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“The Power of the Holy Spirit”

Acts 1:1-11

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Some Christians feel powerless: struggling to have victory over sin, unable to be bold in their witness, tired of running the race, wondering if there is more to the Christian life than just biding their time until Jesus returns. Maybe this describes you, and maybe it is because there is an absence of God’s power without the fullness of the Holy Spirit. In this lesson from Acts 1 we will look at the person and power of the Holy Spirit available to all Believers and learn what it means to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

1. [Acts 1:1-11](#) – *“The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. 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; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.’ 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.’ Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.’”*

2. The Book of Acts

- a. Written by Luke, who was the only Gentile writer of the Bible
 - b. In some ways, Acts is a continuation of Luke's gospel
 - c. Luke was a physician, and he became a traveling companion of Paul
 - i. [Colossians 4:14a](#) - *"Luke the beloved physician..."*
 - d. Written sometime around AD 60-69
 - e. Acts and the Gospel of Luke are both addressed to an unknown man named Theophilus, meaning "lover of God"
 - f. Ideally this book could be called "Acts of Jesus through the Apostles"
3. Acts 1—Jesus' final instructions to His disciples
- a. Following His resurrection, Jesus appeared to people for forty days until He ascended back into heaven
 - b. Just prior to His ascension, Jesus told His disciples that God would provide them with something specific to enable them to continue His ministry and spread the message of the gospel:
 - i. [Acts 1:8](#) - *"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."*
 - ii. Power is **dunamis** in the Greek, which is where we get our English word "dynamite"
 - c. In order to be equipped to spread the good news of Jesus, often at the risk of death, the disciples needed the power of the Holy Spirit
 - d. Many Christians are living powerless lives, struggling to overcome temptation and sin, unable to witness, and simply waiting for Jesus to return
 - i. We need the Holy Spirit:
 - 1. To be bold as witnesses
 - 2. To resist sin and temptation
 - 3. To be vessels for God's miracles
 - a. [2 Corinthians 4:7](#) - *"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." (1984 NIV)*
4. Who is the Holy Spirit?
- a. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity
 - i. There is one God who reveals Himself in a plurality of three persons: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit
 - 1. [Genesis 1:26-27](#) - *"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."*

- b. The Holy Spirit has always existed being co-equal and co-eternal with God because He is God
 - i. [Genesis 1:2](#) – *“The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”*
 - c. The Holy Spirit is not an “it” or just a “force,” but He has all the attributes of personality
 - i. Mind
 - 1. [1 Corinthians 2:11](#) – *“For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God.”*
 - ii. Will
 - 1. [1 Corinthians 12:11](#) – *“But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”*
 - iii. Emotion
 - 1. [Ephesians 4:30](#) – *“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”*
5. How do you get the Holy Spirit and the power that comes with the Holy Spirit?
- a. [John 14:16-17](#) – *“And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—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.”*
 - i. *With* in the Greek is **para**, meaning “with, near, or around”
 - ii. The first role of the Holy Spirit is to be around us, near us, drawing us, and leading us to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ
 - 1. No one comes to Jesus without the Holy Spirit’s influence
 - a. [John 6:44](#) – *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.”*
 - b. [1 Corinthians 12:3](#) – *“Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.”*
 - iii. *In* in the Greek is **en**
 - iv. The second role of the Holy Spirit is to indwell Believers
 - 1. [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, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send*

you.’ And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

2. At the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in the Believer
3. **1 Corinthians 3:16** – *“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”*
4. **Romans 8:11** – *“But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.”*

6. Baptism of the Holy Spirit

- a. Many Christians believe that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit upon conversion is all that is available to us, but in Acts 1:8, Jesus mentioned what is known as “the baptism of the Holy Spirit”
- b. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is an overflowing fullness and power of the Holy Spirit in the Believer, subsequent to salvation
 - i. **Acts 1:8** – *“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.”*
 1. *Upon* in the Greek is **epi**, meaning “upon, on, over”
 - ii. **Acts 1:5** – *“For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”*
 1. *Baptism* in the Greek is **baptizo**, meaning “to overwhelm, to submerge, to immerse”
 - iii. The Bible makes a distinction between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the overwhelming power of the Holy Spirit
 - iv. Some people may be living nominal Christian lives with no victory over sin, unable to witness, wondering if there is more—we should want the fullness of the Holy Spirit in our lives
 - v. How do you get the baptism of the Holy Spirit?
 1. **Luke 11:11-13** – *“If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”*

Discussion Questions

1. Read [Acts 1:1-11](#) to provide a foundation for your Bible study time.
2. What (or who) did Jesus say would come to the disciples to enable them to continue His ministry and spread the gospel after His ascension into heaven? (See #3b above)
3. Why did the disciples need the Holy Spirit? (See #3c above)
4. Why do we need the Holy Spirit? Share an example of a situation in which you need the Holy Spirit's help. (See #3d-i above)
5. Who is the Holy Spirit? What role does He have in the Trinity? (See #4 above)
6. Read [John 14:16-17](#), [John 20:19-22](#), [1 Corinthians 3:16](#), and [Romans 8:11](#). How do we get the Holy Spirit? (See #5 above)
7. What is the "baptism of the Holy Spirit?" (See #6b above)
8. What is the difference between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit at conversion and the baptism of the Holy Spirit? (See #6 above)
9. Do you ever feel like you are living a powerless Christian life? Discuss the importance of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. How do we receive this power? (See #6b-iv and #6b-v-1 above)
10. Close your meeting by allowing the Holy Spirit to lead your time of prayer.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New King James Version (NKJV)