

▼ **The Spirit Jump-Starts The Church - Part 5**
Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday March 29, 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.
- Start 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.

- Fulfills the Jewish Feast of Pentecost: First Fruits, Giving of the Law
- "Undoes" the division and scattering that followed the "Tower of Babel".

▼ Filled and empowered by the Spirit, the disciples proclaim the wonders of God.

- The Holy Spirit doesn't come to glorify us.
- The Holy Spirit empowers us to glorify God.

▼ Filled and empowered by the Spirit, Peter proclaims the Good News.

- The Holy Spirit glorifies Jesus by empowering us to be his witnesses.

▼ The Good News

▼ The presentation matches the audience.

- The presentation will be similar to gentiles who are familiar with Jewish history (Acts 10).
- The presentation will be different to gentiles who are unfamiliar with Jewish history (Acts 17).

▼ He anchors recent events in continuity with Israel's backstory:

▼ Fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-32) - the last days begin at this time.

- The Holy Spirit is now available to all Jesus' followers.
- Blood, fire, and billows of smoke echo Moses and Mt. Sinai.

- All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved - from their tragic national condition.
- ▼ He explains recent events.
 - He highlights what they already know about Jesus - signs and wonders echoing Joel's prophecy.
 - He calls them out on their involvement in Jesus' death.
 - He testifies to Jesus' resurrection.
- ▼ Jesus is Lord and Christ:
 - Anchored in David's prophecy (Psalm 16:8-11).
 - Points out that David could not have been talking about himself, but rather the Messiah who would be descended from him.
 - ▶ Points out the God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ.
 - The Good News demands a response.
- ▼ 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.
 - Three thousand (men) added to their number through baptism.
 - ▼ They join in a new common life:
 - Devoted to the apostles' teaching.
 - Devoted to fellowship.
 - Devoted to eating together (including the Lord's Supper).
 - Devoted to prayer.
 - ▼ They share their possessions.
 - This was necessary because so many of the new believers were pilgrims who has only planned to be in Jerusalem temporarily.
 - They thus formed a new family in Christ.
 - The apostles perform signs and wonders - thus the ministry predicted by Joel and exhibited by Jesus multiplies.
- ▼ **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.
 - These early followers of Jesus were starting from scratch during a “strange time”. Many of them had come to for the feast of Pentecost expecting to return home a week later. Instead they found themselves responding to a message the resulted in them joining a new type of family and hanging out in what was to them a foreign city. Many of their normal life routines were disrupted. It’s in that setting that they build a new 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.
- ▼ Conclusion
 - We are living in a period of disruption. It's a "strange time"!
 - God uses "strange times" to accomplish new things.
 - This is an opportunity to let God rebuild your life in a way that will enable him to use you like never before.
- ▼ Just as Jesus asked the blind beggar in Luke 18:35-43, he's asking you: "What do you want me to do for you?"
 - What do you want him to do for you?
 - What do you want to accomplish for him that requires his divine power?
 - Whose life do you want to see transformed in addition to your own?
 - What particular part of the world around you do you want to see God be king over?
- Get ready to be a disciple and to make disciples!
- Please take some time to reflect on the following discussion questions and skill-building exercises from last week.

▼ Start From Scratch

▼ Seven “F”s - Stages of Discipleship:

- Follow the Message.
- Family Up.
- Flow in the Spirit.
- Face Your Problems.
- Farm Your Land
- Find Your Purpose.
- Fulfill Your Mission.

▼ Follow the message.

▼ Devote yourself to the Apostles’ teaching: The Bible

▼ Understanding the Bible will equip you to:

▼ Recognize God’s agenda in the situations you encounter in life.

- If you don’t know God’s agenda, you won’t know how to handle the situations you run into.

▼ Consider the following different types of sea craft, all of which have to deal with wind, rain, and waves:

- a pleasure boat
- a fishing boat
- a cargo boat
- an oil tanker
- a Coast Guard boat
- a naval destroyer
- an aircraft carrier
- Overcome the trials that come to beat you down. You need to play good defense! By storing God’s Word in your heart AND putting it into practice in your life you will be able to
- Accomplish the work God has called you too. You need to play good offense too!
- Your goal here is to begin the process of learning the “whole will of God” (Acts 20:25-27).
- A simple way to start is to begin working your way through the Gospel of Matthew with a partner or a small group.

- As you work your way through you collectively should begin to identify godly habits you can incorporate into your lives.
- You will also learn how to announce the message - the good news of salvation into God's Kingdom through Jesus.
- We'll have more to say about this "follow the message" phase in the future.

▼ Family Up

- Here you will begin to acknowledge and live out your new family relationships in the church, the Body of Christ.
- Just as that first wave of new believers did you will begin to identify publicly with God's family in large gatherings.
- You will also come together in smaller groups where you can know one another on a deeper level. God uses these relationships with your new brothers and sisters to help shape you to be like Jesus. He uses you in their lives as well. This requires making fellowship (large group and small group) a habit.
- We will of course have more to say about this "family up" phase in the future.

▼ Flow In The Spirit

- Here you will learn initially to let the Holy Spirit interrupt your own plans and agenda and to respond when he does so.
- You will also learn to seek the Holy Spirit's guidance before you make plans ultimately, to let him develop your agenda.
- We will also have more to say about this "flow in the Spirit" phase in the future.

▼ 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.