Promise so that I may be obedient to my Lord and Master by being HIS BOLD WITNESS.

H. We must step out and START WITNESSING! The time for waiting is over. This should be a natural outflow of life in the Spirit! A normal outcome, not something unusual to see!

WHAT EFFECT HAS THE CLOSING OF OUR CHURCH DOORS THE PAST 9 WEEKS MADE? IT HAS AFFECTED US FOR SURE, BUT HAS IT AFFECTED THE UNSAVED IN OUR COMMUNITY AT ALL?

WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS OUR CHURCHES BEING CLOSED UP MADE ON OUR WORLD? HAS IT MADE ANY DIFFERENCE AT ALL?

WHAT ARE WE HERE FOR? WHAT IS OUR CHURCH BUILDING FOR?

We enter the church doors to become equipped to exit those doors to be powerful witnesses for Jesus. Eph 4:11-16

“WHEN WE EXIT THE CHURCH DOORS WE ARE ENTERING THE MISSION FIELD!”

WHAT ARE WE HERE FOR? You shall be WITNESSES OF ME..