



sermon study summary

Reclaiming the Spirit

INTRODUCTION

In our 'Revival' sermon series we've discussed the importance of *Reclaiming Prayer* and *Reclaiming the Word*. Revival is a sovereign work of God through His Holy Spirit in which He awakens the church, reverses spiritual decline and empowers Christians to come alive in their walk with Him. We do our part by cooperating with God in His work!

Here we explore *Reclaiming the Spirit*. What does a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit look like? Strong emotions? Out of control laughter or tears? Spiritual euphoria? Let's differentiate between emotionalism and the work of the Holy Spirit. Humans are emotional, getting excited about things we're passionate about, e.g. at a Calgary Flames playoff game, you see heightened and varying emotions. If God comes down among us, our emotions will be strongly affected. However, emotions do not confirm or deny a genuine move of God or the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Jonathan Edwards, a well-respected theologian and one of the chief figures behind the First Great Awakening, dealt with this issue in the 18th century in his work, *Distinguishing Marks of the Work of the Spirit of God*. He wrote, "A work is not to be judged by any effects on the bodies of men; such as tears, trembling, groans, loud outcries, agonies of body, or the failing of bodily strength". Edwards taught that in a genuine revival: 1) Jesus is esteemed, honored and glorified, 2) People reject sin, turning to God's righteousness and holiness, 3) There is a renewed hunger and thirst for the Bible, God's Word, 4) Lives are transformed, 5) There will be a greater love for God and fellow humans.

In the book of Acts, Jesus told his disciples not to leave Jerusalem until they were baptized by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. We need to receive the Holy Spirit before we engage in Christ's mission for us; we cannot do it alone. 'Baptism' signifies being drenched, immersed, soaked, and saturated in water; God soaks us in His Spirit, and in the new covenant, His Spirit is gifted to every believer, young and old. The Holy Spirit is infinite; although Jesus' death and resurrection won't be repeated, Pentecost as a paradigm happens many times. Spirit-filled believers boldly and courageously declare that salvation was only in the name of our risen Lord Jesus, resulting in the Gospel spreading throughout our world.

On the day of Pentecost, wind, fire and speaking in tongues occurred. These signs stand for new life, holiness and power for global witness. When God's people, awakened by the Spirit, realign their priorities, using their gifts, talents and resources to advance God's kingdom, the world around them turns upside down to the glory of God.

When a church, filled with the Holy Spirit, serves God, broken lives and marriages will be mended, people are healed emotionally, spiritually, physically, etc., and the character qualities of the Kingdom will overflow into our community, showing everyone that Jesus is Lord.

Let's claim God's promise (in Luke 11:13) that He is always eager to lavish more of Himself in us. As we surrender and express our deep need for more of His Holy Spirit within us, let's begin by asking God where He is calling us to serve Him in the advancement of Christ's Kingdom. We are filled with His Spirit for a purpose, so let's focus on one thing that needs to change in our lives, and bring it to the Lord in prayer.



sermon study guide

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. Have you ever refinished/refurbished something that was headed for the garbage into something useful? Explain.
2. What has been a memorable moment or season in your life when you experienced the work of the Holy Spirit?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Acts 1:1-8

3. What is the significance and purpose of the disciples staying in Jerusalem and then going to the end of the earth? How is the Holy Spirit crucial to God's plan?

Read Acts 2:1-4; Acts 2:14-18

4. What were the prominent signs on the day of Pentecost? What did these signs represent?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. Pastor Ashwin said, "What we need is not a single experience or a second experience but an ongoing relationship with the Spirit who is a Person." What are the signs and results of the Spirit's work in your life? What might hinder the work of the Holy Spirit?
6. What is a specific area in your life where you need to experience the quickening, enabling power of the Holy Spirit? What difference could this make? Pray for one another to be filled with the Spirit.

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Pastor Ashwin asks, "Did the early followers of Jesus have access to a dynamic that you and I don't have access to?"
Pray for God's Spirit for boldness, joy, the knowledge of God's love, freedom, deeper prayer, power over sin, generosity, empowerment to serve.

THE WORD (NIV)

Acts 1:1-8

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach 2 until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. 3 After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. 4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." 6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. 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."

Acts 2:1-4

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 2:14-18

Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. 15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! 16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 "'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.