

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Text: Acts 1:1-9

In the last two weeks I have preached about the person and purpose of the Holy Spirit. Today I bring you a message about the power of the Holy Spirit. What we just read were the last words ever spoken by our Savior to the apostles. He chose not to answer their question about restoring the earthly kingdom to Israel but maintained focus on the kingdom of God and spoke of the necessity of the baptism of the Holy Spirit before they could start their ministry. This is part of a pattern that Jesus Christ himself followed by not starting his earthly ministry until He was endued with power by the Holy Spirit coming upon him. This teaches us that it is not only hard but it is impossible to do the work of God in the power of the flesh. We are in a spiritual battle with the kingdom of darkness and that battle must be fought with spiritual power.

Jesus's baptism - Luke 3:21-22 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased. **Luke 4:1-2** And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered. **Luke 4:13-15** And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season. And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. **THE STARTING POINT FOR JESUS'S MINISTRY WAS THE BAPTISM THAT BROUGHT THE HOLY SPIRIT UPON HIM.**

Receiving the Holy Spirit at salvation and the baptism of the Holy Spirit are two separate and distinct events in a believer's life - John 20:19-22 Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, **Peace be unto you.** And when he had so said, he shewed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, **Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.** And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: This is the day of the resurrection of Jesus and when he shows himself to his disciples the first thing He does is give them the Holy Spirit. They received Him by the Lord breathing on them.

When a person repents and believes on Christ, they receive the Holy Spirit and are sealed by him - Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. **THE SEALING IS FOR SALVATION**

When a person is baptized in the Holy Spirit it is for power to do service – In John 20:22 the apostles received the Holy Spirit so they received Him in that moment, but Jesus tells these same men in Acts 1 that they have to wait on the baptism on the Holy Spirit to receive power! Salvation gets the Holy Spirit in you, the baptism gets the Holy Spirit upon you.

A man baptizes you in water, the Spirit of God baptizes you into Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ baptizes people in the Holy Ghost and all these are not the same thing. When you were baptized in water, you were completely immersed in it and you came out covered in the water. **Galatians 3:27** For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. *The Spirit baptizes you into the body of Christ the moment you are saved and that baptism covers you in Christ.* John plainly said that when a person is baptized in the Holy Spirit, Jesus is the baptizer - **Matthew 3:11** I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

The Old Testament examples of Spirit baptism – Any New Testament truth is seen in the Old Testament in picture form. When Israel came out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb they were led by God on purpose to the edge of the Red Sea. Pharaoh was barreling down on them with his army in chariots and the LORD opened the Red Sea so that Israel would pass through it. We learn from the New Testament that that experience was their baptism - **1 Corinthians 10:1-2** Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; After they spent forty years in the wilderness it was now time for them to come over into the promised land and fight the Canaanite giants. What event marked them as leaving their weakness and unbelief in the wilderness behind? God separated the Jordan and they walked through it like they walked through the Red Sea! And when they stepped on the right side of Jordan, they were endued with power to overcome the enemy. Crossing the Jordan was a picture of Spirit baptism and Joshua led them over – Joshua and Jesus are the same name with the same meaning.

Let me share with you the experiences of men in modern times who experienced the baptism with the Holy Spirit:

- **D.L. Moody** – The greatest evangelist of the 19th century saw hundreds of thousands of people converted under his ministry. He traveled continents preaching in the power of Almighty God and was the founder of the Moody Institute and the Illinois Street Church in Chicago. What many people are unfamiliar with was that in the early days of his evangelism, he labored hard but didn't have much power. Two women in the Free Methodist movement attended his meetings and told him repeatedly that they were praying for him. This disturbed him and he asked them “Why do you pray for me and not the unsaved?” They replied “We're praying that you may get the power.” He thought on what they said for a bit and then visited them that he might learn what they had meant. They told him about the definite baptism of the Holy Spirit and the power which it brings so he began to pray with them fervently to receive it. Not long after this, he was walking up Wall Street in New York City and in the middle of the hustle and bustle of the city, his prayer was answered. The power of God fell upon him as he walked the street and he quickly hurried off to a friend's house where he entered a room alone for hours while the power and joy of the Holy Ghost filled him. The experience was so intense that he prayed for God to draw back a little lest he die from being so overwhelmed. From that time forward his preaching was powerful and his ministry

fruitful.

- **Billy Graham** – What I am about to share with you is a condensed excerpt from the book *A Personal Look at Billy Graham, the World's Best-Loved Evangelist*, by Sherwood Eliot Wurt. In October of 1946, while Billy Graham was preparing for an evangelistic tour of England, Ireland, and Wales...he attended the closing meeting of a youth conference, at which the speaker was Stephen Olford. Mr. Olford preached a fervent message on being filled with the Spirit and it got Billy's attention. After the meeting, Graham approached Olford and asked about this teaching that was foreign to him. Olford took Billy into his home and showed him from the word of God the power that was possible through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. For the next two days Billy and Stephen prayed together earnestly and Billy cried out "Lord, I don't want to go on without knowing this anointing You've given my brother." He preached in a meeting that night and the message was ordinary and the response was sparse. Billy kept on praying and seeking the power even in fasting. It was about mid-afternoon on the second day that Billy began pouring out his heart in a prayer of total dedication to the Lord. According to Stephen "all heaven broke loose in that dreary little room. It was like Jacob laying hold of God and crying, "Lord I will not let thee go except thou bless me." They came to a time of rest from prayer...Billy exclaimed "My heart is so flooded with the Holy Spirit! I have it! I'm filled. This is the turning point of my life. This will revolutionize my ministry." That night Billy was to speak at a large Baptist church nearby. When he rose to preach, he was a man absolutely anointed. People came forward to pray before the invitation was given. Later when it was given, the Welsh listeners jammed the aisles. There was chaos...practically the entire audience came rushing forward. What D.L. Moody was in the 19th century, Billy Graham was in the 20th century. His meetings were held in the largest stadiums and televised across the country. He was consulted with by several of our Presidents. He preached in South Korea in one meeting to over a million people.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is for all believers and is essential for them to have power. We need anointed pastors, evangelists, teachers, intercessors, singers, worshipers and witnesses. Ask yourself this serious question "Is there any power on my life to do anything for Christ?" If the answer is no...then you need to what I'm preaching about.

How do I receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit? John 7:37-38 In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, **If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. You must thirst for it, go to Jesus for it, and ask until you receive it. It cannot be earned.**

Luke 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: **how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?**