

# (Acts) the Power of the Church

by Brian Brodersen

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*The power of the church lies in its submission to the authority of the Holy Spirit, and we can experience this power by asking, waiting upon the Lord expectantly, and seeking the Lord continually.*

**Duration:** 48:51

**Scripture:** Zechariah 4:6, Matthew 6:33, Acts 4:33, Revelation 2:1-7

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Church Power"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the Acts of the Holy Spirit through the apostles and other believers in the early church. He emphasizes the motto of the early church, which is taken from Zechariah 4:6, stating that the job of spreading the gospel will be accomplished not by human might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. The preacher compares the effectiveness of the early church with the relative ineffectiveness of the modern church and raises the question of what is wrong. He shares a personal anecdote about a young man in France who had never heard the gospel until a Christian outreach team arrived and shared it with him. The sermon then transitions to the book of Acts, specifically focusing on the power of the Holy Spirit. The preacher reads Acts 1:8, where Jesus promises that the disciples will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them, enabling them to be witnesses for Him in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. He also mentions Acts 4:33, which describes how the apostles were given great power to testify to the resurrection of Jesus.

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## Transcript

Lord, we are desperate for you and we are lost without you. And so, Lord, come and meet us tonight. Fill us with your Holy Spirit, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. Let's open our Bibles tonight to Acts, chapter one. And we are presently making our way toward our study through the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

We're not actually starting this evening, but we are doing a couple of preliminary messages sort of to just get ourselves in the groove for the book of Acts, which we'll be starting next week. Last week, we looked at several different incidents from the book of Acts as we talked about the subject of the purpose of the church. And tonight we're going to be talking about the power of the Holy Spirit.

So let me read to you a couple of verses from Acts, chapter one, or a verse from Acts, chapter one, then a verse from Acts, chapter four. And then we'll look at the subject of the power of the Holy Spirit. Now, in

verse eight, Jesus is speaking and he says to his disciples, he said, but you shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

Now, over in the fourth chapter, the thirty third verse we read and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and great grace was upon them all. In doing a comparison. Of the effectiveness with the of the early church, the effectiveness of the early church with the relative ineffectiveness of the modern church, we must ask ourselves the question, what's wrong? Where did we go wrong? Why is it that when we look back at this first century church, they seem to be so much more effective in spreading the gospel than we are today, even though we seemingly have great advantages over them? After all, we have computer technology, we have satellite communication, we have air travel and we seem to have so many advantages.

Yet, with all of that, there are still billions of people who haven't had the opportunity of hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ even once in the world's two most populated countries, China and India, there are literally. I'm not exaggerating when I say this, there are literally millions of people who have never heard the name Jesus Christ, but it's not just in places like China or India. In Europe.

Which. Historically. Seem to be a very Christianized continent, there are people all over the European continent today who have never heard the gospel, as a matter of fact, when our high school ministry went to Nice, France this summer and did outreach in the street, my son-in-law Michael was telling me one of the highlights of the trip was this young man that he met.

And at first, the young man was very skeptical when he heard that they were there as Christians and they were there to tell people about Jesus Christ. And yet, as he listened to the message, he was astounded by what he heard and he was he was blessed and he was hungry and he wanted that and he received the Lord. But he said to Michael, he said, I have never in my entire life heard the gospel of Jesus Christ.

He had never heard it until that team came into Nice, France. He arrived on the scene as a skeptic. He walked away with a Bible in his hand and hungry for the Lord.

But you know what? We don't even have to go to Europe. There are people all around us today. Truly, there are people around us today that have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now, by the end of the first century, the apostles had literally taken the gospel to the known world in Romans 15, verse nine. Let me quote to you from Paul, the apostle. This is what he said about his own ministry.

This is not including the ministry of Peter and John and the others who went out, but he's just talking about his own ministry. He said, from Jerusalem roundabout to Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. Now, if you are to take a map, take your Bible map and look at the area that Paul describes there and compare it with a modern map and what you find is that Paul preached the gospel from Jerusalem up north and then around through Turkey into Greece, Bulgaria, Albania, Croatia and finally in Italy.

Paul, the apostle himself, did that during his lifetime. He was the person who was accused of turning the world upside down in his day. He was the one through whom it was stated in Acts that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the gospel by the mouth of the apostle Paul.

So how is it that they seem to be so much more effective than we are today, and yet we seem to have so many advantages over them? Consider this. There are more than one million. Americans who are ordained ministers.

Over one million Americans who are ordained ministers, so that that gives you one minister per every 250 people, more than one million. There are more than three hundred and sixty thousand churches in the United States alone. There are thousands of Christian bookstores, radio stations, not to mention countless Christian schools, colleges and seminaries.

Yet with all this, the church is seemingly powerless to affect any lasting change. That's what we see lacking today. You know, sometimes I really marvel at how little we're able to impact our culture with the great numbers of Christians, especially in California.

You know, it's amazing to me that we are the most liberal, godless state in the union, and yet I think we probably have more Christians in this state than any other state in the country. I'm puzzled by that, to tell you the truth. So what has happened? Why are things the way they are? Well, I think to put it simply and honestly, it's because we in the church have forgotten the one that Jesus said would come alongside and be our helper in the ministry.

We have forgotten about the essential need of the Holy Spirit in our lives as individual believers and collectively as a church. A.W. Tozer, I think he had it right when he said this, he said, if the Holy Spirit had been removed from the first century church, 90 percent of its activity would have ceased. If the Holy Spirit were removed from the modern church, 90 percent of its activity would continue.

You know, this past week I was out at the Bible College on Thursday. I go out Thursday to teach along with Cheryl. We go out and she takes the girls and I take the guys and we just share the word with them.

And anyway, as I was out there this week, Dave Shirley, who's the director of the Bible College, he was carrying around this nice four color brochure sort of a thing, you know, advertising the newest church in town. And I saw it in Santa said, what is that thing? Because as I looked at it, it had three beer cans on the front of it. And I thought, what are you carrying around? So he shows me this thing.

And actually, what it was, is there's a new church started in town. And some of the people who are starting the church had snuck onto the campus and they were passing out these things and giving invitations to the students to come out to their church. But on the front of this flyer, they had superimposed these beer cans with the faces of the three pastors on the beer cans.

And they are, you know, making these, you know, faces like they've really just, you know, bitten into a lemon or something. They've got this this bitter sort of a look on their faces. And the gist of, you know, the message they're trying to communicate is, are you sick and tired of those bitter churches where they're just laying on you, you know, the heavy rap about sin and judgment and all of that thing? And then, you know, of course, they encourage you to come to their really hip and trendy church where you're not going to have to worry about any of that stuff.

And then the funniest thing of all was on the back of it. It said that, you know, immediately following service, we've got Krispy Kremes, Starbucks and In-N-Out is on the way. And, you know, I look at this thing, I thought the audacity of these guys, what are they thinking? But you know what? This is just an example of what a lot of people in the churches are thinking.

I guarantee these guys didn't come up with this on their own. They were educated in this mentality, probably in a seminary somewhere or something. But it just goes to show you that what Tozer said is true.

So much of the activity in the church today is really based upon human philosophies and ingenuity and ideas. And that's why, although we have a lot of churches we have in California, we have mega churches. We have churches in Orange County that boast thousands and thousands of people.

There's a church in South Orange County that boasts an attendance of 60,000 people. But yet, if there are 60,000 Christians in Orange County, why is our community in the state that it's in? We see the power of the early church obviously wasn't in their technology. It wasn't in their ability to be really hip and cool.

The power of the early church was in their submission to the authority of the Holy Spirit. That's where the power was. And as we go through this study in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, that's what we're going to see over and over and over again.

Before he sent the apostles out, Jesus commanded them, as we read here in verse eight of chapter one, he commanded them to wait in Jerusalem until they were endued or that word could be translated clothed or furnished with power from heaven. Now, throughout the book of Acts, there are at least 25 references to the Holy Spirit. Working in a variety of ways, and let me give you some examples, there are references to the Holy Spirit filling the believers, there are references to the Holy Spirit speaking and giving direction to the believers.

The Holy Spirit is said to transport believers. He falls upon them. He shows them things.

He sends them places. He forbids them from going other places. He constrains them.

He chooses them and he places them in the various positions. You know, next week when we get into the book of Acts, I want to talk a little bit about the very title of the book. We know it as the book of the acts of the apostles.

Sometimes we just refer to it as the book of Acts, but neither one of those titles are really all that good because it's. It is about some of the the apostles, of course, but it's really about the acts of the Holy Spirit through some of the apostles and through a lot of other people as well, not just the apostles. Now, the motto of the early church was no doubt.

Taken from Zechariah chapter four, verse six, Zechariah four, six says this, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord. That's how God says the job is going to get done. How is it going to happen? And, you know, in the context of that statement there in Zechariah, the Jewish people having gone back.

As we're studying in Ezra, having gone back to rebuild Jerusalem, to rebuild the temple, it seemed like an insurmountable task. It seemed like something that just was so far beyond them. How could they ever accomplish this? And yet the Lord spoke to the prophet and said, it's not by might nor by power, but it's by my spirit, says the Lord.

And I personally and I think many of you do as well. I have a desire to see God work. I have a desire to see people saved.

I have a desire to see lives changed. I would love to see our very own community change, our society change. And, you know, it would be a great thing if our whole country changed.

It would be a wonderful thing to see other countries change. As I spent some time living in Britain, I look at that nation that once was a bastion of Christianity and a place from which the gospel went out. And I look at it today and it is so spiritually desolate.

And I think, oh, Lord, what can be done? And it seems almost like it's an impossibility. You've got Islam on the one hand, ready to swallow up the country. You've got atheism on the other hand, holding it in its grip.

And you think, can anything be done? And yet, from a human perspective, it doesn't seem like anything can be done. But it's not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord. They had what we need.

What they had, we need to get. We need to get that touch of the spirit upon our lives. And what we want to do tonight is we want to look at some practical steps to experience the power of the spirit working in our lives.

So I want to suggest to you four things that you can do as a Christian, as a child of God, four things that you can do that will, I think, bring about a greater work of the spirit in your life. Now, you know, as we look at the nation or as we look at our state or as we look at our community, God is sovereign and we don't know exactly what he's going to do in regard to that. But this is what we do know, that each of us individually, God wants to touch our lives.

God wants every one of us to be as full of the Holy Spirit as we can possibly be. There's not a single person among us, a single person listening. There's not a single Christian in the body of Christ that the Lord looks at and says, oh, you know, I don't really want to give you the fullness of my spirit that's reserved for just a select few.

No, the Lord wants to pour the fullness of his spirit upon all of us. And if we're not experiencing that, I think it's because we've just left off some very important things. So four things I want to suggest.

Number one, in order for us to receive the fullness of the spirit, Luke 13 or Luke 11, verse 13 tells us that we need to ask. Let me read to you, Luke 11, 13, if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, Jesus is speaking, how much more will your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him? Remember what James said regarding. Not receiving certain things from the Lord, he said, you do not have because you do not ask, and sometimes it comes down to something just as simple as that.

We go about our lives, we're trying to do the work of the Lord, we're getting exhausted, we're getting frustrated and we're even getting upset with God for giving us all this ministry and this big burden and not helping us out. And yet we've never stopped to ask for God to fill us. But Jesus said that he gives the Holy Spirit to those who ask him now.

The question that I would ask is, why would he require us to ask him? Why not just do it? Why not just pour it on us? Well, I think the Lord wants to hear from us. I think he wants to know that we want to be. Filled up with him, he wants to know that we want to be part of what he's doing, he wants to hear it from us personally.

And so we are to ask. And in the context here, Jesus said a bit earlier, he said, asking you shall receive seeking you shall find knock and the door shall be open to you for everyone who asks, receives and he who seeks finds and to him who knocks it will be open. And we are told by Greek scholars that a literal translation would be asked continually.

Keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking. And I think sometimes we make the mistake of just saying, well, you know, I asked and nothing happened. We'll keep on asking.

Keep on asking until something happened. I'm really of the conviction these days that, you know, in the area of prayer, whatever we're praying for, not only just praying for the Holy Spirit, but praying for healing or praying for God to do something. I'm of the deep conviction that we need to keep on asking the Lord.

For those things, and we shouldn't stop at all until we either get them or he makes clear to us that we're not to ask about that particular thing any longer, like he did evidently with Paul when Paul was asking for healing regarding that thorn in the flesh. He said, I sought the Lord three times, and I think what Paul means by that is is not that he simply, you know, on three occasions said, Lord, would you heal me of this? But I think he's talking about specific seasons, three specific seasons of really seeking God on this matter. And finally, the Lord made it clear to him, my grace is sufficient for you.

I want to use this thing in your life. But I believe that we. In everything that we pray about, we ought to continue to seek the Lord until we either grants what we're asking him or he tells us, don't ask me any more about that, I'm doing something else.

And I think a lot of times with this whole thing of of being filled with the spirit, I think what we do is we give up prematurely in our prayers. We ask and it seems like maybe nothing is happening. And so we just sort of go off and say, oh, well, I asked, you know, and I guess the Lord doesn't want to do it.

But I think we need to keep on asking, keep on seeking, keep on knocking. I remember years ago, my oldest son got sick with a really bizarre. Sickness, and we didn't know what to do, and I remember so clearly how the Lord spoke to me and said, call for the elders of the church, anoint him with oil, lay hands on him, pray for him.

And it was so clear that that's what God was telling me to do. It was unmistakably the Lord speaking to me. And so I did that the next day.

I brought him in and we gathered around him and we anointed him with oil and we prayed for him. I thought, all right, there it is. The Lord told me to do this and this is going to heal him.

But you know what? A couple of days later, he was still in that condition. And I remember saying to the Lord, well, Lord, I thought you told me to do that. And well, why is he still like this? And the Lord spoke to me and said, do it again.

And so he took him back in and we did it again and a little bit of time passed and that syndrome was still there. And Lord, what are you saying? Do it again, do it again. And you know what? We just kept doing it.

And guess what? The Lord healed him. After I don't know, a half a dozen times of taking him before the elders and laying hands on him and anointing him, the Lord healed him and he's been healed to this day. You see, a lot of times I think we just give up.

But Jesus himself, he taught us, he told us stories to illustrate the point of how we need to be persistent in prayer. You remember, he told the story about the woman who goes before the unjust judge and says, you know, deal with this case regarding my son. And Jesus says now he doesn't do it because he's a nice guy, but he does it because the woman keeps bugging him.

He says, but God's not like that. But he's trying to teach us the importance of persistence. And I think in regard to the filling of the Holy Spirit, a lot of times we don't receive all that God wants to give to us because we don't keep asking and we need to keep on asking until we get what we're asking for.

And this is one thing I can tell you that God is not going to turn you down on. Now, in the issue of healing, like we were talking about with Paul a few moments ago, God had another plan, and so he was allowing Paul to suffer this way to work out his plan in Paul's life. But when it comes to the subject of the fullness of the spirit.

I'll tell you what the answer is going to be. The answer is going to be, yes, the answer is going to be that blessing coming. And if it hasn't come yet, keep on seeking the Lord for it and wait for it to come.

As the prophecy said, wait for it to come. It will not tarry, it's going to come, but we have to seek the Lord for it continually. Secondly, we need to wait upon the Lord expectantly.

I think a lot of times we will ask for something, but we don't really expect God to do it. Have you ever found yourself doing that? As a matter of fact, when God actually answers your prayer, you're shocked. Oh, I didn't.

I didn't think he was going to do that. Remember the story. We'll get to it as we go through acts again, where Peter had been arrested and all of those people had gathered in that house and they were praying, oh, Lord, for Peter, we pray for him.

Deliver him, Lord, set him free, you know, save him, Lord. James had been executed and Herod had taken Peter and he was going to do the same thing. And so there they are, they're pleading with God, they're crying out for Peter and the Lord frees him, he delivers him.

And so Peter comes to the very house where they're praying and he knocks on the door and this young girl, she goes to, you know, she goes to the door. Who is it? It's Peter. Oh, no, it's not.

No, really, it's Peter. Let me in. No, no, no.

Peter's in jail. I know it's not Peter. And then when she finally opens the door and lets him in, everybody's shocked.

Everybody's amazed. Oh, what are you doing here? We thought you were in jail. Well, what were they doing there? They were praying without any expectation of God answering their prayer.

And I think we need to wait expectantly upon the Lord. Hebrews 11, 6 tells us this. That God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

And here's the thing, as we diligently seek him, as we get serious with him, as we come before him and we say, Lord, I want all that you have for me as your child, as your servant, Lord, I want the fullness of your spirit as we do that diligently. You know what? God will reward that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Now, remember, there the context is about faith for without faith, it is impossible to please God for he that comes to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.

You know, faith is not saying I know that God can do anything. That doesn't take any faith to make that statement. All you need to make that sort of a statement is just a logical mind.

Of course, if God is omnipotent, he can do anything. But you see, faith does not merely say I know God can do anything. Faith says I know God will do something.

I know God is going to work. I know God is going to bless. I know God is going to send his spirit to minister in this situation.

And that's how the Lord wants us to be living. He wants us to be living in expectancy of him working. And so when we ask Lord, fill me with the Holy Spirit, we need to be expecting that God is going to do it.

And that is a key then to persistence, you're not going to stop because, you know, God wants to, you believe that he's going to. So you keep on praying until you get what you're asking for. And then thirdly.

I believe that receiving the fullness of the spirit's power in our lives is connected to obedience. And so we need to obey explicitly. Acts 5:22.

Peter made the statement, he said, God has given the Holy Spirit to those who obey him. And I do think. That many times.

We are not experiencing the fullness of the spirit's work in our lives because of disobedience. Because we're not obeying the Lord. Now, I don't know if you can relate to this or not, but let me just share with you an experience that I've had.

I've had it many times, actually, in the years that I've been a Christian, but I've had those times where, you know, there's just a real sense of God's presence and his power and his leading and his moving. And, you know, he's speaking to you as you read his word and he's answering your prayer. And there's just.

You know, there's this obvious connection with the Lord, the power of the spirit, the presence of the spirit. But then something happens and that seems to sort of dissipate and then it fades even more and more. And pretty soon you find yourself going along as a Christian and you're going through the motions.

But yet these kinds of things that you once knew, they're not really happening in your life anymore. And you wonder, well, what's going on? But then as you sort of start to evaluate and take a survey of your life, you begin to see that there are areas in your life where. You're not obeying God now, here's the tricky thing about it.

It's not that you've necessarily gone off the deep end and fallen into an adulterous affair or you've gone out and become a drunkard or, you know, you're into pornography or you're embezzling money or, you know, you've killed somebody or whatever, you know, the obviously serious sins. But what you have done. Is that you started to compromise in little areas.

You started to just sort of harden your heart in little areas when the Lord was speaking to you about certain things like, you know, maybe don't watch that TV program or let's get rid of that music or let's not be with those people or instead of wasting your time on that, why don't you spend your time in spiritual things? And as those things are happening, you're just sort of turning a deaf ear to that. You know what happens? That is called hardening our heart. That's called sinning.

And when we begin to do that, we quench the spirit's work in our lives. And that presence of the spirit that we once were experiencing is no longer the experience that we're having. But you see, it's those little things so often or things that we deem as insignificant, really unimportant.

You know, God certainly doesn't care about this, but he really does. And that's why I say that we need to obey explicitly, that means that we need to do exactly what the Lord tells us. Now, obviously, we need to do what God tells us in his word.

But, you know, God will speak to us individually about our own particular lives and situations and he'll, you know, address things in our lives that he might not necessarily be dealing with somebody else about. And we need to be sensitive to that. And as I said, personally, I can stand here and tell you that I have done that at times.

I remember years ago. You know, just the word for me was it was the thing that I wanted to be in all the time and wherever I went, I carried my Bible with me and I read it as often as I could. And and, you know, it was just great and wonderful and glorious.

And yet I remember distinctly a day came when somebody walked in and said, you know, I notice you read your Bible every day and that's really great. You know, I'm kind of convicted by that. But have you ever read this book right here? I was like, no.

And, you know, I'm not really interested. I've got my Bible right here and I'm really enjoying this. And he said, well, you know, I know that.

But hey, let me just leave this on your desk. I think you're going to really enjoy this. And, you know, that book sat on my desk for a few weeks.

And I would sit there reading my Bible and I'd see that book and I read my Bible and I'd see that book. And there was this thing going, you know, hey, why don't you pick that up and check that out? And, you know, one day I did and it was a good book, it wasn't a bad book, it was a great book. As a matter of fact, it was a book I think I probably have in my library to this day.

But, you know, the interesting thing was. The Lord wasn't really wanting me to read that book, he was wanting me to read his book, the Bible, and reading that book. Set me off on a course, got me messed up in my thinking, got me wrapped up in legalism.

And it also contributed to a loss of that sensitivity to the spirit. And I remember times back in those days that I would slowly sort of start to move away from that deep devotion in the word, and I would start picking up, you know, other books and things. And and then, you know, after a while, you even sort of, well, let's just turn on the TV and let's just see what's on tonight.

Maybe we'll just watch this program or something. And I remember so clearly times where, you know, I would be sitting there in front of the television and my Bible would be at a at a close, you know, it would be near to me. And it was almost like the Bible was shouting to me, hey, turn that stupid thing off.

Pick me up, read me. Oh, well, what's going on? And. Now that can't know that's not the Lord, I mean, you know, this is just TV and it's fun and it's relaxing and I need to unwind and, you know, but as time went on.

I really began to sense a lack of that. Sensitivity, the spirit, that power of the spirit, the presence of the spirit. In my life, and those are just little things, but those little things are things that can kind of build up over time and actually result in a hardening of our hearts and in a lessening of our experience with the Lord.

I taught this morning at a conference in L.A. And. Talking to pastors about, you know, serving the Lord and all of that and kind of everything came down in the end to individually seeking God and and suddenly Revelation two verses one through seven came to mind the the church of Ephesus. And, you know, it was a couple of weeks ago I was reading through Revelation and I was reading through that section there in the church of Ephesus.

And as I was reading it, I was really I was really kind of amazed at. The quality and the character of that church, I mean, you know, when you look at what Jesus says in commendation of that church as he commends them, I mean, it's really a great church, so many wonderful things, so many good things that they were doing, they were you know, they were people that were absolutely serious about the Lord, especially about the ministry. They were serious about getting the word out.

They were serious about working and letting people know the reality of God by change lives. And they were serious about contending for the faith. And, you know, as I looked at that man, this would have been a great church to go to.

And Jesus commends them on many points. But then, as you probably know, he says, but I have this against you. That you have left your first love.

And he said, repent. Or I will come and remove your lampstand from its place. And here's the interesting thing about that, as we go back into the first chapter of Revelation, we find that there are the seven golden lampstands representing the churches, and we find that Jesus is walking in the midst of those lampstands.

And when he said, I will remove your lampstand from its place, you know what he's saying? He's saying, you know, when a church no longer loves me first, then my presence is no longer really manifest among them. And that's true of individuals as well. When I no longer love Jesus first, I immediately lose that sense of his presence.

I don't want to lose that. I want to have that at all costs. That's the key to just know that the Lord is with us and to experience him in that way.

And that's what Peter is talking about when he says God has given the Holy Spirit to those who obey him. If you're sensing that you're lacking in power, you're lacking that sense of God's presence in your life. You're not being convicted like you once were.

You're not hearing the voice of the Lord. He's not directing, speaking to you. Your prayers seem to not be being answered.

It could be that there's some disobedience in your life. And again, it doesn't have to be a big major thing. And sometimes that's the real danger, because we're looking at all the obvious things and thinking, hey, I'm OK, I'm fine.

You know this. What's the problem? But yet, as we get down and we begin to search things more closely, we find that all these little areas where I've been turning a deaf ear, I've been hardening my heart. So we must obey explicitly.

And then fourthly, we need to believe in simplicity. We need to believe. That the Lord wants to work, do you believe that today? Do you believe that God wants to do something? Are you willing to be childlike enough to just say, father, you know, I just trust you to do something.

I just believe that you want to work. And so I'm just going to make myself available. I'm going to step out.

You look at the early church. You know, this wasn't a sophisticated bunch of people. And I look at the modern church and I really think that we're emphasizing so many of the wrong things today.

You know, I'm all for apologetics. I love that particular subject. But there are a lot of people that think apologetics are the solution to the church and the problems of the country and everything else.

And we just need to get out there and get our brightest and our most articulate, get our intellectual people out there to argue with these other people and show them that our worldview is better than theirs. And that'll solve the problem. That will not solve the problem.

You know, a better solution is people with childlike faith going out, trusting the Lord and baffling the intellectuals because the power of God is in their life. Like Paul, the apostle, the great intellect that he possessed, he didn't depend on that when he went to Corinth. He didn't go there and argue with them as a philosopher would.

He said, I came to you determined to know nothing among you except this Jesus Christ and him crucified. That, quite frankly, was a dumb message in that day. And people thought Paul was really dumb for coming to the epicenter of philosophy and talking about the cross.

But Paul said, you know, I came. With that message, because I wanted your faith not resting in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. And I believe that if we will go out in childlike faith, just trusting the Lord to use us.

Just trusting the Lord to work through our lives, they preached a simple message and they expected God to work. They prayed and expected God to answer. And he did.

And that's the story of the first century church. They revolutionized their world. They turned the world upside down.

And in closing tonight, I believe that God wants to do something fresh. In our midst, I believe that God wants to get his message to some of those people that we mentioned earlier that haven't yet heard it. And you know how he's going to do that? Not through finding some great piece of machinery by which he can accomplish it.

Men are looking for new pieces of machinery to get things done. God is looking for people through whom he can get things done and God works by empowering his people with the Holy Spirit. And when people are empowered with the Holy Spirit.

Things start to happen. You know, there's nothing more exciting than a new believer who's just. Sold out, committed on fire for the Lord.

You know what I mean? You see these new believers and men, they are just going about like a whirlwind. You know, everywhere they go, just spinning like a top. They're just, you know, bumping into people everywhere, talking about Jesus.

Oh, I'm saved to know, you know, and and to be like, wait, you know, you're a little out of control there and home and come on, you know, you're embarrassing me and all. But you know what? People are getting saved. Lives are getting transformed and then we're coming along with the sophisticated approach.

You know, let me tell you about the you know, the intellectual ramifications of the gospel. And then you bore somebody for a while and you walk away and it's just, you know, and you think, oh, you know, I don't know. I need to go home and read some more books.

No, I need to get on my knees and say, God, fill me with the Holy Spirit. Make me like that wild guy over there. Make me like that young gal.

And, you know, that's exciting. Like I said, there's nothing more exciting, but I think there is. I think another thing that's equally exciting is people who have been walking with the Lord for a long time who have that same passion, that same fire, haven't lost it or maybe at a point they did, but it's been rekindled.

Whatever the case, if we look at ourselves tonight, if you look at yourself tonight and you can say, you know, I do not have that power of God in my life. Like I know I could or perhaps I do not have that power of God in my life like I once had, then what is the solution? Well, obviously, we need a fresh touch of the Holy Spirit, I believe. And we'll get into this again when we get into acts.

You know, I believe that the baptism of the spirit is not just a one time event. I believe that you can build a strong case, especially through acts, that the baptism of the spirit is something that reoccurs over and over again in our lives. We need to be filled over and over and over again.

And so at any given time, if I just get the sense that, you know, I'm not full, there's, you know, something's happened. I need to stop and say, Lord, fill me up again. And if there's something in my life that's that's hindering that work of your spirit, Lord, help me to deal with that.

One time, the great Victorian preacher, Charles Spurgeon, was seen crossing the road on a busy afternoon and then he was seen to suddenly pause in the midst of the street and there was a lot of traffic. He was almost hit by a carriage, actually, and he paused, though, for a moment, stopped the traffic. And then, you know, a few moments later, he resumed crossing the road.

And someone who had seen him later asked him about that. So I noticed that you were crossing the road and you paused and, you know, it was a little bit dangerous out there. What were you doing? And he said, as I was crossing the road, I suddenly realized that something had come between my savior and me, and I didn't want to take another step before I resolved it.

Is that how we are? As people today, as Christians in the 21st century, do we have that kind of heart that would just say, you know, man, if anything's come between me and you, Jesus, please, Lord, show it to me so I can get it resolved, so we can get on with what you want to do so we can have that ongoing, unbroken relationship. I believe the Lord wants to pour out his spirit upon us and that he wants to do something fresh and exciting through our church. And he is doing really good things, exciting things, but you know, our church is made up of us individuals.

It's great to see what God is doing at Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, but. Is God doing that in your life personally? As part of the body here, as part of the fellowship. He wants to and he will do.

All you have to do is ask him to let's ask him to do that and let's expect him to do that. Let's pray. Lord.

We want you. Lord, to reign in our hearts. Lord, this fullness of the spirit that we see.

In the early church. This power of the spirit that we read about in the lives of the apostles and the disciples and the early Christians. Lord, this work of the spirit that we ourselves have experienced to some degree or another.

Lord, we want tonight. A fresh touch of your spirit. Lord, we are desperate for you.

We can't live without you, Lord. We can't. Lord, progress without you.

And Lord, we know that. The fullness of the spirit is really wrapped up. In the person of Jesus.

And just in knowing him better and getting closer to him. And so, Lord, help us tonight. Help us to get close to Jesus.

And as we do, Lord, fill us up. Fill us, Lord, to overflowing. So that we might be witnesses to you.

In our Jerusalem and our Judea's and our Samaria's and out to the uttermost parts of the earth. Lord, fill us tonight, we pray. Fill us fresh with the spirit of God.

And Lord, may we keep on asking. Keep on seeking. May we keep on knocking.

Lord, may we expect you to do this. Lord, may we believe you. And go out in the simplicity of your truth to impact our world.

So touch, Lord, we pray. In Jesus name. Amen.

8 or call us toll free at 1-800-733-6443. That's 1-800-733-6443. And may God richly bless you as you study his word.

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