

The Holy Spirit

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Your best life is lived in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit.

Name _____

¹ 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. (Acts 2-NIV)

A preacher wanted to illustrate the arrival of the Holy Spirit like a dove, which happened at Jesus' baptism. So, he placed a boy in the rafters and gave him instructions, at just the right moment the boy was to toss the dove through the ceiling and onto the floor near the preacher.

When I say the Holy Spirit came down, you throw the dove down. So, he preached his message and got to the moment where he said, "the Holy Spirit came down." Nothing happened.

The preacher with more voice announces, "the Holy Spirit came down." Nothing happened.

Again, raising his voice even more, "the Holy Spirit came down." And suddenly the preacher heard the boy's voice, "Pastor, a cat ate the Holy Spirit, do you want me to throw the cat down?"

When Danice and I pastored in the Seattle area, we had an opportunity to ride on the aircraft carrier, the Abraham Lincoln.

The Abraham Lincoln is a floating city, we stood that day on the flight deck, as several USS hornets took off and landed. The ground shook. Those in attendance covered their ears. It was a shock and awe experience that we will never forget. I still remember the look on the faces of those whose minds were blown by the experience of power.

You had to protect your ears from the sound of the blast and hold onto your hat. When that kind of event takes place, you never forget that kind of power.

We love loud fireworks, the sound of Harley Davidson motorcycles and all the battery life we can pack into our cell phones. I love power. You love power.

Isn't that right? We are fascinated with power-we love fast cars, loud concerts, big winds because we are all impressed with power. We want all the power we can put into our cell phones; we can put into our legs as we bike across Kansas, and in our arms as was we push the swing of a child as they yell, higher dad, higher dad.

The book of the Bible that we are studying is all about power. More so than any other book of the Bible.

Jesus told his disciples that it is imperative that he go away, because when he does, the disciples will be infused with power, whenever they ask directly from the Holy Spirit.

This Acts 1:8 promise is the main theme of the book of Acts. Jesus offers these words in those last gatherings before he was crucified which were-

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. (Acts 1:8-NIV)

What is the purpose of this Holy Spirit power? To help you be Jesus witnesses and direct others as to how they can have access to Holy Spirit power, a power that comes from God. You ask, what will I get?

A power to save. A power to heal. A power to deliver.

So, the book of Acts is about...

The book of Acts is about the arrival of the Holy Spirit and the supernatural transformations that go along with unlimited power.

Sitting in this audience is a young man that grew up in this church. As he became an adult, he wandered and rebelled from Christ and found himself in some dark places.

The life of the one I have told you about, is a Christ follower who lives daily in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit became Jesus' power source to do the natural and supernatural while living on earth.

³³ And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, "The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit." (John 1:33-NIV)

Jesus began his earthly ministry by receiving the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus needed the Holy Spirit's baptism to do his Father's work. If our leader Jesus Christ received the Holy Spirit's baptism, I will be the first in line.

This power Jesus received was like a baptism of power. The word baptize means to immerse. It is the picture of a sunken ship. A piece of cloth immersed in dye.

It is the idea of flooding every compartment. When you allow the Holy Spirit to baptize you, he enters those areas of your life where you have resisted his entry. He enters those areas where you have closed off the Spirit's work. He enters those areas where you have been too ashamed to allow even a loving and forgiving God to have a peak. He knows what is there already.

Let me see if I can **illustrate it**. This is an Oreo cookie. This is a glass of milk. Some of you dip your Oreo into the milk. How many do that? Some of you dip and drip. Some of you immerse yourself and ingest. Some dip. Some immense.

What happened that day at the River Jordan, Jesus experienced two baptisms. One in water by his cousin John. Then Jesus was immersed, baptized by the Holy Spirit.

No dipping into the Holy Spirit, Jesus was total immersed. If you trusted Christ, you were baptized into the body of Christ. The idea of baptism is used several ways in the Christ follower's life.

First, when you trusted Christ, you were baptized into the body of Christ.

For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body — whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free — and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. (1 Corinthians 12:13-NIV)

The job of the Holy Spirit is to extend the ministry of Jesus Christ into every setting.

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

If Jesus showed up today, he is here by the Holy Spirit, all of us would clamor for his attention. We would want a healing. We would want encouragement for our depression. We might even want him to do a few miracles of financial provision. But one thing is for sure, there would be some close to him and some on the outskirts.

Jesus solved this problem and told us, I am going to be with all of you, always, whenever you call. The Holy Spirit will be there for you, and he is in charge now.

Jesus wants it to be blindingly clear about who is left in charge during His absence.

¹³ But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. (John 16-NIV)

Jesus descended so far. Jesus gave up so much. Now, we come to that part of history in the book of Acts where Jesus leaves earth. Now, he is heading home. Like a soldier returning home after a bloody battle. Now, each soldier has been imparted with the battle plan-**receive power and be my witnesses**. And each soldier is now in alignment with the general's mission.

Jesus planned his departure from the beginning. Jesus had come to earth as a baby and left in a body. After transferring his mission to his disciples and telling them not to start until the Holy Spirit arrives.

If Easter is a Christ follower's best day, then the day of Ascension is Jesus' best day.

The disciples could not take their eyes off the sky as Jesus disappeared into the clouds.

⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:9-11-NIV)

Even though Jesus lifted off, he promised a Helper, the Holy Spirit who is here in person. One day Jesus will return. The Savior of the world and our future King will return. He will make a low fly by in the same body he left with and then catch us up to be with him in the air. The Bible calls this the rapture or catching away of the Christian.

As the disciples strained for one last glimpse of the ascending Lord, two men beamed down from heaven, dressed in white and stood beside them, and asked, "why are you staring at an empty cloud."

Jesus' ascension is the game winning final play connected to an amazing life. Where did Jesus go? 33 years earlier he descended from heaven and began a life as a sinless savior. He did this so he could die to atone for your sins and mine.

Mission accomplished, so Jesus returned to his eternal reality and sat down at the right hand of the Father. The disciples' instructions were simple. Return to Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit's arrival. Then begin a thrilling adventure as you now live, in the power of the Holy Spirit. The disciples had no idea what was before them, but they would possess a power that would make it all possible.

And so, they waited.....

Acts 1 ends with a family gathering, Peter's reminder of God's providential plan and the selection of a final disciple.

Those who waited for the Spirit's arrival are a who's who of Jesus followers. Not his best followers, they all had made mistakes. No one had a halo. Each disciple carried quite a resume' of mistakes. The disciples were prone to infighting, missed the plot to his teaching as Jesus would often say, "did you not learn from the fish and loaves?"

And who could forget in the last hours of Jesus ministry, they reminded him, don't forget us when you are passing out heaven's rewards, we made a lot of sacrifices.

Then we notice that Jesus family is waiting with others in this special place.

Jesus family- would often throw shade on Jesus every chance they get. On a sunny Sabbath Jesus taught with power and the people in the synagogue were furious as Luke 4:28 tells us. This is all happening in Jesus' hometown. They take Jesus outside and plan to throw him off a cliff. It is very possible Jesus own family was there.

In that upper room, as you identify Jesus family, you can't help but notice that Mary is sitting over in the corner praying.

¹⁴ They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. (Acts 1:14-NIV). Circle the name Mary. She is the mother of Jesus.

This would be the last time, Jesus' mother Mary, would show up in scripture. As chapter 1 closes we watch as the disciples fill a vacancy that came about because Judas betrayed Jesus and the hung himself.

With everyone in training camp, the draft was a big success, and the last addition to the team is an unknown to us, named Matthias.

The church is about to be born. As a doctor, Luke carries the responsibility to describe the two most important births in scripture. The birth of Jesus as told in the book of Luke. And the birth of the church as told in the book of Acts. Luke not only offers the history of Jesus the Savior of the world, but the history of the Holy Spirit's arrival. Luke is both doctor and historian.

Contractions are getting stronger. The birth of the church is almost here. Everyone one is in place awaiting the arrival and birth.

This arrival of the Holy Spirit produced amazing transformations in the lives of people, but most of all an **impartation of unlimited power** was given to all who **asked and received**.

Now, for some of you, you come from faith backgrounds that gave very little press to the third member of the trinity-the Holy Spirit.

That is sad, I didn't say bad, just sad. First, because you were deprived of some of the **most vital biblical** material the word of God has to offer.

Also, it is through the power of the Holy Spirit that a relationship with Jesus Christ becomes **deeply personal** and **experiential**.

Finally, the study of the Holy Spirit is especially significant because we live in **Trinitarian history** where the Holy Spirit is prominent more than any of other members of the Trinity.

The **Father's work** was most noticeable in the Old Testament. **Jesus arrival** to planet earth and his ministry and death is spelled out in the 4 Gospels and a few verses in the opening chapter of Acts.

But the Holy Spirit has occupied center stage of God's work in the earth since the day of Pentecost.

If you truly want to participate in what God is doing in the earth today, you must become acquainted with the Holy Spirit's work in the life of his church.

In downtown Jerusalem when the Holy Spirit arrives, the Holy Spirit is poured out in three supernatural experiences. Each one of these manifestations had unique for the Christ followers and unique for us today.

The day of the Holy Spirit's arrival in power has happened.

The experience of the Spirit's arrival was so intense, nobody could miss the Holy Spirit's arrival. The noise was like a mighty rushing wind, but no exterior atmospheric conditions, no low pressure could account for such an event. Hey scientist, run that through your scientific model. Hey engineers, try to figure that out. You can't.

Because God will not be placed in a box!

² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. (Acts 2-NIV)

Sometimes we wonder was that God. Was that me? Was that the devil? Not here. No confusion here about what is taking place.

Those inside the room were subject to the activity of the Holy Spirit whether they wanted to be or not. I love that!

Men and women stood, sat, lie prostrate, not in fear, but in faith as a mighty noise, louder than our band enveloped them.

In both Hebrew and Greek, the word for Spirit-Ruach is the word breath and wind.

We first meet the Holy Spirit in Genesis 1:2, ² *Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. (Genesis 1:2-NIV)*

The activity of the Holy Spirit shows up on the opening pages of God's word in Genesis. The day of the Holy Spirit's arrival in power is for everyone.

Next, what seemed to be tongues of fire burst forth in the room and separated on each of them equally. These were not small flames or big flames. Everyone was given the same access to the power from heaven.

Again, not wind, but noise like a wind. And not a fire, but something that looked like fire. What had once been a Spirit's arrival for a few, and would often leave as fast as the Spirit came, He is for everyone and here to stay.

³ *They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. (Act 2-NIV)*

No regard for past mistakes and no regard for those who would do more. They all got the same flame in the same manner, and I would suggest the same amount.

Why do you believe that Ken? Because he is no respecter of persons.

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism." (Acts 10:34-NIV)

¹¹ *For God does not show favoritism. (Romans 2:11-NIV)*

The Holy Spirit did not land on just the rock stars-James, John, and Peter, but everyone present. Not just on the men, on the woman as well. And who can forget, even Mary the mother of Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit.

God is telling us that the power and outpouring of the Holy Spirit is never going to be relegated to just a few. As if it is a badge of spiritual honor. This is not for pastors or clergy, only. It is not for deacons and elders, only. This is not for the most spiritual, as if those who stumble are excluded.

God is sending a message that all rank-and-file members of Jesus team from this day forward gets Holy Spirit empowerment, if they ask!

The day of the Holy Spirit's arrival in power provides supernatural activity.

⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2-NIV)

The Holy Spirit filled each person with languages they had never learned.

It was Jesus' way of saying to his kids and the church that the atoning message of Jesus Christ death, resurrection and love, healing, deliverance must go to every person in the world. Every people group regardless of race.

Every person regardless of sexual orientation. Every person regardless of past sins.

Within a short time, the room would empty out, and the 120 now Holy Spirit enabled, empowered, left and poured into the streets of Jerusalem making it blindingly clear Jesus' salvation and message of transformation by the Holy Spirit **was to be global in scope**.

God gave them other languages, they had not studied or been proficient in, the Christ message could be taken back to unreached people groups. All of this happens to fulfill Joels prophecy,

²⁸ I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

*Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your old men will dream dreams,
your young men will see visions.*

*²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days.*

*^{30a} I will show wonders in the heavens
and on the earth, (Joel 2-NIV)*

As suddenly as the Holy Spirit arrives, he moves beyond the walls. No bottling this up. No keeping it just for us. The Holy Spirit thrust these disciples into the streets, and they began to declare the wonders of God.....

The message of Jesus atoning death. His supernatural resurrection. His 40 days of appearances. This is an invitation to salvation by grace through repentance and baptism. And people from many other lands hear this message in their own tongue.

Acts 2 says, we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues. (Acts 2:11b)

From the time that the disciples followed Jesus, supernatural power was vested only in Jesus. He did all of the healing. He calmed the sea. He did the deliverance. If you were a follower of Christ in a nearby town, when Jesus healed someone, you missed the whole show.

The only person that the power of God was resident in, was Jesus. Everyone else watched as Jesus wielded the all the power.

On a few occasions Jesus sent his followers out with that power. They healed. They delivered. They taught with power. It did not last. And it was all subject to Jesus' decision who can have his power and when.

At Pentecost this all changed. Every follower of Christ was now let in on a little secret, **Jesus says, I am still here!** But now you can do my work in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Since today is graduation Sunday, congrats, but let me tell you graduates about a test that all of us will one day take in eternity. I want to give you the questions ahead of time. Only two questions. If you don't get them right, you are in trouble. Here you go.

What did you do with your relationship to Jesus Christ?

This question determines where you spend eternity.

What did you do with the life Jesus Christ gave you?

This question determines how you spend eternity.

Father,

I believe my best life is lived in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. I open my heart and hands to say, "Jesus, fill me with the Holy Spirit."

I confess my need to have Jesus Christ redeem me from anger and addiction, lust and lying, resentment and rebellion. As the enemy releases me and chains break, I ask the Holy Spirit to fill me with His power.

Father, make Jesus Christ alive in me in the full power of the Holy Spirit so I can be every place Jesus wants **me** to be.

In Jesus' Name. Amen.