**The Holy Spirit Series**

“The Outpouring of the Spirit”

**Introduction:**

Currently our sermon series is on “The Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. These three are one God, same in substance, and equal in power and glory.” (WSC#6) The role of the Father is primarily Creator/Sustainer, the role of the Son is primarily Redeemer/Lord, and the role of the Holy Spirit is primarily Comforter/Guide. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one God in three persons functioning together in divine oneness.

The Bible teaches that when an individual believes in Christ, they immediately receive the Holy Spirit. The Spirit dwells in the life of believers.

*Indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.* (Rom.8.9)

*The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God.* (Rom.8.16)

The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit was initially poured out on the first believers on the Day of Pentecost recorded in Acts chapter two. After Jesus’ resurrection He presented Himself alive to many of His followers on several occasions over a period of forty days. (ICor.15.3-8) During these presentations Jesus would give evidence of His resurrection and would give final instructions to His followers. (Jn.21.26-29; Lk.24.13-49)

The Bible records it like this: *To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me;**for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”* (Acts 1.3-4)

**The Outpouring of the Spirit**

John the Baptist was the last prophet and forerunner of Christ. John’s baptism was in preparation for the coming of the Messiah. John said, *“As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”* (Lk.3.16) But now the Messiah has come, fulfilling the redemptive purposes of God, and the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit is just around the corner. Jesus continued, *“you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”* (Acts.1.8)

But what does it mean, “*to be My witnesses*?” What impact will the outpouring of the Holy Spirit have on the people of God? What will be the outcome of the outpouring of the Spirit of God upon all of God’s people? That’s what we will discover this morning.

The Bible tells us that after the forty days of presentation Jesus ascended into heaven and took His seat on the heavenly throne of grace at the right hand of the Father. A group of about one hundred and twenty of Jesus’ followers gathered in an upper Room in Jerusalem praying and waiting for the promise of the Spirit.

After tens days at about 6:00 in the morning when they were all together in one place *suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting . . . and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.* (Acts 2.1-3) These faithful followers of Christ rushed out into the streets proclaiming the Gospel of salvation through Christ, miraculously in foreign languages they didn’t know. (Acts 2.4-13) This proclamation of the Gospel in the streets of Jerusalem continued for the next three hours.

**The Proclamation the Gospel**

*Now when* the citizens of Jerusalem heard this proclamation of the Gospel they amazed and astonished, so Peter stood up and spoke to the crowd saying, “*this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:**‘And it shall be in the last days,’ God says, ‘That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind;’”* (Acts 2.13-17) Peter was explaining to the people that this proclamation of the Gospel was an outcome of the Holy Spirit being poured out on all of God’s people. What was happening was a fulfillment of the Father’s promise to pour out His Spirit upon all fresh.

Peter continued, *“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know— this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.* (Acts 2.22-24)

*This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.* (Acts 2.32-33)

*Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”* (Acts 2.36)

*Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.* (Acts 2.37-39)

*So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls*. (Acts 2.41)

And at that moment the Church of Jesus Christ was born and the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit was fulfilled not just to the 120 but to all those who believe in Christ starting on that day and continuing until the day Christ returns.

So, we can conclude that an outcome of the outpouring of the Spirit of God is the proclamation of the Gospel. The proclamation of the Gospel is not the use of persuasive words of wisdom spoken with superiority of speech. But rather it is the proclaiming the testimony of God in the demonstration of the Spirit and power so that people’s faith would rest in the power of God not men. (ICor.2.1-5) The simple proclamation of the Gospel that declares, “I can’t but Jesus did! I can’t but Jesus can!”

But what I want you to see this morning is the proclamation of the Gospel is not the only outcome of the outpouring of the Spirit in the lives of believers in Christ.

The narrative concludes: *And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,**praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.* (Acts 2.43-47)

**The Ministry of Mercy**

Notice these new Spirit-filled believers *had all things in common, were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need,* and *taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart.* So, we can conclude that the ministry of mercy is another outcome of the outpouring of the Spirit in the believer. Both the proclamation of the Gospel and the ministry of mercy are the diect product of the outpouring of the Spirit. The proclamation of the Gospel produces works of mercy, which proclaims the Gospel that produces mercy. The Church of Jesus Christ is a Gospel community in Word and Deed.

**A Gospel Community in Word and Deed**

But is Acts chapter two the only time we see this dynamic work of the Spirit in the Church? No!

Just a little time later Peter and John were arrested after the healing of a lame man and proclaiming the Gospel on their way to the temple to pray. (Acts 3) The religious leaders in Jerusalem were *greatly disturbed because* Peter and John *were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening.*

*But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.* (Acts 4.1-4)

After their release the Church gather together for a prayer meeting. Listen to their words:

*For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur. And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus.”*

*And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.*

*And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.*

*And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales**and lay them at the apostles’ feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need.*(Acts 4.27-27)

Do you see it? The outpouring of the Spirit produces A Gospel Community in Word and Deed. The outpouring of the Spirit produces the proclamation of the Gospel that produces the ministry of mercy.

But does it stop in Acts 4? No!

*Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food.*

*So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.”* (Acts 6.1-3)

Notice one of the qualifications was that the candidate would be*full of the Spirit.*

*The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose*seven men to oversee this ministry of mercy to the neglected widows. (Acts 6.4-6)

And what was the result of this ministry of mercy? *The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.* (Acts 6.7)

Do you see it? The outpouring of the Spirit produces A Gospel Community in Word and Deed. The outpouring of the Spirit produces the proclamation of the Gospel that produces the ministry of mercy.

But does it stop in Acts 6? No!

*Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius.* *And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.* (Acts 11.27-30)

Notice that the Spirit indicated *there would certainly be a great famine.* And how did the Church respond? *In the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea.*

Notice that Barnabas and Saul (Paul) delivered the relief offering to the elders of the churches of Judea. Paul would write about this later in his ministry, *“They only asked us to remember the poor – the very thing I also was eager to do.”* (Gal.2.10)

Hopefully you can see that there is a consistent message in the Early Church, which is, the outpouring of the Spirit produces A Gospel Community in Word and Deed. The outpouring of the Spirit produces the proclamation of the Gospel that produces the ministry of mercy.

But this outpouring of the Spirit that produces the ministry of mercy is not restricted to the book of Acts.

The Apostle John writes, “*Whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?”* (IJn.3.17)

The Apostle Paul celebrates the outpouring of the churches of Macedonia who according to their ability, and beyond their ability, begged for the opportunity to support those in need. (2 Cor.8.1-5)

And the Apostle Paul teaches his young church planter, Titus, “*Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order to provide for urgent needs and not live unproductive lives.”* (Titus 3.8, 14)

Brothers and Sister, the outpouring of the Spirit produces the proclamation of the Gospel that produces the ministry of mercy. The Church of Jesus Christ is a Gospel Community in Word and Deed.

This morning I want to welcome on of our deacons to come forward and give a report of how we here at Christ Covenant have been involved in the ministry of mercy.

**Mercy Report**

**Transition to the Table**

*He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior.* (Titus 3.5-6)

**Apostles Creed**

**Benediction**

*Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.* (Eph.3.20-21)