



The Power of Holy Spirit Baptism

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Introduction:

Our text this morning speaks to us of the power that is available through the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Day of Pentecost was a Memorial Day so to speak. It was a day of remembrance when Jesus who had risen from the dead, made it to the Father. Then the heavens were opened and the dispensation of grace began. It was a powerful day when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the disciples who were obedient to Jesus' instruction. But the story didn't stop then. It continues today in our time.

After Jesus rose from the dead, there were many obvious appearances of Jesus to the disciples and other people. He showed up and encouraged them and taught them about the kingdom of God. There were many convincing proofs that Jesus was alive. It was necessary for Him to ascend to His Father, so the Holy Spirit could come. He was headed back to Heaven to send the Spirit, to intercede to the Father on our account, and to wait there until the Father said, go get your bride, and bring her home.

During one of His encounters with the disciples, Jesus told them that they were not to leave Jerusalem, but they were to wait there until they had received the gift God had promised them, which they had heard him speak about. He referred to this gift as the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

TEXT: ACTS 1:8

"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."

This gift of the Holy Spirit would be useful to them in many ways. This gift was not just a thing, but the third person of the Trinity. Jesus knew the importance and need of the Holy Spirit for the lives of those who sought Him.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a point of arrival, but a point of entrance to a life of empowerment for witnessing about Christ. There are three aspects to witnessing that we want to look at this morning. God's word instructs us to be filled with the Spirit. The purpose of which is to be effective in our witness.

The three aspects of witnessing we want to examine this morning are a verbal witness, a vital witness and a valid witness.

I. A VERBAL OR VOCAL WITNESS. We are to speak up for Christ.

Romans 10:9-10

That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Luke 12:8

“I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God.”

The witness that we speak verbally is that Jesus Christ is alive. He is who He says He is. That we have surrendered to the claims He makes on every life. That He has come to transform our lives.

The words that we speak are powerful. We shared about the tool of power that we have in our spoken words several weeks ago. We speak about what we are passionate toward. Listen to what people talk about in conversations. The things that you hear them talk about are usually pretty close to their heart.

If the passion of our heart is love for Jesus, that will come out in our conversations. When we are baptized with the Holy Spirit, our words will glorify Jesus.

As you read the book of Acts, you will see that the early church message was always focused on Jesus. The disciples went about telling everyone that Jesus was alive, that He died for them and rose again, and that He was coming back. That was the message they took everywhere.

When Jesus is exalted, then people will be drawn to Him, through our verbal witness. Maybe you feel too shy to share. Let me encourage you to ask the Lord to fill you with the person and power of His Holy Spirit. After the Holy Spirit fills you, there will be greater boldness to be a verbal witness.

II. A VITAL WITNESS

How we say something is just as important as what we say. Passion is contagious. Passion is not conveyed by volume, but by sincerity and convictions.

When it comes to people being passionate about their stand and witness, I think of men like Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednigo. These three young Hebrew men were passionate about their stand for God. They had set their hearts that they would not bow down to any idol, to worship regardless of the consequences. When you are facing a fiery furnace, you better be passionate about your convictions. The Holy Spirit will help us be vital and passionate about Christ in the moments when our faith is tested.

Again this past Wednesday evening in Bible study, we were talking about Biblical obedience which includes endurance. This kind of vital witness says I will die before I will disobey. I refuse to betray God by looking out for myself. It is in relationship that we find this kind of loyal endurance.

If we are not moved ourselves by the message we carry of Christ’s love, hope, peace, healing, forgiveness and coming back, then how can we expect that message to move someone else?

Our emotions, attitude, and actions are as much a part of our witness, as are our words.

Both Peter and Paul, in their writings, are inspired to tell us that being a witness is more than just verbal words. Paul says in Col. 4:5-6 that our speech should always be seasoned with grace, and Peter says in I Peter 3:15-16 that we should be prepared to give an answer for our hope, but it should be with gentleness and respect, and our good behavior also enters into our witness.

III. A VALID WITNESS

Several years ago I was on staff at a large church. We lived right next to the church in the parsonage, and had gone home for lunch. We had just finished lunch and were finishing doing dishes when the door bell rang. I went to the door and there stood a lady, modestly dressed. She had driven up in a car that was clean but about 10 years old. She introduced herself and asked if I was the pastor of the church. I explained I was one of the associate pastors and how could I help her. She asked if I had a few minutes and if we could talk. I invited her in and asked her to sit down. She proceeded to tell me that she had found out that the church was starting a building project and wanted to make a contribution to help it come about. She made it known that she was there to write a check, and I needed to let her know how

much the church yet needed to fund the project. Now mind you, I never saw this lady before. I said to her, "You can make your check out for any amount you like. I can't tell you how much, that is that is between you and God." "Oh no", she insisted. "Tell me how much the church needed." About this time, I was thinking to myself, well maybe I should say \$25,000. I guess God was using this to help grow my faith. I didn't want to insult the woman, by suggesting more than she was prepared to give, and I didn't want to insult God by asking for less than I should. I said again, I'm not sure how much you feel you want and can afford to give. She insisted that no amount of money was too much and I should ask for a large donation. She wanted to know what the total project would cost, and I told her over \$1 million dollars. "Well", she said, "how much do you want?" She didn't blink an eye. We kept this up for a short while, and finally I thought OK Lord – here goes. So I said, "How about \$1 million dollars." Without blinking an eye – she said "Fine. Who do I make it out to?" I almost fainted, when I got control of myself, I said, "That would be wonderful. Why that would be most generous. Why.....thank you and God bless you." She opened her purse, pulled out a pen and her checkbook and started filling out a check. I told her the name of the church. She proceeded to tell me that God directed her in giving to churches and Christian schools that were building, so they could reach their goals. I thanked her several times and prayed that God would bless her. When she left, I called the senior pastor and asked if he would meet me at his office at 5:00. I had something to give him. I didn't even tell him over the phone what it was. We met, I gave him the check and we were all very happy. The next day, we called the bank where the check had been written on before we tried to deposit it. The vice president of the bank

came on the line. I shared with him why I was calling. He checked the account number. IT WAS NOT A VALID ACCOUNT. It had been at one time, but had been closed for over 6 years.

Validity is so important when it comes to our witness. Effective witnessing depends on our character. The content of our message will be hindered if our manner and actions are not consistent with our words. In a society where people are rapidly losing faith in the integrity of leaders in government and the business world, the personal credibility and validity of Christians is an essential requirement.

The Holy Spirit empowers us more than just in signs and wonders and spiritual gifts. The word "POWER" is very comprehensive. It means *ability* and applies in practical ways to everyday life.

The Holy Spirit helps by providing us whatever it takes to accomplish whatever is needed. The Holy Spirit will enable ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

The Holy Spirit empowers us to speak about Jesus, confident in His convincing work.

The Holy Spirit helps us in how we speak. To communicate Christ as Paul did. The spirit moves us in our witness with sincerity and passion that is compelling.

The Holy Spirit enables our character to become what God has called us to be as the fruit of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit baptism opens the way to a life of effective witness for Christ in what we say, how we say it, and who we are.

Conclusion:

The Holy Spirit baptism is important to those who are followers of Christ today. In order to receive what Christ offers, we need to ask in faith. The effectiveness of witnessing verbally, vitally, and validly all depend on our being filled with the Holy Spirit.