

Being a Spirit-Filled Church

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Preacher: Kevin Murphy

[0 : 00] Okay, good morning. If you are new to Watermark, my name is Kevin. I'm one of the leaders here. It's great to see you and to be with you this morning. Now, if you're new, you might not know, but the last four weeks we've been working through the latter part of 1 Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14. And the reason is because this is possibly the New Testament's most concise teaching on the spiritual gifts, what the Bible has to say about spiritual gifts.

And the reason we've been doing that is because as a church we want to grow in both our understanding, our theology, but also our practice, our usage of spiritual gifts. But we want to be a church that's governed by God's Word.

We want to be controlled by what God says, not by culture or what any people say. So we've been looking at the Scriptures, right? But there is a challenge. And the challenge is that although 1 Corinthians 12 to 14 has a lot to say about spiritual gifts, it's actually, spiritual gifts is a very small part of the entire Bible's teaching about the work and the ministry of and the person of the Holy Spirit.

In other words, when we think of what does it mean to be a Spirit-filled church, a Spirit-dependent church, a church that's walking in step with the Spirit, living by the Spirit, dependent of the Spirit, being transformed and renewed by the person and the ministry of the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, such as what we've been talking about, is a very small percentage of that, maybe less than 10% of the Bible's teaching.

[1 : 38] And so the question remains, well, we want to be a Spirit-dependent church, a church that's filled with God's Spirit and walking and dependent on Him. What does that mean in its totality? And so this morning, what I want us to do is to close off this kind of mini-series by looking at a lot more of the Bible's teaching.

What does it look like when a church or a group of people, an individual, encounters God, the Holy Spirit, in a profound and wonderful way? And so that's what we're going to look at today. And we're going to do that by looking at Acts chapter 1 and 2.

And so I'm going to pray for us, and then Alan and Kat are going to come read God's Word. Let me pray for us, and then we'll dive in. Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus Christ, wonderful Spirit of God, we come before you this morning because we want you to speak to us.

Lord, as Alan and Kat read your Word to us, won't you speak to us? Let these words go deep in our heart. May we see something of who you are and who we are in you.

May we see what it means to be a church that is wholly dependent on you and filled with you and walking with you. And God wants you to call us to become the kind of church that you want us to be. So Spirit of God, I ask you, come and speak to us through your Word.

[2 : 51] In your wonderful and gracious name, amen. Let's listen to the reading of God's Word. Today's scripture reading comes from Acts chapter 1 to 2.

You can follow along on the screen your Bibles or the bulletin. So when they had come together, they asked him, Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?

He said to them, It is not for you to know times or season that the Father has fixed by his own authority, but you will receive the power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witness in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.

When the day of Pentecost arrived, when they were all together in one place, and suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting, and divided tongues as a fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them.

[4 : 00] Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give ear to my words. For these people are not drunk as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel. And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders, and signs that God did through him in your midst.

As you yourself know, this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised him up, losing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

This Jesus raised up, and of that we are all witnesses, being therefore exalted on the right hand of God. And having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this, that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

[5 : 21] For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brothers, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you 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 for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls himself. And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.

So those who received his word were baptized and there were added that day about 3,000 souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers, and all came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

And all who believed were together and had all things in common, and they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all as any had need.

[6 : 47] And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people.

And the Lord added to the number, day by day, those who were being saved. This is the word of God. Okay, thank you, Ellen and Kat. Many years ago, I was in a conversation with somebody and he made a comment about a certain church, or denomination, type of churches, a group of churches, and his comment was this.

He said, those churches are so dead that the Holy Spirit probably falls asleep when he walks through the door. And I remember being taken aback by the comment for two reasons.

The first one is, it came across as quite opinionated, quite arrogant, as if to say, the Holy Spirit loves out kinds of churches, but those churches he doesn't. But the other reason was, I actually had family members that were part of that denomination.

And I remember hearing stories at that time of God really moving powerfully in those churches and changing people's lives and bringing people to saving faith. And so the comment struck me as, not only opinionated, but just not true.

[8 : 00] But it raises the question, what does it look like for a church to be filled of the Spirit? What does the Spirit-filled church look like? Well, in order to do that, we're gonna look at Acts, chapter one and two.

And you'll remember how the book of Acts starts off. Jesus tells his apostles, his disciples, to wait in Jerusalem until the promise of the Holy Spirit is given to them.

This was a promise that the prophets in the Old Testament had spoken about. And John the Baptist, the final of the Old Testament prophets, in a sense says, I baptize you with water, but there will come one after me who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

And so Jesus says, wait and pray for that day to happen. And so the disciples do. They wait and they pray for 10 whole days. We've got prayer meeting this Thursday. It won't go on for 10 days, I

promise you.

But that's what they do. For 10 days they're praying and eventually on the day of Pentecost, God delivers on his promise and he pours out his Spirit in a most powerful and amazing way.

[9 : 01] And on that day, the New Testament church is born. So what does the New Testament church look like? What does the Spirit-filled church look like? Well, I want us just to think about a couple of things. And the first one is this.

The first mark, the Spirit's presence and power upon a church or an individual is a profound sense of awe and reverence for the majesty of God. A profound sense of awe.

When God's Spirit comes upon us, there's a profound sense of awe and majesty. We see this throughout the book of Acts and throughout the Bible, that when God's people, either an individual or a church, encounters the living God, the first response is not light-hearted laughter or kind of soppy emotionalism.

It's a profound sense of awe and arrestation, a profound sense of being in the presence of one infinitely mightier and more majestic and categorically different from anything we had ever experienced or seen or witnessed before.

And it's like God's presence arrests us. I don't know if you've ever had an experience like this in another setting. Maybe you are, I was thinking about if you're walking on the mountain, the peak, or you're hiking maybe at night and you hear a rustle in the bushes, right?

[10 : 17] And you freeze. Or maybe you see a snake, you know, on the side of the path. And the first thing is you freeze, right? Even if you don't want to, you're just frozen with fright. When God's Spirit comes upon a people, a person, there's a sense that it arrests us.

We don't just go on with life as normal. There's no arresting that takes place in almost fear and dread in light of the awesomeness and the majesty of whose presence we are.

I think we see something of that in Acts chapter 2 here when the Spirit is poured out on the disciples and Peter is filled with the Spirit. He stands up and he preaches the gospel. He tells them about Jesus.

And look what it says. Look at verse 37. It says, Now when they heard his words, they were cut to the heart. That means they were seized. They were taken a hold of. And they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brothers, what must we do?

It's like they don't just go on with life. Nobody goes to the coffee station afterwards and says, Nice sermon, pastor. Good job today. They cry out, Tell us what we must do.

[11 : 22] Something's got to change. How do we get saved in light of what you've told us? And Peter says, Turn to the Lord Jesus Christ. And look at verse 43.

It says, And awe came upon every soul. This deep reverence. This life had changed because they'd encountered the living God. You know, Ray Ortlund tells this story.

Ray Ortlund's one of my heroes. And he tells this story when he was a teenager. His dad was a pastor. And sometimes he'd be in church and his dad would be preaching. And it was a pretty conservative, respectable church in North America.

And he says, Sometimes during his dad's sermon, the middle of the sermon, there'd be such a profound sense of God's majesty in the room that respectable, honorable, suit and tie wearing members of the congregation would gently get up from their seats and walk down the aisle to the front of the hall and before the piano would just get down on their knees and weep.

The weep in the presence of majesty as the eyes were opened to see who God is. I think the closest thing that I've ever come to this was actually just a few weeks ago.

[12 : 32] I don't know if you remember, four or five weeks ago, we were looking at Isaiah chapter six and I'd been meditating on it the whole week and my heart was full of this passage of the majesty and the glory of God.

And afterwards, Alan led us in a song, that song, Holy Forever. And as we were singing this song, I was standing over here and I was filled with such a sense of the sheer glory and majesty of God that there's almost a sense I was afraid of my life.

And actually, I was standing over here and I kept on taking a step further back and another step back and I kept on walking back until I bumped into the chairs. There's kind of a sense of, I didn't want to get too close. I kind of was aware of my brokenness and my depravity and God's majesty and I thought, if I'm not careful, I don't know if I'm going to get out of this room alive.

There's such a sense of the awe, the transcendence, the glory of God. And that's what happens when God's people encounter the Spirit of God.

There's not a frivolity to it. There's a transcendence, a power, a reverence to the majesty and the glory of God. And we see this again in Revelation, right? John encounters God and he falls down as though dead.

[13 : 45] Seeing God, he's astounded by his majesty. What does the Spirit-filled church look like? Yes, there's joy. Yes, there's contentment. Yes, there's peace. But there's a profound sense of awe and reverence in the sheer majesty and glory of God.

But then, and that leads us to the second thing. The second distinction of the Spirit-filled church is deep repentance. Look at our passage here. Look at verse 37 and onwards. Look what happens here.

Jeremy spoke about this a few minutes ago. It says, when they heard this they were cut to the hearts and they said to Peter and the apostles, brothers, what shall we do? In other words, what must we do to be saved? And Peter said to them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit for the promise is for you and for your children, for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls. And with many words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying save yourselves from this crooked generation.

And so those who received his word were baptized. Friends, when God moves upon a church, when God's spirit moves upon a church, there's always profound and deep repentance.

[14 : 58] Now, if you're new to church this morning, that word repentance may, you may not be familiar with it. And it may sound quite strange. It may sound like a very heavy word. You may think when the church talks about repentance we're talking about shaming you and guilt tripping you and making you feel bad.

And you may feel like I feel bad enough about life as it is and now I come to church and you make me feel even worse. Thanks very much. But actually, that's not the point at all. When the Bible talks about repentance, it's actually the opposite of what we often think.

The Bible's call to invitation is always an invitation to life, to freedom, to peace, to life in all this fullness.

in John Bunyan's book, John Bunyan wrote a book called The Pilgrim's Progress about 400 years ago. And in this book, it's an analogy of a man who goes on this journey.

He comes to faith in Christ and it's his spiritual journey through life. But in the beginning of this book, this man, his name's Christian, he has this profound burden on his back.

[16 : 03] It's this picture of a backpack or a rucksack on your back and he's got this heavy burden and he's trudging through life and it's heavy and it's hard and he can't get rid of it. And at one point, he comes to a cross and at the cross, this burden gets released from his back.

And he feels the sense for the first time in his life, the sense of freedom, the sense of lightness, the sense of joy, the sense of life. As this burden that he's been carrying all his life gets laid down.

And friends, the Bible's invitation to repentance is an invitation to turn from death to life, from darkness to light, from carrying our guilt and our shame and our inadequacy to laying that down and experiencing the freedom and the joy of knowing that Christ has taken those things on the cross for us.

Now that doesn't mean that repentance is always easy or simple. Repentance is difficult because it requires we lay down our pride and our ego. It requires that for a moment we lose face before God and say, God, it is right.

I am a sinner in need of grace. God, I admit that I have tried to be my own God. I've lived for my own glory and it's gotten me nowhere. And so at first, repentance is hard.

[17 : 25] It feels like a part of your ego needs to die but it's always an invitation to life. And Jesus said that when the Spirit of God comes, He will come and convict the world of sin and righteousness and judgment not in order to shame us but to liberate us.

But before that happens, the Spirit impresses upon us a profound sense of the ugliness of sin in our lives and the depth and the extent of it. You know, this happened to me a few years ago.

I think I've shared this story with you before. One of the prevailing sins in my life that I've often struggled with and I know it doesn't sound like a very big sin but is a deep love for people's approval and affirmation.

And I know that sounds very trite and small but it's an idol in my life that trips me up and gets me into so much trouble. I find myself doing all sorts of dumb things that I shouldn't do and I don't want to do because I'm scared to say no to people and I don't want to disappoint people.

And what I find is that for me, one of the prevailing sins is that people's approval and people's affirmation and people liking me has this controlling grip on my life. And actually, often I find it's more important to me than the person of Jesus Christ.

[18 : 41] And if I'm honest, that sometimes I love what people think of me more than I love Christ. And I'm meant to be a pastor, right? And what that means is I've got this idol that I bow down to and worship and adore called approval of man, love for man.

And one day, a few years ago, I was grappling with this and praying for this and I went for a prayer walk and I said, God, you've got to change this in my life. I hate this thing. It feels like it controls me and I can't get rid of it.

God, please come and change me. And I was deeply convicted of it. And as I was going on this prayer walk, I saw in my mind's eye a picture of like a chalice or an urn. It was a dark picture and out of this chalice, snakes were coming out of it.

And in my mind's eye, I saw this is this idol that I bow down and I worship. And I give reverence and awe to this disgusting snake infested idol in my life called the approval of man and the fear of man. And this disgusting urn is actually more precious, more beautiful to my heart than Jesus Christ. And as I went on this prayer walk, I said, God, you've got to change me.

[19 : 49] I hate what this thing is doing to me. Lord, and for the first time in my life, what I had thought was just being a wise pastor, just caring for people. Actually, I saw the depravity and the ugliness of it.

And God convicted me of this need to repent. And as I cried out to God and said, God, you've got to not only forgive me, but you need to save me and change me. I felt like God turned my life around. And He did that. He really delivered me of that. Maybe some of you have seen that. I'm not as nice as maybe I used to be. But I didn't, I wasn't nice because I really loved you.

I just was nice because I loved myself. And I loved what people thought about me. Friends, that's what God's Spirit does. He brings us to a place of seeing the ugliness of sin and the repulsiveness of our idols.

So we turn from death to life. And we saw this in Isaiah 6 a few weeks ago, right? Isaiah sees the majesty and the glory of God. God opens his eyes to see God.

[20 : 47] And the first thing he says is, God, you've got to save those people. No, that's not what He says. He says, woe is me. I am lost. I'm ruined. I'm undone. I've seen the glory of the Lord. And my lips are unclean and I live amongst the people of unclean lips.

God's Spirit, when He comes upon us, friends, what does it mean to be a spiritual church? It means we'll see the things in our life that for years have been hidden to our hearts. And things that we've excused and said, oh, I'm just a good steward of money, we'll actually see, no, we're just greedy. And as we say, oh, we just care for this person. We're just talking to everyone in our CG to see how we can love them. We'll see, actually, that's just gossip. And we'll see the depravity of the sin in our lives.

Sorry, I didn't mean this to be this heavy. I just kind of apologize. When God's Spirit comes upon us, we see God and we see ourselves. But here's the third thing, friends, when God's Spirit comes upon our church, upon a group of people, it's not only a profound sense of awe and deep repentance, but an overwhelming assurance of God's profound, undeserved love and kindness and mercy and grace.

Listen to how Martin Lloyd-Jones describes it. He says, when God's Spirit comes upon somebody, they are given a clear view of the love of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ and especially of His death upon the cross.

[22 : 06] At last, they see it. Oh, they'd always believed it theoretically, but it'd never become true for them, truly become real for them. They'd honestly believed it, yes, but they never felt its power.

They'd never known what it was to be melted by the love of God, to be broken by it. They'd never known what it was to weep, yes, with a sense of unworthiness, but then with love and joy, as they realized that in an individual and personal way, the Son of God loved them and has given Himself for them, and peace comes into our hearts, and joy enters into them, and we are lost in love and praise for God the Father and God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Friends, this is what God's Spirit does. He assures us of God's unceasing love and acceptance, which leads to profound confidence and a conviction. Previously, you're timid and you're shy and suddenly, you're now, you're insecure and full of self-doubt and you encounter God's Spirit and His love invades your heart and it changes and it transforms you.

And surely, that's what we see in Acts chapter 1 and 2 here, right? Remember, just six weeks before, the Apostle Peter, Jesus is busy on trial, Peter's watching him on trial, a servant girl comes to him and says, aren't you one of His disciples?

And he says, no, no, no, I don't know the man. She says, I'm sure I saw you with him. He says, I've never met the man. I swear in my life, I don't know what you're talking about. And six weeks later, this same Peter is standing in front of the high priests and the rulers and authorities, the very guys that just crucified Jesus and saying, you need to repent.

[23 : 42] Christ is Lord. You crucified him and you're in trouble. What's happened to Peter? The Spirit of God has come upon him and being filled with the power of God but the love and the confidence that He is God's Son changes him and transforms him into a different person.

Friends, my dear friends, do you know the love of God like this? Personally, deeply, individually, not just theoretically, not just doctrinally or intellectually, do you know that Christ went to the cross for you because of His love for you?

That's what the Spirit of God does. He takes what's written in our heads and He writes it on our hearts in a way that changes us. And the Bible, the Acts, the way the Spirit comes upon the church is described as the outpouring of the Spirit.

God pours His Spirit on the church. Look at verse 17. It says, In the last days it shall be, God declares that He will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. Verse 18, I think He says the same thing. Let me just get in my Bible here. Verse 18, Even on my male servants, my female servants, in those days I will pour out my Spirit. Verse 33, This Spirit He has poured out upon us, says Peter.

[25 : 00] Well, there's another place in the New Testament where God talks about the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. Romans chapter 5, He says this, We rejoice in our sufferings knowing that suffering produces endurance. Endurance produces character.

Character produces hope. And hope does not disappoint us. Which, that's an interesting phrase. I think hope often disappoints us. You hope for a promotion at work and you don't get it, it's disappointing.

You hope for a relationship to work out that doesn't work out. That's the problem with hope. It often disappoints us, isn't it? Paul says here, the kind of hope that God, the Holy Spirit pours into our hearts doesn't disappoint us.

Why? Because God's love has been poured into our hearts. When God's Spirit is poured upon us, His love is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that changes and transforms us.

God takes the truth of the gospel and He writes them in our hearts in a personal way. And what this means is that God takes insecure people and He makes them secure. He takes anxious people and He makes them remarkably calm.

[26 : 04] He takes hopeless people and He gives us sudden new vision and purpose and hope again. And conflict ceases. Grace abounds. Forgiveness and reconciliation becomes common and normative.

You have a conflict with someone in church and God's Spirit is poured into our hearts and the love of God is poured into our hearts and rather than me coming to Claire and pointing out it's all her fault and saying it's all your fault, suddenly I come to her and say, hey I'm so sorry.

Actually I see now what I've done. And she says, no, no, actually it's not your fault, it's my fault. And the love of God transforms us and changes us. The Holy Spirit writes the love of God personally into our hearts.

And of course this inpouring of soul anchoring love and assurance and security generates an unusual outpouring of love and tenderness and softness in our hearts towards others. Suddenly we're no longer living for ourselves and our own plans.

We live for others. And God's love for us means we start to love others. And look what happens here in Acts. Look at the end of chapter 2 verse 44. It says, And all who believed were together and all things in common they were selling their positions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all as any had need.

[27 : 19] And day by day attending the temple together breaking bread in their homes they received their food with glad and sincere and generous hearts praising God and having favor with

all people.

We see the same thing in chapter 4. The full number of those who believed were one heart and one soul and nobody said that any of his possessions belonged to him or were his own but they had everything in common.

Friends, the love of God. The love of God. Do you know it? Have you experienced it? Friends, are you secure in the love of God? Or do you say, yes, I know Jesus died for me because he loves me but you're wracked with guilt and insecurity and fear and shame.

This is what God does when the Holy Spirit poured out in our church and in our lives and in our hearts. The love of the Lord Jesus becomes real and perceptible and perceivable to our hearts. It shapes the way we respond to situations and storms and challenges. Is it evident and visible to those who are closest to you? The love of God to our hearts.

[28 : 24] Well, the Spirit of God knowing does that. He does, fourthly, empowers us for bold evangelism and witness. Look at what happens here. Look at the quote. Peter here, when he stands up and the Spirit comes upon him, he quotes from Joel chapter 2 and he says, Joel in the Old Testament promised this is what was going to happen.

And so look at what Joel says, verse 17. He says, In the last days it shall be, declares God, that I will pour out my Spirit in all flesh. On your sons and your daughters they shall prophesy.

Okay, that's an important word. Young men shall see visions. Old men will dream dreams. Even on my male servants and female servants, in those days I will pour out my Spirit and they shall prophesy.

What does Joel mean when he means this? Well, I don't think Joel simply means that in small group or community group everyone's going to have a word of knowledge or a prophecy for one another.

Okay, it might mean that, of course. God gives us spiritual gifts. We spoke about that last week. Paul says, don't despise prophecy. Don't despise speaking tongues. That's fine. But when Joel says that men and women, young men, old men, young women, old women, employees, employees, servants and bosses, everyone will prophesy.

[29 : 37] The word prophecy means will proclaim the excellency and the awesomeness of God. They will preach the gospel. They will go into their workplaces. They will go into their sports fields. They'll go into their social clubs.

They'll tell colleagues and family members and neighbors and friends, this is who God is. When God's spirit comes upon us, all people, rich, poor, young, old, educated, uneducated, will be so filled with God's spirit and power that they won't be able to help themselves as they speak about Jesus.

And that's what we see in Acts, right? In Acts chapter 5, the apostles are called in and they threatened, hey, don't tell anyone about Jesus otherwise we will arrest you and beat you up. And they do beat them and they send them out and what do they do?

And so every day in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching everyone about Jesus Christ. Acts chapter 4, with great power, the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and grace was upon them.

Acts chapter 8, Philip opened his mouth and beginning with the scriptures, he told them the good news about Jesus. They throw them in jail and what do they do? They tell the jailers about Jesus. They release them from jail and they go into the marketplace and they tell people about Jesus.

[30 : 49] They enjoy the favor of man and they tell them about Jesus. They threatened and beaten and accused and they tell people about Jesus. In each and every circumstance, they cannot help themselves but tell people that Christ is Lord and they preach the gospel to one another and that's why the book of Acts is called the book of Acts.

It means the act of the disciples but it actually should be the acts of the Holy Spirit empowering the disciples to proclaim the gospel. Friends, what does a spirit-filled church look like?

It means we so love God and love others that we cannot keep this good news to ourselves and we find ways and opportunities and we overflow with the wonder of who Christ is that he died on the cross as we were saying earlier, for sinners like me and we tell people about Christ.

What does a spirit-filled church look like? Lastly, the spirit-filled church looks like an insatiable love and delight and treasuring of Jesus Christ. When you read the book of Acts and the rest of the New Testament, what we see again and again and again is that the work of the Spirit is to make the

church more focused and in love with the person of Jesus Christ.

The irony is the spirit-filled church is not focused on the Holy Spirit. The spirit-filled church is empowered by the Spirit to worship and glory Christ and God the Father.

[32 : 14] In John chapter 15, Jesus says this, he says, when the Spirit comes, he will bear witness about me. Now, the Holy Spirit is like this giant spotlight that shines and says, look at Christ, see Christ, see what he's done on the cross, see how glorious he is, see his majesty but see his humility.

The Holy Spirit bears witness about Christ in our hearts and then in chapter 16, he says this amazing thing. I think we've got on the slide, he says this, when the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you in all truth, okay, so the Holy Spirit comes and fills our hearts and he guides us into truth. What truth does he guide us into? Does he tell us the truth about, you know, equals MC squared and AI and technology and how life works?

No, the truth that he reveals to our hearts is that Christ is worthy of our worship. He will glorify me. The great J.I. Packer said this little verse, John 16 verse 14 is the most important verse in the entire Bible in helping us to understand the work and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

When the Spirit comes upon our hearts, he fills us with a sense of the all-sufficiency, the all-satisfying wonder of Jesus, that Christ is glorious and wonderful and enough for us.

[33 : 36] John Piper says his passion, the passion of the Holy Spirit is to make much of Jesus in our hearts, in our lives, in our churches. He sent into the world to open the eyes of our hearts that we might see the magnificence of Christ and glory in him and glorify him.

Friends, this is what we see in Acts in the New Testament. That everywhere we go, the Spirit-filled church, they cannot help themselves but worship and glorify and treasure and delight in Jesus Christ, praising him.

And in the marketplace and in the temple and in their homes and on the way, they're opening the Scriptures and they're showing people Jesus is wonderful, Jesus is sufficient, Jesus is enough.

Friends, if you're a Christian this morning, I want to ask you, is that true of you? Is your heart full of Jesus? Is your heart delighting in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Is your relationship with Christ one of delight and treasuring Jesus above all things? Friends, if you're anything like me, I know it's not true of me all the time. Other things grab my attention.

[34 : 43] Other things become more important to me. I get distracted by things like saving money for the future. Distracted by kids and education and career progression.

We get distracted by house renovations and exams or studies or relationships. And Jesus becomes smaller in our hearts and these things become bigger in our hearts. And one of the goals, one of the roles of the Holy Spirit is to so invade our hearts.

We need the Spirit of the living God to break into our hearts and make Christ big in our hearts and our own kingdom small again. And so I want to ask you, what's your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ?

Is Christ big in our hearts? Or do we just pay lip service and go on with our lives? Dear friends, this is what the Spirit-filled church looks like.

Spiritual gifts such as prophecy, speaking tongues, a word of knowledge, a spiritual revelation. Yes, we need them. Wonderful. God, may we have more of them. Absolutely. Signs and wonders, miraculous healings, I'm all for that.

[35 : 42] But oh dear friends, can't you see how much more the Spirit of God wants to do in us in the church? Let's not settle for a few prophecies here and then and say we are a Spirit-filled church. No friends, let's get on our knees.

Let's humble ourselves before God. Let's cry out to the living God and ask for Him to pour out His Spirit upon us in power and majesty and in awe. Martin Lord Jones again, let me close with this. He explains what the Spirit-empowered church looks like and he says this. I think I've got a quote up there. He says, Do we know anything about this, my dear friends? Do we believe in God coming and doing these things not only that we cannot do but that we cannot control, cannot explain? I ask you, do you long to know such things, to see such things happening again in our day? Are you praying for such things? This is what God can do. This is what God has done. Let us together decide to implore Him, to plead with Him to do this again.

Not that we may have the experience or the excitement but that His mighty hand might be known and His great name may be glorified and magnified among all people. Friends, next week is our

church retreat and we're going to be talking about these things a little bit more.

[36 : 54] Oscar's going to be speaking on this theme more as well. Some of you might know I'm going on sabbatical the week after the retreat and so I won't see you for a while.

If you're not at the retreat, I'll see you again in 2025. But while I'm on sabbatical, I am not just going to be on holiday and I'm not just going to be watching Netflix and sipping pina colodas by the swimming pool.

What am I going to be doing on sabbatical? I'm going to be praying and studying God's Word and seeking God for this. This is going to be my prayer for my own heart and for you and for us as a church and for our great city that we too will be freshly and mightily filled anew with the Holy Spirit in a fresh and powerful way.

that we will have such a profound sense of God's awe and reverence and fear and holiness and the glory of God that it will turn our worlds upside down. That God, whose Word really matters, that we will live for Him.

That God, the one whose opinion, the only one whose opinion really counts, will so explode in our hearts that the other idols of our life will fall away and become trivial into our life and we will live in fear and trepidation and awe and reverence before the majesty and the holiness of God.

[38 : 11] I'm going to be praying that we will be so filled with the, anew with the Holy Spirit that we will repent deeply of our pride and our ego and maybe the things that we, and starting with myself, the things that we've kept secret for too long will be brought into the light.

That some of us maybe for the very first time will be honest with ourselves and honest with others. That we will know and experience the freedom and the joy and the life and the peace of walking in the light.

Friends, I'm praying that God will show me deep idols in my heart that they will be exposed to me and that I will repent deeply of these idols. That the, the, the web and the roots will be disentangled from my heart and that I will live in freedom.

Friends, I'm praying that we as a church will be so utterly astounded by the radical, radical love of God that it will change our lives. That for many of us that have been wracked with shame and guilt our entire lives that feel insecure and are always afraid of what people or our parents think of us for the first time will be anchored and rooted in the profound love of God that they'll be given a security to our hearts and lives we didn't think was possible.

Friends, I'm praying that God's spirit will come upon us in a new and wonderful way that the love of God into us will flow through us to others and that we will be unstoppable in sharing the gospel with others.

[39 : 36] Friends, I'm praying that God will pour his spirit into our hearts that we will treasure Jesus Christ above all things that Christ will be more precious and glorious and beautiful and wonderful and desirous to us than anything else in all the world that we will be able to walk away from any other treasure to hold on to Jesus.

This is who Christ is. This is what the spirit does in his church. This is what God wants to do in us and so will you join me in praying that we will be truly a spirit-filled church, a God-dependent church.

Friends, last thing before I close, let me say this. In John chapter 7, Jesus stands up and he says this. He says, if anybody thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.

And John says this, he said, about the Holy Spirit who is not yet given. Friends, I want to ask you, if you're not a follower of Jesus this morning, Jesus says that your heart will always be dry.

It will always be like a dry riverbed. You will always be searching for life and hope in the things of this world and they'll never satisfy. And maybe they'll satisfy for a week or a month or a year, but soon they'll fade away.

[40 : 54] Jesus Christ says that only as you come to him will he fill your heart to the life, the life-giving power of the living God, the life that you were made for.

Friends, where are you looking for life? What are you hoping and trusting in? What are you giving yourself to? It cannot satisfy. It cannot save.

Jesus Christ can. So why don't you come to him and he says that as you do, he will pour the Holy Spirit into your heart and he will do these things for you. Let's come to him now and pray. Father God, wonderful Son, Holy Spirit, we need you.

Oh God, we need you. God, we confess that our lives are a poor reflection of what we see in the scriptures, a poor reflection of what we see in the book of Acts.

And God, so many things in this world distract us and grab our attention and grip our hearts and you, God, have become small. Lord, I pray by a move of your spirit, won't you pour your spirit upon us in a fresh way?

[42 : 05] Won't you come and fill and flood our hearts that we will live in awe and majesty and reverence before you? Won't you come and fill our hearts that God, we will live for you and you alone.

God, you know each and every one of us. You know where we're at this morning. You know the struggles in our hearts. You know the anxieties and the fears. You know the things we're worried about.

The things we trust and the things that we find so hard to let go because for all our lives we've held onto it. Oh God, won't you help us this morning. Spirit of God, come and help us.

In your great name I pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.