

# Pentecost Power

Acts 1:8

6/7/2025

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## Main Point

### Point A

Announcements Honduras team Deacon nominations Prayer walk - 5pm Baby dedication

## Illustration

Once, an old lumberjack was told by a friend that he should buy a chainsaw. The guy said, "You'll chop four times more wood with a chainsaw than with your ax." But after several outings with his new chainsaw, the lumberjack was chopping less wood. In frustration, he returned the saw to the hardware store. The clerk was surprised. He cranked it to troubleshoot the problem... As soon as it roared to life, the lumberjack got a weird look on his face and asked, "What's that noise?"

Pentecost explanation - 50 days after Passover celebrating the first-fruits of the wheat and grain harvest.

## Application

Our need for the Spirit of God is just as great as ever. The needs around us demand it, and the needed changes within us demand it. I have to agree with author John Stott on this when he observes, "Today, the general picture of the church remains one of steadily diminishing Christian influence in an increasingly secular community. The dead, dry bones of the church need the living breath of God." Author Jack Taylor has an analogy that dramatizes the helplessness of churches today that depend on their own ingenuity and efforts, rather than on the power of the Holy Spirit. He writes, "To a large extent, we go around beating on trees with bare ax handles. At intervals, under the suspicion that this is not getting the job done, we call for strategy conferences on how to make our ax handles more effective, or improve our swing. We take a census of the trees, motivate the wood choppers, declare that this is the day for felling forests, and with polished ax handles and persuasive personnel, we embark towards the woods. But, alas, though the noise of these workmen is great, the sound of falling trees is missing..." Taylor concludes... "This is movement without might, energy without effectiveness, much doing but little dynamic! There is little to show after all is done but bruised hands, and tired bodies, and wounded trees. What is missing? The ax head of course - the cutting edge of it all. And what is the ax head of the Church? It's the life of God in Christ released through the work of the Holy Spirit! The church, with all our abilities and programs, are but handles on which swings the ax head of God's life. It's the ax head that has to be recovered!"

When it comes to the person, work, and empowerment of the Holy Spirit in the church today, it's a touchy subject. The reason is not that it's not a biblical subject, but because of how human beings have marred it. I have observed these two extremes and how they actually perpetuate one another.

### Experiential

On one side, there are people who think they have the freedom to drive the car however they want. The Holy Spirit is a means to their own emotional highs. They don't stay within the lines of scripture or on the road of truth. They do their own thing and end up out of control.

Today, there is so much abuse being done in the Spirit's name and so many fleshly, carnal works that are being attributed to Him. Many times, these things are done in the pursuit of an experience—a spiritual high that will somehow surpass the last one. People are losing complete control of themselves, howling like animals, laughing uncontrollably, completely distracting others from Christ in the name of the Holy Spirit, paying no attention to the biblical boundaries that God has established. They have so lost touch with the biblical Jesus and the scriptures that the Holy Spirit Himself has inspired, that they throw off all restraint and allow for experiences in the name of the Holy Spirit that actually detract from the gospel and create a bad reputation for the church. Whether it be through demonic influence or simply the fulfillment of the flesh, the Holy Spirit's power has been given a bad rap because of so much abuse. These things might conjure up some sort of spiritual or emotional experience, but they bear no lasting fruit of the Holy Spirit.

### Purely Pragmatic

Conversely, some deal with the Holy Spirit pragmatically. They have observed many of these wacko things, so they dismiss the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit because they are afraid they might end up like those others. No, they won't deny Him scripturally or theologically, only experientially.

They might even teach about His gifts and His work, but practically, there is never any experience or interaction encouraged or sought after. There's no mark of the supernatural in their lives or ministry, but they have dotted their doctrinal i's and crossed their theological t's. The problem? These churches still want to drive a car that looks powerful, but because there is no real spiritual power present, they have to start to rely on their ingenuity, creativity, and resources to try and mimic the work of the Holy Spirit. They paint up to the exterior; they come up with plans and programs. They use all the latest tactics and ideas of the world and create organizational monsters that have an appearance of getting things done. But when the rubber meets the road and true disciples need to be developed, or true spiritual warfare needs to be fought, or true sacrificial ministry needs to be pursued, everything crumbles under the surface. The gas is pressed, but the vehicle doesn't have the spiritual power to move the kingdom forward.

## Scripture

2 Timothy 3:5 (NKJV) having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

### The Balance

Of course, in between these two extremes are those who worship in Spirit and truth. Here we find true power and true protection. We discover that by being rooted and grounded in God's Word.

## Quote

— *Pastor Josh*

"The Holy Spirit's power burns brightest and truest in the fireplace of the Holy scriptures."

It's been said that a church that has the truth but no power will dry up, the church that has power but no word will blow up, but the church with the word and power will grow up.

Today, we don't have the time I would like to spend on the issue of the Spirit's power and how it applies to us, but we are going to go through Acts 1 and examine these three elements of the Holy Spirit's empowerment. Jot these down if you're taking notes: 1.

The Promise of the Spirit's Power   The Purpose of the Spirit's Power   The Priority of the Spirit's Power

## Main Point

The Promise of the Spirit's Power

## Scripture

Acts 1:4 (NKJV) And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me."

IMAGINE IT: Being one of the disciples. Jesus died, but he came back to life! Easter just happened! Great. He's going to come back again one day! Great. But what are we supposed to do in the meantime!?

They spent an amazing 40 days with him after his resurrection. Upon his ascension into heaven he gave them a seemingly impossible task: "Go ye therefore into all the earth making disciples of every nation." Earlier he had told them, "Those who believe in me will do the works that I do, even greater works shall they do." BUT HOW? That would be my question as a disciple! Jesus healed the sick, made the lame walk, and the blind see, and raised the dead. Whenever he spoke, it was like powerful spiritual daggers that pierced through the heart and soul of every man, woman, and child. Now Jesus is gone, what are we supposed to do? We know that he told us, "It is better that I go away so that I may send the spirit of truth," but what does this look like? At that moment, it had to be comforting to remember the many words of Jesus to them when he reminded them of a promise that the Father made regarding His departure and the coming of the Holy Spirit:

## Scripture

John 14:26 (NKJV) But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Jesus made a promise, a promise that came from the Father that He would not leave those who believe in Him orphans, but that He would come to them in the third person of the triune nature of God, the Holy Spirit. I have yet to know God to ever break a promise!

But how would they know it's time? The answer from Jesus: WAIT. Before you go, you need to WAIT. Why?

## Illustration

The disciples had the best ministry seminary training available. Three years in the school of Jesus beats any doctoral degree from a seminary. They had experience. Jesus had given them a taste of ministry when he sent them out to heal the sick and cast out demons. They had a good team. A considerable number of followers had gathered during Jesus' ministry. They were certainly excited about and committed to the cause after experiencing the resurrected Jesus! But apparently, education, experience, people, and passion were not enough to accomplish the mission.

This is why they had to WAIT. The promise of the Father that the Holy Spirit would come is found in three forms in scripture. The Spirit is WITH us, he wants to live WITHIN us, and He desires to come UPON us. Up to the point of Acts 1, the disciples had experienced two of those three relationships. We see two of these earlier in John 14:17:

## Scripture

John 14:17 (NKJV) "the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you."

## Application

With You (para) – to be in close proximity. This is His relationship with everyone in the world. He is always present, convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16). Before Christ's atoning work, the relationship with the Holy Spirit was mainly external. There were times when the Holy Spirit empowered certain individuals intermittently for specific tasks, such as Samson, David, Gideon, and even Saul. But mainly the Spirit was working from the outside in, convicting, revealing the truth. He still works this way today among the unbelieving world.

## Application

In You (en) – Within the interior of a designated space. It means to dwell within us. His Spirit is directly communicating with our spirit, personally sanctifying us and speaking to us. Bringing understanding and spiritual enlightenment to the Word and leading us through life. This relationship begins when one first places their faith and trust in Jesus Christ for salvation. The Spirit makes His home in you and seals you unto the day of redemption.

## Scripture

2 Corinthians 1:22 (NKJV) who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

## Scripture

Ephesians 1:13 (NKJV) In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

For the disciples, this took place in John 20. After Jesus' resurrection, He made the way possible for a new relationship with the Holy Spirit. We read:

## Scripture

John 20:22 (NKJV) And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

## Illustration

Could you imagine this picture? The disciples just had breakfast. Everyone has morning breath and is standing around. Jesus starts walking around, blowing in everyone's face. Peter remembers what happened last time he tried to stop Jesus from doing something... Lord, breathe all over me! But with that breath of God, the living God in the person of the Holy Spirit entered into the essence of their very being. They became regenerated men. In the Garden of Eden, before man had the breath of life, we read:[Gen 2:7 NKJV] 7 And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. Now the breath of God was coming into these men who had been dead in their sins but were receiving new life in Christ. They were now more than walking, breathing, living objects; they were spiritually living beings who were dead to sin and alive to Christ! This small, quiet breath brought something to pass within them.

## Application

Shall come upon you There is a third relationship uniquely described in scripture. And I use the word relationship over experience because it is not merely a one-time event, but an ongoing relationship in which the believer is filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit for the supernatural work of ministry. This relationship is described in Luke 24:49 and here in Acts 1:8 NKJV – "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;

## Scripture

Luke 24:49 (NKJV) "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

There are things within me that you can't see, but when you see me, you see what I'm clothed in. Apparently, there is a ministry of the Holy Spirit in which we bring apparent and visible power to the believer to be a witness for Christ.

## Application

Upon (epi) – To have charge of, to be immersed in. The beginning of this dynamic relationship is often referred to as, "the baptism of the Holy Spirit." Act 1:5 NKJV – "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." This truth carried over from the very words of John the Baptist who said, "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." This is a biblical title, although it is unfortunately highly abused in the modern church. Jesus told them in verse 5 that they would be, "Baptized with the Spirit..." There are three uses of the word baptism in the NT: Baptized in water – our bodies are full immersed to demonstrate our death to the old nature and resurrection into Christ. Baptized into the body of Christ – 1 Cor. 12:13 – the Spirit baptizes us (or initiates and inserts us) into the church family when we put our faith in Christ. Baptized in the Holy Spirit – this is when the Spirit's power comes UPON us and our entire being is immersed in God's supernatural power for ministry.

## Illustration

EXAMPLE: A cup of water can be with me, in me, and upon me!

Remember in Ephesians, Paul tells the church in chapter 1, that when they believed in the gospel, they were, "sealed by the Spirit." But later in chapter 5, He writes to those same believers:

## Scripture

Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV) "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,"

In fact, have you noticed the imperative commands that Paul gives throughout Scripture to every church and every believer?

Walk in the Spirit  
Live in the Spirit  
Be filled with the Spirit  
Speak in the Spirit  
Sing in the Spirit  
Pray in the Spirit  
Be led by the Spirit  
You almost get the impression that the Christian life is mainly a spiritual one! One that is not lived by mere human logic or understanding. One that doesn't quite operate the same way the world operates. Our life is to be baptised and immersed in the Holy Spirit's UPON power.

# Main Point

## Point 2

### The Purpose of the Spirit's Power

We are told in verse 8 that the Holy Spirit would cause them to bear witness to Christ, which would spread throughout the entire world. So what does that witness look like?

Unfortunately, when we hear the word “witness,” we automatically think of verbally sharing the gospel message with someone else (ie: we are going to go witnessing). While the vocal presentation of the gospel is an absolutely necessary part of that witness, that is not solely what Jesus was talking about. Those who witnessed Christ's life witnessed Him preach and teach, heal the sick, raise the dead, display compassion, and much, much more...MAKE CLEAR: There are movements today that walk around saying Jesus was just like us, and anything Jesus did by the power of the Spirit, we should do. Let me make this perfectly clear: There is only one sinless, perfect Son of God, and you are not Him. His name is Jesus. Many things Jesus did, he did of his own divine power, a power that was and is unique to him. We are sinners who are flawed. However, Jesus, in His mercy, modeled a life led and empowered by the Holy Spirit. He did this to demonstrate to us that even we, in our flesh, can experience God's power doing supernaturally beyond what we are naturally capable of, to the glory of God.

## Scripture

Acts 4:33 (NKJV) - And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.

## Quote

— *Pastor Josh*

Jesus doesn't say, "You will go witnessing," but "You will be My witnesses." The power is not for an event but for a lifestyle — a life that radiates the presence and truth of Jesus wherever it goes.

Dýnamis, the Greek word for power, teaches us that the mission of the Church is impossible without the Holy Spirit. It's where we get the English words dynamic or dynamite. It indicates a supernatural infusion of power that propels God's Kingdom purposes outside our natural capabilities

It rebukes both self-reliance and complacency. Self-reliance says, "I can do it without God." Complacency says, "Let someone else do it." Jesus rejects both: He commands all His followers to go, and provides the power to do so!

As a result of delivering the message of the gospel, what did the witness of the early church look like? What did the display of the power of the Holy Spirit look like?

Acts 2 – The day of Pentecost had come, and the disciples were waiting in obedience to Christ's command. Then, unexpectedly, that small breath of Jesus turned into a mighty blow. Like a rushing wind, the disciples were immersed in the person and power of the Holy Spirit. The appearance of flaming tongues appeared over them, and they supernaturally spoke foreign languages with a perfect dialect so that the crowds of foreigners gathered around heard the



## Scripture

Acts 14:3 (NKJV) Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

Notice the witness was through: Bold preaching, signs, and wonders. To what end? To bear witness to the Word of His grace.

You see, the signs and wonders were present, but they were not the emphasis. The emphasis was the gospel message, the Word of grace. This is why ministries and movements that center around the signs and wonders often waiver. They make signs and wonders the centerpiece and the goal rather than God's Word. Signs and wonders become the destination rather than the avenue. On the other side, what a shame if we have become so fearful that we preach the message, but never allow the Spirit to demonstrate His power to confirm the word as a witness to its truth. I think we need to be more aware of the reality that the power of the Holy Spirit can be demonstrated! Listen to what the apostle Paul said to the Corinthians:

## Scripture

1 Corinthians 2:4-5 (NKJV) And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

This is the power we need to be his witnesses. We need the power that causes someone to look at us and say, "There is something supernatural there, something I can't humanly explain." Where the power of the Spirit is present, lives are being changed in ways that are not worldly possible, things are taking place that cause the world to look in and tremble, not laugh. And this "upon" experience is no joke. It is the promise of God, prophetically spoken from ages past. God spoke through the prophet Joel:

## Scripture

Joel 2:28-29 (NKJV) "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days."

The Holy Spirit's power is a promise from our Heavenly Father that we need to receive. The Holy Spirit's power has a purpose: to bring forth a mighty witness through the church in word and deed.

## Illustration

Those who diminish this reality of the Holy Spirit's baptism of power don't fully recognize the scope of the task we have been called to accomplish. EXAMPLE: Remember digging holes in the sand at the beach as a kid and thinking you were going to dig all the way to China? Imagine a 6-year-old with his plastic shovel and buckets digging on the beach. He says, "Mom, Dad, I am going to dig through the earth! You smile and laugh at the cuteness of it all, but to him, there's no joke involved. He thinks his shovel, pale and digging abilities will get the job done! He's not thinking that the Earth is 7916 miles from one end to the other. He's not wondering how he will get through the 21 mile crust, 1800 mile mantle, or survive the journey through the Earth's



## Application

The account of the church's mission in the book of Acts is one filled with Spiritual power, not human prowess. In other words, the souls that were saved, the miracles that were wrought, the planting and growth of churches, the impact on cultures and communities, all came from supernatural leading, supernatural strength, and supernatural truth (God's Word). The things taking place could not be attributed to board meetings full of people with degrees in church growth and Church fundraising campaigns. The growth and effectiveness of the church didn't depend on a group of church staff members exhausting themselves to come up with a more creative idea than the church down the street or the nightclub down the street to keep people in the pews. No, the mark of the first, and most effective church, was power and truth that came from a supernatural source outside of human ingenuity, strength, creativity, and resources.

## Main Point

### Point 3

The Priority of the Spirit's Power

## Scripture

Acts 1:6-8 (NKJV) Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The disciples were excited after Christ's resurrection. They assumed that He would immediately come and rule and reign on the earth, establishing His kingdom with them. Apparently, the first disciples of Jesus were also lovers of prophecy, as we all should be.

25% of the Bible is dedicated to predictive prophecy; we have a God who declares the end from the beginning and the beginning from the end. We are told to have an awareness of the days in which we live. We are told to see things that are coming to pass and lift our eyes, for our redemption draws near. But what is the true purpose of prophecy? It's not so that we can become anxiously consumed with trying to figure out things that only God knows and that belong to His wisdom. Even Jesus said, "No man knows the day or the hour of His appearing." Why? Because we naturally drift toward wanting to figure it out exactly, and God wants us to walk by faith. People in the past who have tried to figure it out precisely and predict dates have only caused problems. Great Disappointment – Baptist preacher William Miller predicted the day of Christ's return on October 22, 1844. People were selling all they had and tens of thousands were expecting Christ's return on that day. The fallout of that was devastating to the church. All the way to 1988, when the book "88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Be in 1988" sold over 5 million copies. From the Y2K bug on January 1, 2000, to Harold Camping's rapture prediction in 2011, many have come to view the Bible's incredible and truthful prophecies as nothing more than a joke—a collection of ancient fantasies and mythologies with no real present-day application. This is sad, of course, because the prophecy in God's Word gives us the clearest picture of our past, present, and future. When handled in an appropriate way, these can bring tremendous glory to God, hope to the world, and comfort to God's people. In Acts 1, the disciples wanted to know the exact time the end was coming. When is the kingdom coming? Jesus directs them to be concerned with God's plan right now.

## Quote

— *Pastor Josh*

"The purpose of prophecy is to excite us so much about the future that we will work powerfully in the present."

## Application

Hey, the events of the end times, the coming of Christ's kingdom, God's got it handled, and I CAN'T WAIT! I am watching and waiting, observing what happens around me in the world today. However, don't forget that Jesus looks at us and says the same thing he said to His disciples then... BUT YOU... We say, "But when Lord?" Jesus turns around and says, "BUT YOU shall receive power!" Christian, because Jesus is coming back, and because his kingdom will be established on this earth, God wants to empower YOU! God wants to use YOU! God wants to communicate the His truth of salvation through YOU. God wants to demonstrate His mighty power through YOU. Will you make yourself available to Him?

Conclusion

## Scripture

John 7:38-39 (NKJV) "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive...

Three final points of application (seek, surrender, serve):

Seek

## Scripture

Matthew 7:7-8 (NKJV) "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."

Surrender

## Quote

— *Stephen Seamands*

"... Though the Holy Spirit is present in all believers, in some He is not preeminent; though He is resident in all, in some He is not president."

Serve