

▼ **The Spirit Jump-Starts The Church - Part 3**
Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday March 15, 2020

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• **Read the Passage: Acts 2**

▼ **Sermon's Purpose (what listeners should do)**

- Understand the flow of Acts 2.
- Recognize how this event echoes key Old Testament events.
- Recognize the elements of the Good News that Peter proclaims and learn to use it as one available model.
- Recognize the elements of the family life of the disciples and learn to use it as a model.
- Recognize the value of starting from scratch.

▼ **The Flow of Acts 2.**

- Disciples are all together waiting in obedience to Jesus' instruction (Acts 1:4-8).
 - ▶ The Holy Spirit arrives on Pentecost.
 - ▶ Filled and empowered by the Spirit, the disciples proclaim the wonders of God.
 - ▶ Filled and empowered by the Spirit, Peter proclaims the Good News.
- ▼ People respond to the message:
 - The people ask what they should do.
 - ▶ Peter's response: repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins.
 - ▶ The Church grows.

▼ **Recognize how this event echoes key Old Testament events.**

- This is like the giving of the Law at Mount Sinai, but even better. Through the Spirit, the law is being written on human hearts.
- Filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit, the disciples proclaim God's glory in the languages of the gathered pilgrims.
- This is turning around the division of human languages and the scattering of humanity that God brought about during the construction of the Tower of Babel. The Kingdom of God is for all language groups, ethnicities, and nations.

▼ **Recognize the elements of the Good News that Peter proclaims and learn to use it as one available model.**

- The Kingdom predicted by the Jewish scriptures has arrived. The "Day of the Lord", when God finally and ultimately rights all wrongs will happen.

- Through his death, burial, and resurrection, God has established Jesus as Israel's Messiah/Christ (i.e. King) and therefore the world's true Lord. "Jesus is Lord" ultimately means that Caesar isn't.
 - To be part of this Kingdom you must turn around and follow Jesus - beginning with baptism. Following Jesus is not stated explicitly here, but it is implied by the fact the Jesus is Lord and Christ.
- ▼ **Recognize the elements of the family life of the disciples and learn to use it as a model.**
- Devotion to the Apostles' teaching - The Bible.
- ▼ **Devotion to The Fellowship.**
- Meeting in the Temple Courts (i.e. large gatherings).
 - Meeting in homes (i.e. small gatherings).
 - Meetings characterized by thanksgiving and praise to God.
 - Devotion to the breaking of bread.
 - Devotion to prayer.
 - Sharing to meet needs.
- ▼ **Recognize the value of starting from scratch.**
- Our theme this month, "The Spirit Jump-Starts The Church", acknowledges an important milestone for us.
 - Together with the gospel of Matthew, the book of Acts shows us how to build a Christian life from scratch.
- ▼ **This is important because discipleship, the process of fully training another believer, is a key component of God's agenda for the Church.**
- This is clearly taught in Matthew 28:18-20
Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
 - God wants you to be a disciple.
 - God wants you to produce disciples.
- ▼ **In order to be a disciple you need be trained:**
- You need to receive a clearly-defined body of teaching from a trainer.
 - You need to incorporate that clearly-defined body of teaching into your life under the supervision of a trainer.
- ▼ **In order to produce disciples you need to train others - 2Timothy 2:2**

- You need to impart a clearly-defined body of teaching to a trainee.
- You need to supervise that trainee as he/she incorporates that clearly-defined body of teaching into his/her life.
- The Gospel of Matthew provides us with the clearly-defined body of Jesus' initial teaching.
- The Book of Acts shows us how the Apostles implemented that teaching through the power of the Holy Spirit.
- ▼ We are going to make use of the key practices of the early church that we see illustrated in the Book of Acts:
 - We will continue to devote ourselves to the Apostles' teaching (i.e. the Bible), fellowship, eating together (including the Lord's Supper), and prayer.
 - We will model the fundamental nature of the Kingdom of God by becoming family and sharing our resources and our lives with each other.
 - Just as they met together in the Temple Courts we will practice large-group gatherings on Sundays (subject to the modifications required by the current Corona Virus crisis).
 - Just as they met in homes, we will practice small-group home gatherings throughout the week (subject to the modifications required by the current Corona Virus crisis). We are working on a plan now and will keep you posted.
 - Just as theirs did, our meetings will feature thanksgiving and praise to God - i.e. Worship.
 - Just as they did, we will take advantage of opportunities to eat meals together and to practice the Lord's Supper.
 - We will devote ourselves to prayer.
- ▼ What will stay the same, and what will change:
 - Most of these are not new practices for us, but it's important for everyone to see how these practices are grounded in scripture (e.g. in Acts 2) because, as we disciple others, we need to be able to show them not only what to do, but also why.
 - What we have not done a good enough job with in the past however is to present a clearly-defined body of teaching for people to use in discipleship. We've been teaching biblical truth of course, but we haven't packaged it for systematic transmission. This will change!
- ▼ Over the coming weeks we're going to flesh out the essential components of discipleship training so that:
 - You can fill in the gaps in your own training.
 - You can begin training others with confidence.

- Many of the components of this training will be things we have discussed before (e.g. “The Sermon On The Mount”, “The 7 Fs”, “imparting godly habits”, “turning godly habits into skills”, etc.), but we’re going to do a better job of showing you how it fits into the overall picture of full discipleship training.
- We will incorporate frequent reminders of and pointers to the essential components of discipleship training so that, through repetition, it will remain fresh in your thinking.

▶ **Critical mass of believers building in Jerusalem.**

▶ **What difference does it make? So What?**

▼ **Discussion Questions**

- What does the Apostles’ teaching mean in your day to day life? Are you devoted to it? What is the evidence?
- In what ways do you participate in the fellowship? Are you devoted? What would those who know you say?
- What role does the “breaking of bread with believers” play in your life?
- How’s your prayer life - individually and corporately?
- How well do you share?

▶ **Decide How to Accomplish This Purpose**

▼ **Skills Development**

- For this exercise gather into small groups.

▼ **Good Works**

▼ Corporate thought exercise:

- What does the Kingdom of God mean?
- **What problems in the world make you passionate enough to invest your time and resources in solving them?**
- **How do you think God feels about those problems?**
- Pair up and pray for God to show you how he wants to use you this week.
- What did God tell you? Discuss with your group and identify your next steps.

▼ **Good News**

- Practice presenting the gospel to one another.
- Practice sharing with a partner how you became a follower of Jesus or what you think stands in the way of you becoming one.