

Holy Spirit in the Church (Part One)

Relevant Bible Verses: Acts 1:1-11 ; 1 Thessalonians 4

Main Points: The Holy Spirit is a deposit of things to come and is one of the clearest examples that there's more to this life than that which is seen. Jesus promised us the gift of the Holy Spirit and, through him, we have power to be witnesses to those around us. Luke outlines what church is meant to look like; *rooted in, and baptised in, power through the Holy Spirit in order to be witnesses for Jesus.*

Message Notes:

- The Gospels of Luke and Acts were written specifically for the Gentiles in order to help them understand the truth of Jesus. In other words, they were written with the intent, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, for the Gentiles to know the certainty of the things they were being taught. To lend credibility to this, Luke spoke to many eyewitnesses from the events surrounding Jesus, in addition to his first-hand knowledge.
- The word of God is an *accurate, reliable, and trustworthy* account. While we don't only use the words of Luke to prove the word of God is reliable, they do lend credibility in the same way you judge online shopping to be trustworthy through confirmations, reviews, and testimonies.
- Luke's testimony, and those of Christians at the time, had the reward of persecution, and possible death, in return for talking out and promoting Jesus' teachings. This indicates they were fully willing to give up their lives. Are we willing to do the same?
- When faith is tested it leads to refinement of that faith, which then can lead to the purity of faith. People all around the world claim they believe the Word of God to be accurate and true, but that faith might not stand through fire.
- Jesus promises us the gift of the Holy Spirit. Luke outlines what church is meant to look like; *rooted in, and baptised in, power through the Holy Spirit in order to be witnesses for Jesus.* We make church fairly complicated sometimes, when in actuality it is that simple.
- We are to encourage each other with times to come in the end, however, as 1 Thessalonians 4 makes clear, we are *not to spend our lives looking up*. It may be hard not to during times of struggle, but our lives were meant for more as we have work to do here and now. We are not to worry about when Jesus will come and restore his kingdom, but instead need to focus on what we are called to do, our *purpose*, here and now.
- The disciples were told to go into the city and wait and, in doing so, received the Holy Spirit. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, they then went into the world. There are still structures of men. Jesus established his twelve disciples, Paul created

churches and leadership. These structures were put into place to establish pure calling and the 'Church', not the other way around. In other words, established structures of men are servants of God's will, and what He wants to do in and through the Church.

- ***How to apply to our lives:*** There are many earthly causes people have laid down their lives for, such as environmentalism and sports. The question to ask is how much are we giving up for God?
 - Look to the here and now, take your eyes off the clouds, and ask yourself what it is that you have been given. Be excited for the future in heaven but put your hands to what you are called to here and now.
 - Luke's challenge to the church was if they knew the Word of God. The challenge stands today. You may not feel that you're getting much out of it, but it is necessary. Like food, it is essential to continuously fill yourself with the Word, not just being content with what you already know. The world is changing, we need to change and grow as well.
- ***Summary:***
 - Are we watching the clouds, waiting for the world to end? We have great hope, but we also need to follow our purpose here on this earth. There is still stuff to do in our hearts, our families, and our communities.
 - We may feel powerless to make change around us, and that drives us to look up. This is why we need the Holy Spirit. Power comes when the Holy Spirit rests on us. If we trust the Word is reliable, accurate, and trustworthy, then we know the Holy Spirit brings power to us.
 - Do we believe that, through prayer, we can make an impact? If we believe we have power through the Holy Spirit, and the Word can be trusted, then the answer is yes.

For Further Study:

- Set aside time to study the Word of God, not just to read it, but to study it. Ask yourself, do I believe this to be accurate, reliable, and trustworthy? How do you see the Word at work in your life?
- Make an effort to be a witness to those around you, trusting that the Holy Spirit will be with you.