

Being Filled with the Spirit

(Series: Reimagining Church; Message Three)

Acts 1:6-8

"Clearly my job is to live, wrapped in God, trembling to His thoughts, burning with His passion. And that is the best gift that you can give...I look at this page, and it is not red hot as my soul is now... It is black ink. It ought to be written with the red ribbon. You will not see the tears that are falling on this typewriter -- tears of a boundless joy broken loose. As for me, I had never lived. I was half-dead; I was a rotting tree... until I reached the place where I wholly, with utter honesty, resolved and re-resolved that I would find God's will, and I would do that will, though every fiber in me said, 'No.' And I would win the battle in my thoughts. It is as though some artesian well had been struck in my soul, and strength came forth. I do not claim success, even for a day, yet, in my mind -- not complete success all day, but some days are close to success. And every day is tingling with the joy of a glorious discovery." (Frank Laubach)

"Keeping God in mind for at least one second of every minute of every day"
(Frank Laubach; The Game with Minutes)

A. Acts 1:6-8 is the thesis statement and outline for the book of Acts

B. When the Holy Spirit comes (Acts 2), the wait is over. The adventure begins!

WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

"He, as well as the Father and the Son, is eternal God. He has been given to me personally, so that, by true faith, he makes me share in Christ and all his blessings, comforts me, and remains with me forever." (Heidelberg Catechism; Q/A 53)

"Now the earth was a formless and empty darkness over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovered over the waters." (Genesis 1:2)

A. The Spirit was in the beginning; he was not created; he's eternal; he's God

- 1. We know God as Father; we think of Jesus as our teacher, Savior, and Lord**
- 2. Scripture provides images for the Spirit: counselor/advocate (John 14:26), teacher (John 14:26), or guide (John 16:13)**

B. The Hebrew (OT) word for "Spirit" is "ruach." The Greek (NT) is "pneuma"

- 1. One of their primary meanings is "wind" - a powerful, yet mysterious force**

"The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear it's sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

"Who has understood the [Spirit] of the Lord? Or instructed him as His counselor?"
(Isaiah 40:13)

- 2. While the Spirit may be mysterious and powerful, we do not need to be afraid**

WHAT DOES HE DO?

"When you hide your face they are terrified; when you take away their breath, they die and return to dust. When you send your spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth." (Psalm 104:29-30)

A. The words for "Spirit" can also be translated as "breath" (i.e., life)

"I will put my Spirit within you, and you will live" (Ezekiel 37:14)

B. The primary sign of the Spirit's presence is life (vitality)

"I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability, and knowledge of all kinds of crafts..." (Exodus 31:3)

C. The Spirit gives (special) gifts to enrich the whole community

"When they cried out to the Lord, he raised up for them a deliverer, Othniel son of Kenaz. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him so he became Israel's judge..." (Judges 3:9-10)

D. Joel prophesies about a day when every believer will have the Spirit

"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men will see visions...I will pour out my Spirit in those days." (Joel 2:28)

1. Poured. No holding back; no temporary measures; no select few

2. Literally, the Spirit will flow like a flood

WHAT IS "THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?"

A. In Acts 11:16, Luke contrasts the Holy Spirit baptism to the baptism of John

1. In Acts 1:5, Jesus says "You will be baptized in the Spirit...in Jerusalem..."

2. In 1 Corinthians, Paul is addressing the church about unity in the Spirit

"For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one spirit to drink." (12:13)

B. Yet, sometimes people use this phrase, "baptism of the Spirit," differently

BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

A. Luke uses the phrase "to be filled with the Spirit"

"Brothers, chose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom...and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit." (Acts 6:3,5)

"But, Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father." (Acts 7:55)

"Then, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them..." (Acts 4:8)

B. "To be full of the Spirit" is a statement of total surrender to Christ's Spirit

C. So here is the challenge...

1. In order to fill a vessel with something, it must first be emptied

2. Then we need to fill the vessel with the Spirit

a. Time in silence, time in solitude, time in the Word; time on our knees

b. Asking God every day when we get up, "God, fill me with Your Spirit"

3. Let's focus together on the main thing - keeping the main thing the main thing