

Reimagine: So That My House Will be Full
Reimagine the Work of the Holy Spirit in our Lives!
Empowered to Make an Impact
Acts 1-3

INTRODUCTION: As our church began this new year, we engaged in 14 days of fasting and prayer. At the same time, I asked people to read through the book of Acts; two chapters each day to read all 28 chapters during our fasting and prayer.

The gospels tell us that Jesus lived, Jesus died, Jesus rose, Jesus ascended into heaven, and then the book of Acts tells us what happens next.

Acts is the follow-up to the Gospel of Luke (Ac 1:1-2). Luke's Gospel has a pronounced interest in the Holy Spirit also. The first two chapters of Luke are filled with references to the Holy Spirit's action. The Spirit is prominent at the baptism of Jesus (3:22). The Lord is led out into the desert **full** of the Holy Spirit to be tested and tried (4:1), and then comes out of the desert in the **power** of the Holy Spirit (4:14).

Acts is especially the book of the Spirit. The full title of the book is The Acts of the Apostles, but that title could equally be The Acts of the Holy Spirit.

Acts tells us how the Holy Spirit came upon the church, and how the gospel spreads from Jerusalem to Rome.

Before the Good News spreads, we have this account **in John 20:22**. Jesus appears to his disciples in the first evening after His resurrection, and **said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit."**

Until Christ's resurrection the faith of the disciples was like the faith of Old Testament saints. It was **anticipatory** of the coming Messiah.

How could they have the full saving faith when the work of Jesus was not finished. He had not yet died for their sins and risen from the dead. Saving faith in the New Testament sense is looking on what the Lord has **done** and having the benefit of **His finished work applied to our lives by faith**.

The disciples in that upper room on that first evening after His resurrection, are in the position for the **first time** to have the resurrected life of Christ imputed and implanted into their lives.

According to Romans 10:8-9 is ***whoever believes in his heart that Jesus is raised and confesses with his lips shall be saved.***

In fact, what Jesus says to them is linked with what He does next. The bible says he breathed on them and says, ***“Receive the Holy Spirit.”*** What Jesus is doing in breathing upon them is saying, now I have by virtue of my resurrection, a new life to give to you, in the person of the Holy Spirit.

Here Jesus is reenacting that moment in the Garden when God breathed the breath of life into Adam, and he became a living soul.

Jesus is breathing the life of His renewed spirit into those disciples. They are being born again. Then He says after the event of John 20:22, in Acts 1:4-5 ***“Do not leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift my Father promised which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”***

And then later, in an upper room, where 120 are gathered on the day of Pentecost. The Spirit descends upon them, and they are all filled with the Spirit. Acts 2:1-4 says, ***“When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” (NIV)***

The book of Acts begins with the ascension of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit and goes on to show how the apostles preached Christ to the world.

Theme verse of Acts: ***“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” (Ac 1:8)***

In the American Standard Version of Acts there are **fifty-six** references to the Holy Spirit. Even a casual reader would note the build-up in chapter one for the coming of the Holy Spirit which is described in chapter two.

In Samaria, Macedonia, Asia, and all other places where the kingdom expanded to, the Spirit moved through healings and other miracles. Paul gained the attention of Sergius Paullus by the blinding of a sorcerer. Peter saw the region of Joppa open because of the resurrection of Tabitha. Philip performed wonders in Samaria. In each instance, the Holy Spirit was proclaiming that Jesus is the Messiah and that these men were not just speaking empty words.

Beyond the Holy Spirit's guidance in **what** to preach, He also directed the apostles and evangelists of the early church **where** to preach. The Holy Spirit guided people to the right town, at the right time to speak to the right person. Philip for example was divinely led to go to a wilderness road, where he found the Ethiopian official who believed and carried the gospel home with him.

The Holy Spirit was on the move, in and through the early believers from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria, and throughout the world; and then we come to this interesting encounter in Acts 19; Paul is on his third missionary journey.

Acts 19:1-7 says, 1While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples 2and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"

They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied.

4Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." 5On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. 7There were about twelve men in all." (NIV)

Let's Pray

At some point in our Christian growth, we've all probably made a similar statement. I've not even heard of the Holy Spirit or I'm not sure who the Holy Spirit is and what He does.

Story: This was something I said early in my marriage, when Nancy and I attended our first AG church in Del Rio, Texas.

We began our 2023 Vision Series **Reimagine** a few weeks ago. I talked about reimagining the Two Greatest Commandments, Loving God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength; and loving other's as you love yourselves. On the night Jesus was betrayed He gave the disciples and us a new command, "**love others as I have loved you.**" That's a game changer, that takes our love for others to a whole new level. Don't treat others how they have treated you, treat them and love them as Jesus has treated and loved you.

Last week Pastor Jon talked about **Reimagining the Great Commission.**

Today my message focuses on Reimagining the Work of the Holy Spirit in our Lives. My message today is entitled; **Empowered to Make an Impact.**

There is a tremendous amount of confusion and controversy that exists about the Holy Spirit. Part of our problem is that the Holy Spirit seems so mystical. We can picture God the Father because we've all seen fathers. We can picture God the Son, because he became human, and we can read about what He did and what He's like. But when we try to picture the Holy Spirit, our minds go blank. We end up thinking of symbols like a dove or wind or fire.

Different churches tend to emphasize the Holy Spirit in different ways. Charismatic and Pentecostal churches focus on his power, evangelicals tend to emphasize the Spirit's work in bringing attention to Jesus Christ, and Roman Catholics focus on the Holy Spirit working through the church hierarchy.

Let's look back at this account in Acts 19.

These disciples were baptized in John's baptism of repentance – salvation

They believed on the one that is to come, who is Jesus

They are water baptized. (vs 5-6)

Finally, Paul lays hands on them, and they are baptized in the Holy Spirit.

We see here 3 distinct baptisms.

Baptism of Repentance

Baptism of Water

Baptism of the Spirit

Just so you know, you don't need all three to go to heaven. All you need to do is repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. (Thief on the cross)

The Holy Spirit at **conversion** places us in Christ. We are a new creation. We are perfect because of our position, not our performance.

The Holy Spirit at **water baptism** places us into the body of Christ

Holy Spirit baptism endue us with power to walk in our new life in Christ.

Baptism of Repentance – We become a new person.

Baptism of Water – the old person gets cut off.

Baptism of the Spirit – gives us power to walk in our new life.

We see these types in the Old Testament

Moses was a type of Christ.

Passing through the Red Sea a type of water baptism.

Fire by night and cloud by day was a type of Holy Spirit.

In the Temple there was outer court, inner court, and Holy of Holies

The altar where the blood was shed – salvation.

Laver of water – water baptism.

Flask of oil – Baptism of the Holy spirit.

The doctrine of the Trinity tells us that the Holy Spirit is a divine person. The 66 books of the Bible present God the Father as our Creator, God the Son as our savior, and God the Holy Spirit as our comforter, guide, and source of power. You might think of God the Father as ***God for us***, God the Son as ***God with us***, and God the Holy Spirit as ***God in us***.

[As we reimagine the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives, I want to begin with 2 observations:](#)

1. The Promise of the Holy Spirit!

John 16:7 — ***“But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate (Holy Spirit) will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.” (NIV)***

The promise Jesus made about the Holy Spirit is revealing on two levels.

A. The promise of Jesus reveals our need! Jesus promised His disciples a counselor, a helper, a senior partner; because He knew they couldn't handle life successfully without help — ***and neither can we!***

B. The promise of Jesus reveals the Holy Spirit's nature!

Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as a — counselor, or comforter!

The Greek word is Parakletos! It is an incredibly rich word in the Greek language — in fact there isn't one English word that can capture all its meanings and nuances!

Let me share with you just a few of the ways in which the word was used:

- The word Parakletos was used in the legal arena to describe a defense attorney, or a character witness in a trial!
- The word Parakletos was used to describe a specialist in any field who could come in and supply the missing knowledge or insight needed to solve a perplexing problem!
- The word Parakletos was an encourager who knew the right thing to say or do when a person was suffering or discouraged!

Note that a Parakletos wasn't something — a Parakletos was someone. When Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit, He used personal pronouns like — "he and him!" The personal nature of the Holy Spirit can be seen in 2 Corinthians 13:14, where Paul writes: ***"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."*** (NIV)

We have the promise of the Holy Spirit and secondly, we see...

2. The Priorities of the Holy Spirit!

A. The Holy Spirit wants to help us — get right! (Salvation)

John 16:8 — *"When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment..."*

B. The Holy Spirit wants to help us — grow right! (Sanctification)

Healthy *babies* grow. Healthy *believers* grow — being born again or born from above speaks of a beginning not an end!

Physical and spiritual growth is a process — and the Holy Spirit is the power (or the enabler) of that process!

C. The Holy Spirit wants to help us — go right! (Service)

Acts 1:8 — *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (NIV)*

The Greek word translated 'Power' is 'dunimous' — where we get our English word 'dynamic' and 'dynamite.' The real meaning of the word is more than explosiveness — it was a word that literally meant — ability! The most basic meaning is — The ability to do whatever needs to be done!

Myer Pearlman published a fascinating little book in 1935 called *The Heavenly Gift*. In it he says.

“There is one Holy Spirit but many operations of that Spirit. Just as there is one electricity but many operations of that electricity. The same electricity propels streetcars, lights our houses, operates refrigerators, performs many other tasks. In like manner the one Spirit regenerates, sanctifies, energizes, illumines, and imparts special gifts. The variety of the operation is beautifully set forth in the many symbols employed in the scriptures to picture the work of the Holy Spirit. He is the gentle dove who broods over us. The wind which blows over us in cooling and life-giving power, the fire that warms and purifies. The water which quenches spiritual thirst. Cleanses our lives and makes us

faithful. The seal that preserves us and assures us of our sonship. The oil which speaks of usefulness, fruitfulness, beauty, and perennial life.

The Spirit regenerates human nature in the crisis of conversion. Then the Spirit of holiness within produces the fruit of the Spirit.

Go with me to Acts, chapter 3, and let me ask you three questions that will help us reimagine the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

- Have I been filled with the person and power of the Holy Spirit?
- Has the filling of the Spirit equipped me for ministering to people in need?
- Are the gifts of the Holy Spirit being used in my life to intimidate, impress or to impact?

Let's read Acts 3:1-10 ***“One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. 2 Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. 3 When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. 4 Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” 5 So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. 6 Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” 7 Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. 8 He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. 9 When all the people saw him walking and praising God, 10 they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.” (NIV)***

In this story shortly after the disciples have been baptized in the Spirit, we see the purpose of Pentecost lived out in the lives of the disciples — and how the Holy Spirit wants to work in and through us!

[Luke, who was a doctor, offers a very detailed and descriptive analysis of this day in the life of the disciples]

Peter and John are on their way to the temple for afternoon prayers...

Their attention is riveted upon an incapacitated beggar that they had undoubtedly passed many times before ... but this day they can't dismiss him or his need ...

Luke uses medical terminology to describe a man who was cripple from birth.

- The word translated 'feet' is used only by Luke, and it's found nowhere else in all of scripture but here!
- It's a medical term that refers to the 'base' or 'heel' of the foot?
- The term 'ankle' is again a medical term found only here.
- Leaping up — is an ancient medical phrase which describes the suddenness of a socket coming into place.

Peter and John speak 'healing' to the man, and he is instantaneously healed; a man who has never walked in his life begins to leap and dance and praise God!

Crowds gathered in amazement as the crippled man they'd known for years was now miraculously healed!

2. Why did it happen? [3 reasons]

A. The first reason is — faithfulness!

Note that — Peter and John were on their way to a time of prayer and praise!

It was while they were being faithful to what they knew to do that God worked miraculously through them! "When we do what we know we'll know what to do!"

Key — God-connectedness enables us to be the right person in the right place for the right purpose!

B. A second reason for the miracle is — focus!

Verse 4 — "Peter looked straight at him, as did John."

Peter and John had undoubtedly passed this man before — but they'd always looked past him — like everyone else did!

- Why was it that they couldn't ignore the beggar this time?

Answer — Christ's focus became their focus and they couldn't take their eyes off an incapacitated man who had God's focused attention!

Key — Our Spirit-focused attention on an overlooked life is more life-changing than we can imagine!

The power of focused attention says — "you count — you are known — you are loved!"

C. There's a third key reason for the miracle of Acts 3 — fullness!

Verse 6 — ***"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."***

This phrase can also be translated — "But what I've been given — I give to you!"

What had Peter and John been given? The gifts of the Holy Spirit to meet the needs of the man!

To Phrase It Differently — The Holy Spirit filled Peter and John with the necessary tools to touch and transform the crippled beggar!

Key - The gifts of the Spirit are ministry tools for changing lives!

The gifts of the Spirit are not trophies ... toys ... talents ... or traits — they are tools for touching and transforming people by the power of Jesus Christ!

Let me expand on that statement for a moment:

- The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not — **trophies!**

They are not spiritual merit badges that say — "We've arrived at some level of spiritual growth!"

When God uses us, it is humbling not exalting ... we didn't do it — God did!

- The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not — **toys!**

They are not given for our personal or private pleasure ... they are given for service and edification!

- The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not — **talents!**

The ability to make a man crippled from birth walk, was not the result of Peter or John's medical knowledge or surgical skills!

- The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not — **traits!**

Because we are an intellectual doesn't mean we have the gift of knowledge or wisdom!

- Let me say it again — The gifts of the Holy Spirit are — **tools**, essential tools for life-giving and life-changing ministry!

The real question we need to address from this story is: Can what Happened then Happen Today?

Postmodern people are too broken to be fixed through human caregiving; they need to be pieced back together through the supernatural healing of Jesus through the working of the Holy Spirit in and through believers, you and me."

Commentator Lloyd Olgivie puts it like this, "The power of Pentecost is for people. What happened at Pentecost is for the paralysis of the world. The Holy Spirit, Christ in the present tense, is for the healing of people in the present age. The excitement and enthusiasm of the infilling of the Spirit was to create a people through whom the Lord could continue his ministry of restoration and healing. A new age was born, Christ was alive in his people, and they were now equipped to do what he had done and the greater things he promised — communicating his love and bringing people to him."

Power — in the animal and human kingdom is often a tool of intimidation and suppression — it's used to get ahead and stay ahead and diminish or destroy anyone who dares to get in your way!

Power — in the kingdom of God has an entirely different purpose — the power Jesus promised and provided through the Holy Spirit isn't power to intimidate or impress — **it's power to impact!**

We have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to make an impact. Only God's power can put broken people back together again!

In another account of the Holy Spirit's miracle working power, Acts 8:6 says — **"... when the crowds saw the miraculous signs, he (Philip) did, they all paid close attention to what he said."** In other words, **People will HEAR the MESSAGE because they can't Miss the Miracle!**

Conclusion

Leonard Ravenhill said in Why Revival Tarries, "We appease sin-but do not oppose it. We have left our first love. To such a cold, carnal, critical, careless church; this lax, loose, lustful, licentious age will never capitulate. It has not been in times of popularity but of adversity that the true church has always triumphed." He goes on to say, "We have many organizers, but few agonizers; many players and payer, few pray-ers; many singers, few clingers; lots of pastors, few wrestlers; many fears, few tears; much fashion, little passion; many interferers, few intercessors; many writers, but few fighters."

We have traded away holiness for hype; we have forgotten righteousness for ritual; we've mastered the form of religion, but we've forgotten the force...the Holy Spirit of God. Too many have a caffeine-free relationship with God. It won't stir you up, it won't keep you up, and it won't take you up.

What we need is Pentecostal power. We need all the sleeping folks to wake up; the lukewarm folks to fire up; the disgruntled folks to sweeten up; the discouraged folks to cheer up; the gossipers to shut up; the dry bones to shake up; and the true soldiers to stand up.

Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? My prayer for the Church: Send us the fire. Moses was called by fire. Elijah called down fire. Elisha made a fire. Micah prophesied by fire. John the Baptist said, I baptize with water, but "Jesus shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire."

Let's reimagine it in our own lives TODAY!