Acts 1:8 Commentary

Acts 1:8 but 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:

Greek: alla lempsesthe (2PFMI) dunamin epelthontos (AAPNSG) tou hagiou pneumatos eph' humas, kai esesthe (2PFMI) mou martures en te Ierousalem kai [en] pase te Ioudaia kai Samareia kai eos eschatou tes ges.

Amplified: But you shall receive power (ability, efficiency, and might) when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria and to the ends (the very bounds) of the earth. (Amplified Bible - Lockman)

ESV: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

ICB: But the Holy Spirit will come to you. Then you will receive power. You will be my witnesses--in Jerusalem, in all of Judea, in Samaria, and in every part of the world."

KJV: But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Mace NT: but ye shall receive the influence of the holy spirit, which will descend upon you: and ye shall be witnesses for me, in Jerusalem, in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the remotest part of the earth.

NET: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the farthest parts of the earth."

NIV: 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."

NKJV: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

NLT: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (NLT - Tyndale House)

Phillips: But you are to be given power when the Holy Spirit has come to you. You will be witnesses to me, not only in Jerusalem, not only throughout Judea, not only in Samaria, but to the very ends of the earth!" (Phillips: Touchstone)

TLB: But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power to testify about me with great effect, to the people in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth, about my death and resurrection."

Weymouth: and yet you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and Samaria and to the remotest parts of the earth."

Wuest: But you shall receive power of the kind which God has and exerts after the Holy Spirit has come upon you. And you shall be those who testify of what they have seen and experienced, my witnesses, both in Jerusalem and in all Judaea and in Samaria and to the end of the earth.

Young's Literal: but ye shall receive power at the coming of the Holy Spirit upon you, and ye shall be witnesses to me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the end of the earth.'

BUT YOU WILL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS COME UPON YOU: alla lempsesthe (2PFMI) dunamin epelthontos (AAPNSG) tou hagiou pneumatos eph' humas:

- **but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you:** Ac 2:1-4 6:8 8:19 Mic 3:8 Zec 4:6 Lk 10:19 Rev 11:3-6

- **Power**: Lk 1:35 Lk 4:14, 36, 5:17, 6:19, 8:46, Luke 9:1, Luke 10:13, 19:37 = miracles, Luke 10:19, 21:26, Lk 21:27, Luke 22:69 Ro 15:19

POWER FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT:
THE MODERN CHURCH'S GREATEST NEED!

See also discussion of A Spirit Filled Church

I love **Robert Morgan's** summary of Acts 1:8 -

> Acts 1:8 is the key that unlocks the door of Acts and the gates of Christian history.
>
> Acts 1:8 represents the last known words of Jesus during His earthly ministry. Verse 9 indicates these are the Lord's final words before being "taken up." Luke 24:50-53 says Jesus ascended to heaven while blessing His disciples, but His words of blessings aren't given. Acts 1:8 are His final words as they were recorded for us. Shouldn't His last command be our first concern?
>
> Acts 1:8 represents the passing of the baton between the Son and the Spirit regarding the divine mission on earth. Jesus indicated in the upper room discourse (John 13-17) that in His physical body He would return to heaven. His presence here would be replaced, so to speak, by the Holy Spirit; and He told the disciples in Luke 24 to tarry in Jerusalem until the Spirit arrived. In Acts 2 we have this arrival, the unleashing of the Holy Spirit upon the church. The book of Acts (and all subsequent Christian history) is the story of what Jesus Christ is continuing to do (see v. 1) on earth through His Spirit working in His church.
>
> Acts 1:8 provides the table of contents for the book of Acts. In reading through Acts, it becomes clear that chapters 1-7 describe the gospel's penetrating Jerusalem; chapters 8-12, Judea and Samaria; and chapters 13-18, the ends of the earth, exactly as outlined in Acts 1:8.
>
> Acts 1:8 represents Christ's agenda for the duration of history till He returns. It's our personal mandate, and every day of our lives must be spent under its ambition and authority (**100 Bible Verses Everyone Should Know by Heart**)

A W Tozer - If God were to take the Holy Spirit out of this world, much of what we're doing in our churches would go right on and nobody would know the difference!...I do not believe in a **repetition** of Pentecost, but I do believe in a **perpetuation** of Pentecost—and there is a vast difference between the two.

Robert Neighbour on the need for the Spirit - Unless saints know their **anointing**, they are helpless as babes in doing the will of God. The work of God can only be made powerful through the Spirit of God. "Ye shall receive power, the Holy Ghost coming upon you," was the promise of the Father. Alas, how many churches there are to-day whose only knowledge of the Holy Spirit, is a theoretical knowledge. From the pastor down through the whole membership, there seems to be no Spirit-endued witnesses to the faith. It certainly pays to halt the work until there is a conscious manifestation of the Spirit's working. Service rendered in the energy of the flesh is a fruitless service. The minister himself needs far more than the best that a theological training can give him; he needs far more than oratorical gifts; far more than literary accomplishments; he needs to have his heart and lips touched with a live coal from off God's altar. The young man or young woman who is in preparation for any phase of Christian work, needs more than schools and colleges can impart. In order to be used of God, one must be set on fire by the Spirit of God. "Power belongeth unto God." (Psalm 62:11KJV) It is "by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Zechariah 4:6) Stephen was a mighty witness, because he was a man full "of faith and power." (Acts 6:8) The early Church was told to look out from among themselves, men "filled with the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:4, 4:8, 4:31, 9:17, 13:9) Our churches and our mission stations at home and abroad need to demand as their first prerequisite, that those who serve them are people who have heard of the Holy Ghost and who have been "endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:49) The factory may be splendidly equipped, but of what use is it all, unless there is power to turn the wheels? The train may stand on the track with every comfort that modern ingenuity can provide, but of what value is it unless the fire is under the boiler, and the power is at hand to run the train?

Bill Crowder gives us a pithy Illustration of Need for Power - The first winter that my wife Marlene and I were married was marked by severe blizzards. I can vividly remember one Sunday when we awoke to find that the electricity had been knocked out by an ice storm. Huddled around a battery-powered radio for news on that frigid Sunday, we heard a most unusual announcement. The announcer, before giving the list of church services canceled due to the ice storm, said,**"The following churches will be closed due to lack of power."**What an interesting comment! I knew what he meant, but I was struck by what he said. The idea of churches closing due to lack of power conjures up some spiritual parallels that directly tie into Jesus' promise of the Spirit. Just prior to His ascension, Jesus told His men in Acts 1:8, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." He directly attached the coming of the Spirit to the empowering of believers. (Bill Crowder - RBC Ministry - Promise of the Spirit)

Vance Havner - Satan has scored a point in making us so afraid of extremism about the Holy Spirit—which abounds indeed—that

we may miss the true in our fear of the false. We can be so wary of getting out on a **limb** that we never go up the **tree**!

John Murray- If Pentecost is not repeated, neither is it retracted. This is the era of the Holy Spirit.

John Stott - Before Christ sent the church into the world, he sent the Spirit into the church. The same order must be observed today.

Why should the children of a King
Go mourning all their days?
Great Comforter, descend, and bring
Some tokens of Thy grace.
--Isaac Watts

(From Jensen's Survey of the New Testament or Logos)
(CLICK TO ENLARGE)

THE Book of Acts takes up the thread of the story just before the point at which the Gospel had dropped it. It begins with a brief summary of the Forty Days, adding a fuller account of the Ascension. These introductory verses (Acts 1:1–12) mark the transition from the earthly Ministry of the Lord ("all that Jesus began both to do and to teach") to the Ministry of the Spirit which was to follow His Ascension (**Click Jensen's diagram above**). The earthly Ministry had been from the first in the power of the Spirit, as the Gospel has taught us; and the Acts opens with an intimation that this continued to the end. (**H B Swete in Great Texts of the Bible**)

A BLESSED CONTRAST

But (235)(**alla**) is a conjunction which signifies a **contrast** which always introduces a "change of direction" so to speak. Whenever you observe a "**but**", pause and prayerfully ponder the text and **context** (to study the verse not in isolation but in relation to other verses) by asking the "**5W/H" questions**, remembering that an interrogative mindset is a vital component of **inductive Bible study** and also an integral component of the **blessed discipline of Biblical Meditation** (see Ps 1:1-note, Ps 1:2-note, Ps 1:3-note, Joshua 1:8-note). As **Mortimer Adler** once wrote in his excellent text **How to Read a Book** ...

If you ask a living teacher a question, he may really answer you. If you are puzzled by what he says, you may save yourself the trouble of thinking by asking him what he means. If, however, you ask a book a question, you must answer it yourself. In this respect a book is like ***nature***. When you speak to it, it answers you only to the extent that you do the work of thinking and analysis yourself.

> **Comment**: The Bible of course is not like ***nature***, nor is it like any other book, for as believers we possess within ourselves (1Cor 3:16, 1Cor 6:19-note) the Holy Spirit, the Author and "Decipherer" of the Book. And so as we prayerfully, humbly, thoughtfully, meditatively, yea even as a little child (Mt 18:3-4) interrogate the "**living and active**" (Heb 4:12-note) **Word of Truth** (Ps 119:43-note, 2Co 6:7, Col 1:5-note, 2Ti 2:15-note, Jas 1:18-note, see also Jn 8:31,32, 17:17), our Teacher, the Spirit, in some very real (albeit to me still mysterious) way interacts with us, illuminating the inspired Word and leading us into all Truth, even as Jesus promised (John 16:13, cp Jn 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:7 1Jn 2:20,27).

The more you **actively** (in contrast to passively) engage the text by **practicing this discipline** (and it does take practice) of **Spirit led interrogation**, the more relevant will be your **questions**, and the richer your rewards as the Spirit illuminates God's Word to the "eyes of your heart" (Eph 1:18-note) allowing you to glean wonderful insights of vital **Truth** by which we are **sanctified** (set apart from the profane world and for the Holy One's use, Jn 17:17, cp 2Ti 2:21-note).

And so we need to examine the **context** to discern Jesus' **contrast** or **"change of direction"** ...

> Acts 1:1 The first account (Gospel of Luke) I composed, Theophilus (Means "friend of God" - see Lk 1:1,2,3), about all that Jesus began to do and teach, 2 until the day when He was taken up, after He had **by the Holy Spirit** given orders (Notice Jesus' dependence on the Holy Spirit for ministry leaving us an example to follow in His steps! **See additional discussion below**) to the apostles whom He had chosen. 3 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. 4 And 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 (Acts 2:33 Isaiah 32:15, 44:3,4, 59:20,21, Joel 2:28-32, Mt 10:20, Lk 24:49, 11:13, 12:12, Jn 7:39, 14:16, 26-28, 15:26, 16:7-12, 13-15, 20:22); 5 for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized (see **baptizo**) with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." And so when they ("the apostles whom He had chosen" Acts 1:2) had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are

restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (cp Acts 1:3, Mt 24:3) He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority (Acts 1:1-7)

Comment: The apostles were looking for the restoration of "**the kingdom to Israel**," an observation which refutes many today who say that God is finished with Israel and that the promises to Israel have been transferred to the Church. Notice that Jesus did not "correct" their "aberrant eschatological" view! Clearly, God is not finished with Israel (Israel's truly miraculous nationhood granted in May, 1947 should be evidence enough to convince even the most skeptical observer!) will restore the **kingdom to Israel** in the **Millennium** (numerous passages from the OT, not just from Revelation 20!) (see also Millennium 1 and Millennium 2) (See related studies on Daniel 9:24-27 [**Daniel 9:24; Daniel 9:25; Daniel 9:26; Daniel 9:27**]) The timing of the messianic, millennial kingdom on earth is unrevealed (Mt 24:36, 42). To reiterate, if Jesus had not intended such a kingdom, surely He would have corrected this erroneous notion in His disciples at this point.

SO WHAT IS THE CONTRAST?

In a word, Jesus calls the apostles to focus not on the **future**, but the **present**. Instead of discussing their **future** kingdom, Jesus sharply draws their attention to their **present** responsibility. Jesus alludes to His previous mention of baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5) and now associates this baptism with the receipt of supernatural power which was necessary for them to be His witnesses.

THE SHARP CONTRAST	
ACTS 1:7	ACTS 1:8
FUTURE	PRESENT
WHAT THEY WILL NOT RECEIVE NOW	WHAT THEY WILL RECEIVE NOW
THE PROMISED MESSIANIC KINGDOM	THE PROMISED HOLY SPIRIT
RESTORATION OF A NATION	SALVATION OF SOULS
REBIRTH OF ISRAEL	BIRTH OF THE CHURCH
PROPHECY OF A KINGDOM	PROPHECY OF A POWER
TIMING NOT TO BE KNOWN BY THEM	TIMING KNOWN BY THEM
TIMING FIXED BY THE FATHER	NOT MANY DAYS FROM NOW

F N Peloubet remarks that Jesus is saying in essence "*You cannot know the future, but you can make it*" (**The Teachers' Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles**)

You will receive - What does this tell us? This was something future. This prophetic promise (Acts 1:4, Lk 24:49) was fulfilled on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). What will they receive? Power, not so much that it is a gift from the Holy Spirit; but that the power is intimately associated with the presence of the Holy Spirit. What was the great need of the first church? **Power from the Holy Spirit**! What is the great need of the church today? **Power from the Holy Spirit**! **Dear reader, may God be pleased to pour to overflowing the supernatural power of His Spirit into your life and your local body of believers for the sake of His Kingdom and His glory. Amen.**

Richard Longenecker summarizes Acts 1:8 observing that it is

> the mandate to witness that stands as the theme for the whole of Acts is explicitly set out. It comes as a direct commission from Jesus Himself—in fact, as Jesus' last word before His ascension and, therefore, as one that is final and conclusive. All that follows in Acts is shown to be the result of Jesus' own intent and the fulfillment of His express word. This commission lays an obligation on all Christians and comes to us as a gift with a promise.
>
> It concerns a **person**, a **power**, and a **program**—the **Person** of Jesus, on Whose authority the church acts

and Who is the object of its witness; the **power** of the Holy Spirit, which is the sine qua non for the mission; and a **program** that begins at Jerusalem, moves out to "all Judea and Samaria," and extends "to the ends of the earth."

The Christian church, according to Acts, is a missionary church that responds obediently to Jesus' commission, acts on Jesus' behalf in the extension of his ministry, focuses its proclamation of the kingdom of God in its witness to Jesus, is guided and empowered by the self-same Spirit that directed and supported Jesus' ministry, and follows a program whose guidelines for outreach have been set by Jesus himself. (**Gaebelein, F, Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary 6-Volume New Testament. Zondervan Publishing**)

DIVINE DUNAMIS:
A KEY WORD IN ACTS

There are two NT words that convey the idea of **power**, **exousia** and **dunamis**, and it is the latter which is used by Luke in Acts 1:8. However, these two words are related in one sense, for the One Who promises the **power** (dunamis) is the very One to Whom all **authority** (**exousia** = "the right and the might") **"in heaven and on earth"** has been granted (Mt 28:18)! It follows that His promise of **power** can be fully trusted because He has full **authority** to make such an incredible proclamation - **natural** men and women will receive **supernatural** power to be His **witnesses** and by their **witness** will be privileged to **witness** the great miracle (based upon the greatest miracle, the Resurrection of Christ) of rebirth of a dead spirit, the creation of new life, eternal life in another human soul. Let me encourage you to study the Biblical truths about power in the following section, and as you study this truth, may **our Father be pleased to generate in your inner being a deep, abiding hunger and thirst to experience the continual fullness of the Holy Spirit and the power He provides to live the supernatural life as a dynamic witness for Jesus Christ and His Gospel of grace. Amen.**

Power (**Miracles**) (1411)(**dunamis** from **dunamai** = to be able, to have power especially achieving power) refers to inherent **ability**, not physical ability but power to accomplish a task. **Dunamis** is intrinsic power, the power to carry out some function. In Acts 1:8, **dunamis** is associated with the coming of the **Holy Spirit** upon a person, giving that person the supernatural power capable of accomplishing the task Jesus assigns. So clearly, in the **context** of the book of Acts, '**Divine dunamis**" is the power which is **necessary** (emphasize "*necessary*") for **disciples** to be witnesses of the Good News, which also possesses inherent '**Divine dunamis**" as Paul explained declaring...

> **For** (term of explanation = see context = Ro 1:15-note) I am not **ashamed** of the **Gospel**, **for** (term of explanation = e.g., Ask "*Why not*?") it (*What*?) is the **power** of God for **salvation** to everyone who **believes** (present tense), to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (Ro 1:16-note).

Leon Morris reminds us of something we often forget that...

> The same power that brought Christ back from the dead is operative within those who are Christ's.
>
> **Comment**: Which should cause us to break out in song...

Jesus Be Jesus In Me

Jesus be Jesus in me, no longer me but Thee.
Resurrection power fill me this hour.
Jesus be Jesus in me.

Gilbert writes that **dunamis**

> is used of both an **inward spiritual equipment** and of the **resulting outward achievement**. Thus Stephen was full of power (Acts 6:8), and great powers or miracles were wrought by Philip (Acts 8:13)The connection of this power with the Spirit of God was to be illustrated in the case of the disciples as it had been in the earthly life of Jesus (Acts 10:38). (**Acts 1 - Interpretative Comment from Bible for Home and School -1908)**

Dunamis (power) is clearly a **key word** in the book of Acts where it is used 10 times, 3x to describe **miracles** (supernatural power that is visible) and 7x as **power** (supernatural power that is necessary for ministry - albeit Acts 8:10 refers to counterfeit supernatural power of Simon the sorcerer!)...

> Acts 1:8 but you will receive **power** (**dunamis**) 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 2:22 "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with **miracles** (**dunamis**) and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you

yourselves know--

Acts 3:12 But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own **power** (**dunamis**) or piety we had made him walk (**Context** = Acts 3:1-6, 7, 8?

Comment: Peter's implication is that it is not his "**power**" (**dunamis**) but it is God's power, supernatural power by which the miracles have been performed.

Acts 4:7 When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, "By what **power** (**dunamis**), or in what name, have you done this (Context = healed the lame man - see preceding use of **power**)?"

Comment: Luke records that "seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply." (Acts 4:14) As **Henry Morris** commented "Intellectual or philosophical arguments are silenced when confronted with direct evidence of the (supernatural) **power** (**dunamis**) of the Gospel." (**Defender's Study Bible**)

Acts 4:31 (For Context) 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 (**What was the effect of filling?** Speaking the Word of God, not their words, and doing so with boldness, clear evidence of the power Jesus had promised would be associated with the coming of the Holy Spirit).... **Acts 4:33** And with great **power** (**dunamis**) the **apostles** were giving **testimony** (*marturion* from *martus*) to the **resurrection** of the Lord Jesus, and abundant **grace** was upon them all.

Comment: Observe how the **apostles** obeyed Acts 1:8 and God blessed their obedience. Will He do any less for any of His disciples who obey His charge to be "**My witness**" wherever He has placed us? I think not!

Acts 6:8 And Stephen, full of grace and **power** (**dunamis**), was performing great wonders and signs among the people.

Comment: Be careful when you read a passage in isolation, lest you arrive an incorrect interpretation. If possible take time to examine the context -- you will often be pleasantly rewarded with wonderful insights! In the present passage, we learn from the context that Stephen was "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5) and here in verse 8 we see he is full of grace and power. Do you think there is any association? The answer is obviously "yes" and so once again we observe the intimate association of the presence (and fullness) of the **Holy Spirit** and **power**. Notice that spiritual opposition arose but "they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he (Stephen) was speaking." (Acts 6:10) Why? Because Stephen's power was not human but divine! The same power every believer has access when filled with the Holy Spirit (cp Eph 5:18). Observe the Spirit empowered boldness that prompted Stephen to tell the Jewish audience "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did. Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who had previously announced the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; " (Acts 7:51, 52). And how did they respond? "They were cut to the quick and they began gnashing their teeth at him" (Acts 7:54) And how did Stephen respond? "But **being full of the Holy Spirit**, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God 56 and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55-56) And observe his supernatural power to forgive the very ones who were stoning him declaring "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And having said this, he fell asleep." (Acts 7:60) Stephen had received power and the fullness of the Spirit to be a witness for Jesus, for a man named Saul watched Stephen's supernatural life and death and later became Paul, the greatest apostle of the New Testament. That's what Acts 1:8 is about!

As a side exercise study the passages in Acts that describe filling or fullness of the Spirit (remember to observe the context) - Acts 2:4, Acts 4:8, Acts 4:31, 33, Acts 6:3, 5, 8, 7:55, Acts 9:17, Acts 11:24 (note the impact of his witness), Acts 13:9 (contrast Acts 13:9), Acts 13:52 (compare Ro 15:13).

Acts 8:10 and they all, from smallest to greatest, were giving attention to him, saying, "This man is what is called the Great **Power** (**dunamis**) of God."

Acts 8:13 Even Simon himself believed; and after being baptized, he continued on with Philip, and as he observed signs and great **miracles** taking place, he was constantly amazed.

Acts 10:38 "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the **Holy Spirit** and with **power** (**dunamis**), and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was

with Him.

Comment: Beloved, do not miss the intimate association of the presence of the **Spirit** and **power** in the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. As will be discussed more fully below, Jesus is our great example for dynamic, supernatural ministry. If He needed the Spirit and the power, how much greater is our need? Why do we so often attempt to minister in our natural ability rather than relying upon God's provision of power?

Acts 19:11 God was performing extraordinary **miracles** (**dunamis**) by the hands of Paul

Paul also associates the **Holy Spirit** with supernatural **power** (**dunamis**) in the following passages...

Romans 15:13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by **the power of the Holy Spirit**

Romans 15:18 For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed, 19 in the **power** (**dunamis**) of signs and wonders, in the **power** (**dunamis**) **of the Spirit**; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as **Illyricum** I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.

Comment: Notice the phrase "**what Christ has accomplished through me.**" How did Christ accomplish this spread of the Gospel? Acts 1:8 says that being Christ's witness requires the power which is associated with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7), the Spirit of Christ (Ro 8:9-note). Note also that **Illyricum** was a province of the Roman Empire, lying East and Northeast of the Adriatic Sea. Paul is describing the witness of Jesus being spread **to the remotest part of the earth**.

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the **power of God**.

1 Corinthians 2:4 and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of **the Spirit and of power** (**dunamis**), 5 so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the **power** (**dunamis**) **of God**.

1 Thessalonians 1:5 for our Gospel did not come to you in word only, but also **in power** (**dunamis**) and **in the Holy Spirit** and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

Ephesians 3:16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with **power** (**dunamis**) through His **Spirit** in the inner man,

Ephesians 3:20 Now to Him Who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the **power** (**dunamis**) that works within us,

Comment: While this passage does not mention the Holy Spirit, the phrase "the power that works within us" is clearly a manifestation of the Spirit Who dwells within us and through Whom God works.

Colossians 1:29 For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His **power** (**dunamis**), which mightily works within me.

Comment: As in Ephesians 3:20, the **power** that works within us is a manifestation of the Spirit of Christ Who lives within us, strengthening us in our inner man, enabling us to do supernaturally what we could never do naturally.

The power that compels us
comes from the Spirit who indwells us.

Dunamis (dynamis) is the source of our English words **dynamic**, **dynamo**, and **dynamite**. Ponder the meanings of these English words as you **meditate** on Acts 1:8 and how this truth should impact our **witness** to a world spiritually dead in "**trespasses** and **sins**" (Eph 2:1-note).

Dynamic is an adjective describing one as "characterized by constant activity," "marked by usually continuous and productive activity or change," "energetic". Synonyms = "alive, functioning, live, operative, running, working." "Many a person who thinks he's a human dynamo is probably more like an electric fan." As a noun **dynamic** describes "a force that stimulates change." **Would you describe our witness as dynamic**?

Dynamo is "a machine for converting mechanical energy into electrical energy by rotating conducting coils in a magnetic field," "an extremely energetic person,"

Dynamite is a well known explosive, which when used figuratively describes "one that has a powerful effect".

And so we have "**dynamic**" (a powerful person or movement), "**dynamo**" (a power-producing machine), and "**dynamite**" (an extremely powerful explosive). These English words suggest (1) adequate power; (2) personal power; (3) perpetual power. Ponder these meanings as you contemplate how they might apply to the phrase "**my witnesses**".

John Owen well said that...

We have no power from God unless we live in the persuasion that we have none of our own.

Comment: I would add the corollary that pride (call it self sufficiency or self reliance if you wish, but it's still the same sin in different "dress") impedes the flow of God's power.

F N Peloubet comments that

Power in the Greek is **dunamis**, of which our word "**dynamite**." is almost a transliteration, and this expresses well the greatness of the power to upheave the obstacles in their way; although the power bestowed was in its action more like that of the sun, which is infinitely greater than all the explosives in the world.

This **power** given includes (1) moral and spiritual power; (2) power to overcome temptations, and to do right under the most trying circumstances; (3) power to lead men to the Saviour; (4) power to overcome all enemies and obstacles, though they were like mountains to be cast into the sea; (5) power to work miracles; (6) power to lead the church; (7) power to bring the kingdom of heaven. (**The Teachers' Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles**)

DUNAMIS OF THE SPIRIT
IS SPIRITUAL POWER

H P Liddon describes the **power** primarily as **spiritual power**...

Spiritual power may be felt rather than described or analyzed. It resides in or it permeates a man's whole circle of activities; it cannot be localized, it cannot be identified exclusively with one of them. It is an unearthly beauty, whose native home is in a higher world, yet which tarries among men from age to age, since the time when the Son of God left us His example (1Pe 2:21), and gave us His Spirit.

It is nothing else than His spiritual presence, mantling upon His servants; they live in Him; they lose in Him something of their proper personality; they are absorbed into, they are transfigured by, a Life altogether higher than their own; His voice blends with theirs, His eye seems to lighten theirs with its sweetness and its penetration; His hand gives gentleness and decision to their acts; His heart communicates a ray of its Divine charity to their life of narrower and more stagnant affection; His soul commingles with theirs, and their life of thought, and feeling, and resolve is irradiated and braced by His.

"If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode (dwelling, abiding place, resting place, mansion) with him." (Jn 14:23) "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father Who speaks in you." (Mt 10:20) (**Acts 1:8 Power for Witness in Great Texts of the Bible - 23 pages**)

Illustration of Spiritual Power versus Natural Power - Suppose we saw an army sitting down before a granite fort, and they told us that they intended to batter it down; we might ask them, "How?" They point to a cannon-ball. Well, there is no power in that; it is heavy, but not more than half a hundred-, or perhaps a hundred-weight; if all the men in the army hurled it against the fort, they would make no impression. They say, "No; but look at the cannon." Well, there is no power in that. A child may ride upon it, a bird may perch in its mouth; it is a machine, and nothing more. "But look at the powder." Well, there is no power in that; a child may spill it, a sparrow may peck it. Yet this powerless powder, and powerless ball, are put into the powerless cannon, one spark of fire enters it, and then, in the twinkling of an eye, that powder is a flash of lightning, and that ball a thunderbolt which smites as if it had been sent from heaven. So is it with our Church machinery at this day: we have all the instruments necessary for pulling down strongholds, and O for the baptism of fire! (W. Arthur, The Tongue of Fire, 309)

S D Gordon writes...

There is one inlet of power in the life,—anybody's life—any kind of power, just one inlet,—the Holy Spirit. He is power. He is in every one who opens his door to God. He eagerly enters every open door. He comes in by our invitation and consent. His presence within is the vital thing. (Quiet Talks on Prayer)

One of my favorite verses regarding the **power** of the **Word of God** is found in Luke...

> For no (Greek = *ou* = **absolutely no**) **word** (**rhema**) from God shall be void of power (a**duna**teo - which is essentially the antithesis of **duna**mai). (Luke 1:37ASV)
>
> **Weymouth translation**: For no promise from God will be impossible of fulfilment.
>
> Here is an OT parallel from Genesis 18:14ASV - The Greek (Lxx) translation = me adunatei (present active indicative) para to theo **rhema**...
>
> **Brenton's translation of the LXX**: Shall anything be impossible with the Lord?...
>
> **My translation of LXX** (Brenton ignores the Greek word "**rhema**" = spoken word. He also translates adunatei as future but it is actually present tense. He also translates "theo" as Lord but it is actually "God"). Therefore here is my rendition = Is any spoken word [continually] too difficult for God....

As Peter declares God's "**divine power** (dunamis) **has granted** (perfect tense = an enduring gift) **to us everything pertaining to life and godliness**" (2Pe 1:3-note).

In summary, believers have everything necessary to be His **witnesses** - His Word of power, the inherent supernatural power of the Gospel message, and the miracle working power of His indwelling Spirit! **What else do we need?**

JESUS, DUNAMIS AND DISCIPLES

Jesus on **power** (**dunamis**) given to the **disciples**...

> Luke 9:1 And He (Jesus) called the twelve (disciples) together, and gave them **power** (it is a Gift even as here in Acts 1:8!) and **authority** (**exousia** = the right and the might) over all the demons, and to heal diseases.
>
> **Comment**: Notice that even before the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, it was necessary for "**Kingdom workers**" to be enabled by **Divine Dunamis**!
>
> Luke 10:19 "Behold, I have given you **authority** (**exousia** = the right and the might) to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and over all the **power** of the enemy, and nothing shall injure you.
>
> **Comment**: Notice that in context Jesus was sending out the seventy-two in twos to minister in His name and they needed His divine authority and might for ministry! Beloved, if this was their need then, is it not our great need of the hour now?!
>
> (Jesus) And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides ***with*** you, and will be ***in*** you. (Jn 14:16-17)
>
> **Comment**: The Spirit was "***with***" them but would be "***in***" them is a promise of the fulfillment of the New Covenant (**Read** Ezekiel 36:26, 27, Jer 31:31-34)
>
> Luke 24:49 (**Context**: Lk 24:45-46, 47-48, 50-51)"And behold, I am sending forth the **promise** of My Father upon you (the 11 disciples/apostles); but (strong contrast) you are to stay in the city **until** (**Note**: Not "*if*" but "*until*" - see expressions of time) you are clothed with **power** (**dunamis**) from on high."
>
> **D L Moody comments**: Some people seem to think they are losing time if they wait on God for His power, and so away they go and work without unction; they are working without any anointing, they are working without any power. (**Secret Power, by D. L. Moody - Online version**)
>
> Old Testament examples of Spirit "Upon" Someone: Moses = Nu 11:16, 17, 25, 26 (!!!), Nu 24:2, Jdg 3:9, 10, Jdg 6:34, Jdg 11:29, Jdg 14:5, 6, 19, 15:14, Saul = 1Sa 10:6, 10, 11:6 (Contrast 1Sa 18:10), David = 1Sa 16:13, 1Sa 19:20, 1Sa 19:23 (Saul), 1Chr 12:18, 2Chr 20:14, Isa 32:15 (to be fully fulfilled at the inception of the Millennium - Zech 12:10, Ezek 37:12-14, cp Ro 11:26), Isa 42:1, 59:21, Isa 61:1 (Lk 4:18, cp Mt 3:16, 12:18), Ezek 11:5, 37:1.
>
> Acts 1:4 "And 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."
>
> **Comment**: The **promise** of the Father was the **Person** of the Spirit, the **Power** of the Holy Spirit and the **Plan** of the Holy Spirit (Jerusalem, etc).

Henry Morris...

> The **power** associated with the coming of the Holy Spirit on a believer is more than just a dynamic preaching style. It will also involve "**boldness**" and "**great grace**" (Acts 4:31,33) in witnessing, centered in the wisdom of God rather than the wisdom of men (1Corinthians 2:4-6) and manifestation of "the fruit of the Spirit" in one's life (Galatians 5:22-23). (**Defender's Study Bible Notes**)

William MacDonald rightly comments that Spirit given, supernatural...

> **power** is the grand indispensable of Christian witness. A man may be highly talented, intensively trained, and widely experienced, but without spiritual **power** he is ineffective. On the other hand, a man may be uneducated, unattractive, and unrefined, yet let him be endued with the **power** of the Holy Spirit and the world will turn out to see him burn for God. The fearful disciples needed **power** for witnessing, holy boldness for preaching the gospel.
>
> **Comment**: I think immediately of **Dwight L. Moody**, a layman who never went to seminary and yet by some accounts preached powerfully to over 100 million people in a day time when travel was difficult. C H Spurgeon is another man who never went to seminary, but whom God used mightily. They were greatly used by God because they relied on the Spirit's power. The need of the hour is **power**! But beware! While there is genuine Spirit given power based on truth, there is also a subtle counterfeit power based on error. There is a crying need for Spirit given discernment of Scripture saturated saints, men and women who have a steady diet of "solid food" which "is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained (gumnazo - rigorous spiritual exercise involving the practice of serious study of the Word.) to discern good and evil." (Hebrews 5:14-note). I know of no more efficient way of cultivating this greatly needed quality of discernment than by learning to **study the Bible Inductively**.

THE SECRET OF EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

In his last letter, **Paul** emphasized Timothy's continual great need for supernatural empowerment for effective ministry writing...

> You therefore (term of conclusion - check context to see what, why, etc Paul is concluding), my son, **be strong** (present imperative - command) in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. (2Ti 2:1-note)
>
> Comment: This was Timothy's need and beloved it is the great need of the present dark hour in America (I am writing Feb, 2012), an hour in which the church seems powerless (for the most part) to be radical salt and light to an increasing God hating society. **Be strong** (**endunamoo** is related to the root word **dunamis**) is not a suggestion but a command calling for Timothy (and all believers in ministry -- we are **ALL** in ministry!) to continually renounce self strength and rely on supernatural Spirit given strength. The **passive voice** signifies that Timothy is the recipient of the power and is to continually keep himself in a position (and attitude) so that he might receive power from the Spirit of Christ indwelling him. What is that position or attitude that is crucial for the receipt of God's power for to be His **witnesses**? James explains that "God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble." (James 4:6) Jesus answered Paul's prayer for removal of the thorn in his side, not by removing the thorn, but by explaining to Paul the secret of power in ministry -- "My **grace** is sufficient for you, for **power** (**dunamis**) is perfected in weakness." Paul replied "Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the **power** (**dunamis**) of Christ may dwell in me." (2Cor 12:9-note)

The greatest evangelist of the 19th century, **D L Moody** once said...

> Some people think that they are losing time if they wait on God for His **power**; and so they go and work, without unction; they are working without any anointing; they are working without any **power**. (**Ouch!**)

In his book entitled **Secret Power (online)**, **D L Moody** writes...

> One man may have "zeal without knowledge," while another may have knowledge without zeal. If I could have only the one, I believe I should choose the first; but, with an open Bible, no one need be without knowledge of God's will and purpose; and the object of this book is to help others to know the source of true power, that both their zeal and their knowledge may be of increased service in the Master's work. Paul says, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable;" but I believe one portion, and that the subject of this book, has been too much overlooked, as though it were not practical, and the result is lack of power in testimony and work. If we would work, "not as one that beats the air," (1Cor 9:26) but to some definite purpose, **we must have this power from on high**. **Without this power, our work will be drudgery. With it, it becomes a**

joyful task, a refreshing service. May God make this book a blessing to many. This is my prayer. D. L. MOODY. NORTHFIELD, MASS., May 1st, 1881.

"Without the soul, divinely quickened and inspired, the observances of the grandest ritualism are as worthless as the motions of a galvanized corpse." -Anonymous

I quote this sentence, as it leads me at once to the subject under consideration. What is this quickening and inspiration? What is this power needed? From whence its source? I reply: **The Holy Spirit of God**. I am a full believer in "The Apostles' Creed," and therefore "I believe in the Holy Ghost." A writer has pointedly asked: "What are our souls without His grace? - as dead as the branch in which the sap does not circulate (cp Jn 15:5). What is the Church without Him? - as parched and barren as the fields without the dew and rain of heaven." (cp Jn 6:63) There has been much inquiry of late on the subject of the Holy Spirit. In this and other lands thousands of persons have been giving attention to the study of this grand theme. I hope it will lead us all to pray for the greater manifestation of His power upon the whole Church of God. How much we have dishonored Him in the past! How ignorant of His grace, and love and presence we have been? True, we have heard of Him and read of Him, but we have had little intelligent knowledge of His attributes, His offices and His relations to us. I fear He has not been to many professed Christians an actual existence, nor is He known to them as a personality of the Godhead....

....The Holy Spirit is closely identified with the words of the Lord Jesus. "It is the Spirit that quickens (gives life); the flesh profits nothing, the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." (Jn 6:63) **The Gospel proclamation can not be divorced from the Holy Spirit. Unless He attend the word in power, vain will be the attempt in preaching it.** Human eloquence or persuasiveness of speech are the mere trappings of the dead, if the living Spirit be absent; the prophet may preach to the bones in the valley, but it must be the breath from Heaven which will cause the slain to live....

...It is the work of the Spirit to impress the heart and seal the preached word. His office is to take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto us....

....We can not work for God without love. It is the only tree that can produce fruit on this sin-cursed earth, that is acceptable to God. If I have no love for God nor for my fellow man, then I can not work acceptably. I am like sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. We are told that "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." (Ro 5:5) Now, if we have had that love shed abroad in our hearts, we are ready for God's service; if we have not, we are not ready. It is so easy to reach a man when you love him; all barriers are broken down and swept away....

....WHAT IS NEEDED. Nine-tenths, at least, of the church members never think of speaking for Christ. If they see a man, perhaps a near relative, just going right down to ruin, going rapidly, they never think of speaking to him about his sinful course and of seeking to win him to Christ. Now certainly there must be something wrong. And yet when you talk with them you find they have faith, and you can not say they are not children of God; but they have not the power, they have not the liberty, they have not the love that real disciples of Christ should have. A great many people are thinking that we need new measures, that we need new churches, that we need new organs, and that we need new choirs, and all these new things. That is not what the Church of God needs to-day. It is the old power that the Apostles had; that is what we want, and if we have that in our churches, there will be new life. Then we will have new ministers--the same old ministers renewed with power; filled with the Spirit. I remember when in Chicago many were toiling in the work, and it seemed as though the car of salvation didn't move on, when a minister began to cry out from the very depths of his heart, "Oh, God, put new ministers in every pulpit." On next Monday I heard two or three men stand up and say, "We had a new minister last Sunday--the same old minister, but he had got new power," and I firmly believe that is what we want to-day all over America. We want new ministers in the pulpit and new people in the pews. We want people quickened by the Spirit of God, and the Spirit coming down and taking possession of the children of God and giving them power....

...Skeptics and infidels may say they don't believe in it. It is not our work to make them believe in it; that is the work of the Spirit. Our work is to give them the Word of God; not to preach our theories and our ideas about it, but just to deliver the message as God gives it to us....

.... If a man is filled with the Spirit, he will magnify the Word; he will preach the Word, and not himself; he will give this lost world the Word of the living God....

....Now I tell you when the Spirit of God is on us for service, resting upon us, we are anointed, and then we can do great things....I would like to see some one just full of living water; so full that they couldn't contain it; that

they would have to go out and publish the Gospel of the grace of God. When a man gets so full that he can't hold any more, then he is just ready for God's service.

Here are some other quotes that relate to the great need of believers for **power** from the **Holy Spirit** in order to be Christ's **witnesses**...

In vain do the inhabitants of London go to their conduits for supply unless the man who has the master-key turns the water on; and in vain do we think to quench our thirst at ordinances, unless God communicates the living water of His Spirit.--**Anonymous** (cp John 7:37,38,39)

It was the custom of the Roman emperors, at their triumphal entrance, to cast new coins among the multitudes; so doth Christ (Acts 1:8), in His triumphal ascension into heaven (Acts 1:9), throw the greatest gifts for the good of men that were ever given.--**Thomas Goodwin.**

To unconverted persons, a great part of the Bible resembles a letter written in *cipher*. The blessed Spirit's office is to act as God's *Decipherer*, by letting His people into the secret of celestial experience, as the key and clue to those sweet mysteries of grace which were before as a garden shut up, or as a fountain sealed, or as a book written in an unknown character.--**Augustus Toplady.** (cp Eph 1:18, 19)

IN GOD'S
PERFECT TIMING

When - Not "if" but "when" - His coming was a certainty. His power was assured. All they had to do was tarry, to wait.

The Holy Spirit - Not an "it", nor a "thing", nor a spiritual "effect." No! He is a Person, the Third Person of the Godhead. He is One Jesus asked for from the Father. He the one the Father promised to send. He is the One Who would accompany the New Heart of the New Covenant. He is the One associated with power, supernatural power, miracle working power, necessary power, sufficient power, power to be Christ's witnesses.

We cannot cover all of the passages that relate to the promised gift of the Spirit but here are several from the lips of Jesus spoken some 40 days prior to the events of Acts chapter 1...

John 14:16 "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another **Helper**, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the **Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because **He** abides with you, and will be in you. 18 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."

Comment: Observe (1) the indwelling of the Spirit is forever, which implies He will be in us in eternity future. (2) the promise that the Spirit would one day dwell "in" them (3) Jesus saying "I will come to you" but how? Surely a reference to the Spirit of Christ Who came at Pentecost and Who now comes to indwell every believer.

John 14:25 "These things I have spoken to you, while abiding with you. 26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 15:26 "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me, 27 and you will **bear witness** (martureo) also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

John 16:7 "But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. 8 "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me; 10 and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you no longer behold Me; 11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

FOLLOWING
JESUS' EXAMPLE

(From Jensen's Survey of the New Testament or Logos)
(CLICK TO ENLARGE)

In the diagram (click to enlarge) notice that when Jesus ascended, the Spirit descended. However, there is more to the story as Paul

Harvey used to say! As will be explained below, the Gospels teach us that Jesus, fully God, but also fully Man, witnessed in the power of the Holy Spirit and in so doing left His followers the perfect example to follow as His witnesses to the world!

Peter reminds us (in context of discussing His suffering)

> For (term of explanation - What should this prompt us to do? 1Pe 2:20-note) you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an **example** for you to follow **in His steps** (1Peter 2:21-note)

The apostle John adds that

> the one who says he abides in Him ought (opheilo - "owe a debt", are under obligation) himself to **walk** (peripateo = behave, conduct himself) **in the same manner as He walked**. (1John 2:6)
>
> **Comment**: John's exhortation begs the question "How did Jesus conduct Himself during His ministry on earth?" And specifically what was the source of His power for this walk?

Paul issued this command...

> I exhort you therefore (term of conclusion - see 1Co 4:15), **be** (present imperative = command to continually be) **imitators** of me. (1Cor 4:16)
>
> **Comment**: As an aside it is important to understand that every imperative or command spoken to believers in the New Testament is a call for us to renounce our dependence on self (our fleshly ability to obey and carry out the command) and to depend on the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit, Who gives us both the desire (my flesh left to itself does not want to obey God) and the power (my flesh does not have the supernatural power to obey God). (See Php 2:13NLT-note). And yet in the mysterious working of God, we must make a conscious, volitional decision to work out our salvation in fear and trembling. (Php 2:12-note), a "process" I like to refer to as **"Sacred Synergism."** (a term adapted from Jerry Bridges' book I highly recommend entitled **The Bookends of the Christian Life**.)
>
> **Be** (present imperative = command to continually be) **imitators** of me, **just as** I also am of Christ. (1Cor 11:1)

And so, beloved, we must ask the important question -- **"What is Jesus' example which Paul imitated and we too are commanded (enabled by the Spirit) to imitate?"** The Gospel accounts explain **Jesus' "example"** specifically describing His Source of power for ministry...

> Matthew 3:16-17, 4:1 (cp Mk 1:10, Lk 3:22, Jn 1:32, 33, 34) And after being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the **Spirit of God** descending as a dove, and **coming upon Him** (come = *erchomai* + upon = *epi*. Compare "*comes upon*" = *eperchomai* here in Acts 1:8),17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." Then Jesus was **led up by the Spirit** into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
>
> **Comment**: "**Led by**" is **passive voice** meaning just what it says. Jesus submitted His will to the will of the Spirit, to obey as the Spirit led Him. And so at the inception of His 3 year ministry we begin to see Jesus' example and the "secret" of His power. **Beloved, are you learning to yield to the leading of the Holy Spirit? Do you desire the same power in which Jesus ministered? Do you believe Jesus' promise to you as one of His disciples?...**
>
>> **Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do shall he do also and greater works than these shall he do because I go to the Father. (John 14:12)**
>>
>> **What did Jesus mean? The ESV Study Bible has this excellent answer...** "Greater works" will be possible because of the power of the Holy Spirit Who would be sent after Jesus goes to the Father (John 16:7; also John 7:39; 14:16, 26). These "greater works" include evangelism, teaching, and deeds of mercy and compassion—in short, the entire ministry of the **Church** to the entire world, **beginning from Pentecost** (Acts 2:1-2, 3-4). (E.g., on the day of Pentecost alone, more believers were added to Jesus' followers than during his entire earthly ministry up to that time; cf. Acts 2:41.) These works are "greater" not because they are more amazing miracles but because they will be greater in their worldwide scope and will result in the transformation of individual lives and of whole cultures and societies.
>>
>> **John MacArthur adds**: The greater works to which Jesus referred were not greater in

power than those He performed, but greater in extent. The disciples would indeed perform miraculous works, as Jesus had (cf. Acts 5:12–16; Heb. 2:3–4). But those physical miracles were not primarily what Jesus had in mind, since the apostles did not do more powerful miracles than He had. When the Lord spoke of His followers performing greater works, He was referring to the extent of the spiritual miracle of salvation. Jesus never preached outside of Palestine, yet His followers would spread the gospel throughout the world. Jesus had only a limited outreach to Gentiles (cf. Mark 7:26ff.), but the disciples (particularly Peter and later Paul) would reach the Gentile world with the gospel. The number of believers in Christ would also grow far beyond the hundreds (Acts 1:15; 1 Cor. 15:6) that were numbered during His lifetime. The power to perform those greater works would only be available because Jesus was going to the Father. It was only then that He would send the Holy Spirit (John 7:39; cf. John 14:16–17, 26; 15:26; 16:13; Acts 1:5) to indwell believers (Ro. 8:9–11) and empower them for ministry (Acts 1:8; 1Cor. 12:4–11; cf. Eph. 3:20). Christ's promise to send the Holy Spirit offered further comfort to the disciples. Though Jesus would no longer be visibly present with them, the Spirit would provide them with all the power they needed to extend the work He had begun (cf. Acts 1:8). (**MacArthur, J: John 12-21. Chicago: Moody Press**)

Luke adds "And Jesus, **full of the Holy Spirit,** returned from the Jordan and was **led about by the Spirit** in the wilderness." (Luke 4:1)

JESUS...
FILLED WITH THE
HOLY SPIRIT

Comment: This passage parallels Mt 4:1 but adds that Jesus was filled with the Spirit, the very thing Paul commands in Ephesians writing that believers are "not to be drunk with wine for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit." (Eph 5:18-note). **What does this mean to be filled with the Spirit?** What happens when one is filled with alcohol? It controls what they say, how they walk, what they do, etc. When someone is filled with rage as were those in the synagogue in Luke 4:28, it controls their actions (see Luke 4:28, cp Lk 6:11). In short, what fills you, controls you. If the Spirit fills you, He controls you. Is this a bit mysterious? It is to me, but it is clearly the pattern of powerful ministry laid out in the Gospels, in Acts and in the Epistles. Observe and meditate on the following passages in Acts - Acts 2:4, Acts 4:8 (Observe how Peter spoke prior to the filling with the power of the Spirit! - Mt 26:69-70, 71, 72, 73, 74-75), Acts 4:31 (Observe especially what they spoke and how they spoke! Do you see a pattern?), Acts 9:17 (How was Paul able to be such a powerful and effective witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ?), Acts 13:9, Acts 13:52

I love the way the great Puritan writer **John Bunyan** described filling with the Spirit "Seamen cannot create the wind, but they can hoist their sails to welcome it; neither can we create the breath of the Spirit, but are we to miss it when it comes through failure to keep our sails unfurled?" **May God grant us grace to keep our "sails unfurled!" Amen**

Spirit of God, descend upon my heart;
Wean it from earth; through all its pulses move;
Stoop to my weakness, mighty as Thou art,
And make me love Thee as I ought to love.
-George Croly

JESUS...
THE POWER OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT

(After Jesus' temptation by the devil) And Jesus returned to Galilee **in the power (dunamis) of the Spirit**; and news about Him spread through all the surrounding district. (Luke 4:14)

(After entering the synagogue on the Sabbath He read from Isaiah) "**THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD** IS **UPON** ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE DOWNTRODDEN, 19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD." (Luke 4:18-19)

In Acts **Luke** declares again that **Jesus** carried out His ministry in the **power of the Holy Spirit**..

> You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with **the Holy Spirit** (see Mt 3:16-17 above) and with **power** (**dunamis**), and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for **God was with Him**. (Acts 10:38)
>
> **Comment**: Observe that last phrase "God was with Him." Notice that it is introduced by a ("for"), which explains how Jesus was able to carry on ministry. This is a mystery to me, for Jesus could have chosen to minister in His own power, but He did not. He chose to empty Himself and become a bondservant of the Most High God and to leave you and I the perfect pattern for powerful ministry "for God was with Him."

In summary from the preceding passages, it is clear that Jesus, although fully God, emptied Himself of His divine prerogatives (cp Php 2:6-7-note) and carried out His ministry in **the power of the Holy Spirit,** leaving us an example to follow His steps, an example to be imitated even as Paul imitated Jesus. To be sure, there are some supernatural events in Jesus' ministry that cannot be replicated (in my opinion) by believers (turning water to wine, feeding 5000, etc), but the basic premise holds that Jesus showed us that a perfect Man could carry out a supernatural ministry in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. And so here in Acts, at the beginning of the Church Age, Jesus is explaining to His apostles (and by way of application **to all believers**) that they cannot be His witnesses in their own strength but only in **the power of the Holy Spirit!**

> **Do we in the modern church truly understand this simple but profound pattern for powerful proclamation of the Gospel? Dear reader, do you understand that you cannot carry out a supernatural ministry without the power of the Holy Spirit? While I may not agree with everything that D. L. Moody says in his little book "Secret Power", I do wholeheartedly agree with his statement that ...**
>
> The fact is, we are leaky vessels, and we have to keep right under the fountain all the time to keep full of Christ (**Ed**: "the Spirit of Christ" Ro 8:9-note), and so have a **fresh supply** (**Ed**: "Of the power of the Spirit for ministry"). I believe this is a mistake a great many of us are making; we are trying to do God's work with the grace God gave us ten years ago. We say, if it is necessary, we will go on with the same grace (**Ed**: Contrast Paul's example - observe Paul's responsibility and God's provision [cp Sacred Synergism]-1Cor 15:10-note)....
>
> ....When we have the Spirit resting upon us, we can **speak with authority and power**, and the Lord will bless our testimony and bless our work. I believe the reason why God makes use of so few in the Church, is because there is not in them the **power** that God can use. He is not going to use our ideas, but we must have the Word of God hid in our hearts (**Ed**: **See Memorizing His Word and Memory Verses by Topic**), **and then, the Holy Spirit inflaming us, we will have the testimony which will be rich, and sweet, and fresh, and the Lord's Word will vindicate itself in blessed results**. God wants to use us; God wants to make us channels of blessing; but we are in such a condition He does not use us. That is the trouble; there are so many men who have **no testimony for the Lord**; if they speak, they speak without saying anything, and if they pray, their prayer is powerless; they do not plead in prayer; their prayer is just a few set phrases that you have heard too often. Now what we want, is to be so **full of the Word**, (cp Col 3:16-note) that the Spirit coming upon us shall bring to mind--bring to our remembrance--the words of the Lord Jesus (Jn 14:26)....
>
> ...When the Spirit of God is on us the world looks very empty; the world has a very small hold upon us (cp Col 3:1-note, Col 3:2-note, 2Cor 4:17-note, 2Cor 4:18-note, 1Pe 1:13-note), and we begin to let go our hold of it. (**Ed: Let it be so Lord!**) When the Spirit of God is on us we will just let go the things of time and lay hold of things eternal. **This is the Church's need to-day; we want the Spirit to come in mighty power, and consume all the vile dross there is in us**. **Oh! that the Spirit of fire may come down and burn everything in us that is contrary to God's blessed Word and Will**. (**Amen**!)

E. M. Bounds once said "The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods but through men. He does not come on machinery but on men. He does not anoint plans but men—men of prayer."

A W Tozer commenting on “Ye shall receive power.” explained that "By those words our Lord raised the expectation of His disciples and taught them to look forward to the coming of a supernatural potency into their natures from a source outside of themselves. It was to be something previously unknown to them, but suddenly to come upon them from another world. It was to be nothing less than God Himself entering into them with the purpose of ultimately reproducing His own likeness within them.... This power is to come upon powerless men as a gentle but resistless invasion from another world bringing a moral potency infinitely beyond anything that might be stirred up from within. This power is sufficient; no additional help is needed, no auxiliary source of spiritual energy....Power came upon the Church, such power as had never been released into human nature before (with the lone exception of that mighty anointing which came upon Christ by the waters of Jordan). That power, still active in the Church, has enabled her to exist for nearly twenty centuries."

Has come upon you (1904) (**eperchomai** from **epi** = upon + **erchomai** = come) means literally to come upon or over a person or place. To draw near which can refer to people, events or time as shown in the nine NT uses. To come upon in the sense of arriving (Acts 14:19). To come upon in the sense of something happening or occurring (Acts 8:24) **Eperchomai** is used by Luke twice to describe the Holy Spirit coming upon individuals (Mary Lk 1:35, apostles Acts 1:8). Luke 21:26 uses **eperchomai** in a prophetic sense of coming global and heavenly catastrophic events. Luke 11:22 uses **eperchomai** to signify coming upon in a hostile sense, so as to assault someone.

Epi and **erchomai** the root words of **eperchomai** are used in the Lxx translation of Isaiah 32:15 where the Greek can be rendered "until the Spirit **has come** (erchomai) **upon** (epi) you from on high." The context is the prophet speaking of the desolation of Israel which will continue until "the Spirit is poured out on us from on high." The point is that in Acts, the fulfillment of the promise of the Spirit is a sign that marks God's end-time restoration of Israel. Acts 1:8 however envisions a worldwide mission. The complete fulfillment of Isaiah 32:15 (Israel's restoration, specifically the believing remnant) awaits the completion of God's worldwide mission to both Jews and Gentiles.

Has come is in the **aorist tense** which indicates the Spirit's coming is to be a definite historical event, not a continuous coming. He will **come** on believers at a given point in time, specifically on the day of Pentecost. It is important to clarify that since the time of the book of Acts, every believer has been "baptized" (in the sense of identified with) the Holy Spirit at the time of their new birth. Conversely, if a person does not possess the Holy Spirit, they are not born again. (See Romans 8:9). Baptism with the Spirit is a one time event, while filling with the Spirit is a repeated experience. Our goal as followers of Christ should be to continually seek to obey Paul's command to "be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). When He fills us, He will control us and empower us. Is this mysterious? It is to me, but it is the great need of every blood bought, heaven bound believer until the day they see the Lord face to face!

The renowned Bible teacher **Donald Grey Barnhouse** said that ...

> No one may ask a believer whether he has been baptized with the Spirit. The very fact that a man is in the body of Christ demonstrates that he has been baptized with the Spirit, for there is no other way of entering the body.

TDNT summarizes the NT uses...

> Except in Eph. 2:7 and Jas 5:1 the word occurs in the NT only in Luke and Acts. Figuratively it means coming on someone, e.g., the stronger on the weaker in Lk. 11:22. The Holy Spirit as the power of God comes on Mary in Lk. 1:35 and on the disciples in Acts 1:8. Disasters will come at the end, according to Lk. 21:26, 35 (cf. Jas 5:1). But in Eph. 2:7 the ineffable generosity of divine grace will be shown to coming ages.

Eperchomai - 9x in 9v-

> Luke 1:35 The angel answered and said to her, "**The Holy Spirit** will **come upon** you (the virgin Mary), and the **power** (dunamis) of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.
>
> **Comment**: Luke describes the creative act of the Holy Spirit, not the sort of divine-human cohabitation sometimes seen in pagan mythology. Doctor Luke is describing the doctrine of the virgin conception of Jesus. Luke also records "the Holy Spirit was upon" Simeon (Lk 2:25, 26, 27-35)
>
> Luke 11:22 "But when someone stronger than he **attacks** (Literally - comes upon) him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder.
>
> Luke 21:26 men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are **coming upon** the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.
>
> **NET Note comment**: An allusion to Isa 34:4. The heavens were seen as the abode of heavenly forces, so their shaking indicates distress in the spiritual realm. Although some take the powers as a reference to bodies in the heavens (like stars and planets, “the heavenly bodies,” NIV) this is not as likely.
>
> **Comment**: I agree with the NET note that the powers that are to be shaken are the demonic powers who will indeed be devastated by the return of the Lord Jesus Christ.
>
> Acts 1:8 but 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 8:24 But Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me yourselves, so that nothing of what you have said **may come upon** me."

Comment: The sad commentary of a man who came close to salvation but never manifested genuine belief. See **John MacArthur's** back to back sermons on this sad scenario - **Acts 8:9-24 The Faith That Does Not Save** and **Acts 8:25-40 The Faith That Does Save** .

Acts 13:40 "Therefore **take heed**, (present imperative - command to continually watch out! And the warning tells them why this is imperative!) so that the thing spoken of in the Prophets **may** not **come upon** you:

Comment: The reference is to the prophecy of Habakkuk that Judah would fall to Babylon. Acts 13:41 goes on to quote Hab 1:4 as a solemn warning of divine judgment to those who might be tempted to refuse God's great offer of present salvation. To reject or ignore the Good News guarantees (eternally) frightening consequences.

Acts 14:19 But Jews **came from** Antioch and Iconium, and having won over the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead.

Comment: The resistance of the enemies of the Gospel is seen in the fact that these Jews **came from** 100 miles to try to destroy Paul and his Gospel.

Ephesians 2:7-note so that (This term always expresses purpose - stop and ask what purpose, why, when, who affected, etc) in the ages **to come** He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Comment: This is one of my favorite verses for it tells us (1) there will be more than one age to come (ages is plural), at least the millennium followed by the New Heaven and New Earth (? more - we don't know) and (2) the miracle of transforming grace will be the subject of eternal revelation so that "God will be unveiling to the heavenly throng what it cost Him to send His Son to this jungle of sin, and what it cost the Lord Jesus to bear our sins at the cross. It is a subject that will never be exhausted." (MacDonald).

James 5:1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which **are coming upon** you.

Comment: Here eperchomai is used like Luke 21:26 in the context of judgment which is coming upon the disobedient, those who steadfast refuse God's gracious offer of the free gift of salvation by repentance and faith (Mark 1:15). The use of the **present tense** pictures these miseries as continually on their way! No excuses, and no escape, except in Christ!

TDNT summarizes the following 82 **Septuagint (Lxx)** uses "The LXX uses the word with reference to things, events, conditions, etc. that bring evils, or, less frequently, blessings."

Gen 42:21; Ex 10:1; Lev 11:34; 14:43; 16:9f; Num 5:14, 30; 6:5; 8:7; Josh 24:20; Jdg 9:57; 20:33; 1 Sam 11:7; 30:23; 2 Sam 17:2; 19:7; 1Kgs 19:19; 2Chr 20:9; 22:1; 32:26; Job 1:19; 2:11; 3:5; 4:15; 15:19; 19:29; 20:22, 28; 21:17; 23:6, 17; 25:3; 27:9; 31:12; 37:9; 40:20; Ps 90:10; Pr 3:25; 4:14f; 5:6; 16:33; 18:3; 19:11; 26:2, 11; 27:12; Eccl 2:12; Isa 7:25; 13:13; 28:18; 32:15; 41:4, 22f; 42:23; 44:7; 45:11; 48:3; 63:4; 65:17; Ezek 33:4; 39:11; 47:9; Dan 4:19; 5:30; 9:11, 13; 10:13; 11:13, 15, 17, 41; Hos 10:11; Mic 3:11; 5:5f; Nah 3:19; Zeph 2:2; Zech 9:8; 12:9

METAPHORS DESCRIBING THE COMING OF THE SPIRIT

David G Peterson has an interesting summary of the **coming of the Spirit** noting that His coming can be described metaphorically in terms of...

clothing (Lk. 24:49), **baptism** (Acts 1:5; 11:16), **coming upon** (Acts 1:8; 19:6), **falling upon** (Acts 8:16; 10:44; 11:15), **pouring out** (Acts 2:17-18, 33; 10:45), **reception** (Acts 1:8; 2:38; 8:15, 17, 19; 10:47; 19:2), and **filling** (Acts 2:4; 9:17). These are complementary metaphors, used interchangeably in some contexts, and designed to express different aspects of the same experience. One should not be elevated above the others as an interpretive key to the rest. (The Acts of the Apostles. Pillar Commentary)

As a fellow physician, I particularly love Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones metaphorical description of the Holy Spirit...

If it were possible to put the Holy Spirit into a textbook of pharmacology I would put him under the stimulants, for that is where he belongs.

Come, Holy Spirit, God and Lord!
Be all thy graces now out-poured
On the believer's mind and soul,

To strengthen, save, and make us whole.
--Martin Luther

AND YOU SHALL BE MY WITNESSES : kai esesthe (2PFMI) mou martures

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- **You shall be my witnesses**: Acts 1:22 2:32 3:15 4:33 5:32 10:39-41 13:31 22:15 Mt 28:19 Mk 16:15 Lk 24:46-49 Jn 15:27

SPIRIT EMPOWERED EVANGELISM

We wait, O Lord, Thy power to know,
Before we forth to service go,
Or else we serve in vain.
We trust not human thought or might,
Our souls are helpless for the fight,
Until that power we gain.

You shall be - When? In the future. Note Jesus does not say "you shall ***do***" but "you shall ***be***." There's an eternity of difference between "being" and "doing." Too many in the church accentuate the "doing" at the expense of the "being" and the result is (supernatural) power failure!

Dr. Howard Hendricks adds that "It's not, "You are going to be witnesses and then receive power," but the other way around: "You are going to receive power, the result of which is, you are going to be witnesses." That's an interesting point, because often we spend a lot of time trying to urge people to witness concerning the faith. Yet nothing inside of them would ever warrant their doing that. They have nothing to share with others, and if they tried, they would be doing nothing but putting on an act. By contrast, suppose one of my female seminary students gets engaged over the summer. In the fall, she walks into my class, and the first thing you know she's waving her ring finger in front of my face. I never have to beg her to show me her ring. No, there's something inside that compels her to take the initiative. She's in love with a man, and she's got co share it. She can't keep it to herself. That's the kind of dynamic Luke wants us to see in this passage. As a result of what the apostles receive, they are going to be witnesses. But whose witnesses? Christ's witnesses. His by personal identification. They are going to represent Him. (Living by the Book)

As **A J Gordon** so pithily put it - Before Pentecost the disciples found it hard to do easy things; after Pentecost they found it easy to do hard things.

My witnesses - There are two possible meanings -- The first sense is witnesses ***about*** Jesus (objective genitive) giving testimony of His life, death and resurrection. The second sense is witnesses ***of*** Jesus (possessive genitive) as those who belong to Him and are His feet on the ground so to speak. Luke 24:44-48 (cp also Acts 4:33 and Acts 10:42) would tend to favor that the intended meaning is witnesses who help establish the truthfulness of Jesus life, death, burial and resurrection by testifying firsthand about Him (even to the point of death, our English word *martyr*) .

> Now He said to them (to His apostles), "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead the third day; and that repentance (Jesus directly refutes those in the modern church who say you do not need to preach repentance! cp Mk 1:15, Peter in Acts 2:38) for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem (cp Acts 1:8). 48 "**You are witnesses of these things**. 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:44-48)
>
> **A T Robertson** - In Luke 24:48 Jesus calls the disciples "witnesses to these things" (objective genitive).

There are two requirements necessary for one to **be a witness**

> (1) A witness must have seen that about which he or she seeks to bear witness.
>
> (2) A witness must tell others what he or she has seen.

A witness is one who gives testimony to an event, person or circumstance. So a witness is one who has seen something, experienced something, heard something. For 3 ½ years these apostles had lived intimately with the Savior and now as a result of their contact with the Holy Spirit and His provision of power they are going to be totally different people. Up until now the apostles

have been living primarily in their own strength and the results have not been too impressive! Now they are going to be the Savior's witnesses in the power of the Spirit!

Notice that a witness does not need to have complete understanding of what they have witnessed (Cp Jesus' description of the "new birth" John 3:6,7). Furthermore a witness does not need to be eloquent, convincing, clever, persuasive, articulate or a seminary graduate! The greatest evangelist of the 1800's (and probably of all time) was **Dwight L Moody** (called "Crazy Moody") who had only a fifth grade education and yet this Spirit filled and empowered man was used by God to "witness" to more than 100 million souls! Remember that God is not as interested in your ***ability*** (to be His witness) but in your ***availability***! **Are you available?** A witness for Jesus simply needs to tell others what they know to be true. **What have you seen that you can relate to others?** If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then you have seen Jesus change your life (2Cor 5:17-note) and you can tell others what He about this miraculous supernatural transformation! **Have you ever given your testimony of the life changing Gospel of grace**? (Spurgeon's Personal Testimony; My Personal Testimony)

CAN I GET A WITNESS?

Witnesses (3144) (**martus**/**martys**) basically describes one who remembers something and testifies concerning what they remember. Notice that **martus** has a two fold meaning of (1) describing one who has seen and/or experienced something or someone and (2) one who testifies to what he or she saw. The testimony could be in a legal setting (Mk 14:63; Acts 6:13; 7:58; Heb. 10:28) or in the general sense of recounting firsthand knowledge (Lk 11:48; 1Ti. 6:12; Heb 12:1; 1Pe 5:1).

A **martus** is one who attests to a fact or event, one who gives evidence (testifies in a court to the truth of a fact or event), one who has seen or has personal knowledge of something or someone, especially as an "eye witness" (eg, the apostles in Acts having and relating their personal knowledge of Jesus' post-resurrection appearances). A witness is one who furnishes evidence or proof, confirming the truth by verbal testimony.

A witness gives testimony in a court trial (Mt 26:65, Mk 14:63, false = Acts 6:13). Scripture repeatedly refers to the Old Testament "formula" of witnesses to some event using the phrase "two or three witnesses" (Mt 18:16, 2Cor 13:1, 1Ti 5:19, Heb 10:28) The witnesses of Hebrews 11 are those whose lives speak of the reality of their faith in God (Heb 12:1).

Timothy's good confession before witnesses-they authenticate his confession, Paul's teaching before witnesses - they authenticate his teaching. There were eye witnesses of Stephen's stoning (Acts 7:58) who saw and could tell how he was stoned to death.

Martus is used of God as witness (Acts 5:32 = Holy Spirit, Ro 1:9, 2Cor 1:23, Php 1:8, 1Th 2:5, 10). Paul uses this statement somewhat as a "formula" to add validation to what he is saying. In other words, he is saying God saw this and would give testimony that this is what I said or is what I did. Witness is also used of the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:32) and Jesus (Rev 1:5, Rev 3:14).

The two **witnesses** of Revelation 11 (Rev 11:3) give a unique and powerful testimony to the entire world to the truth of God and His coming judgment. **Martus** is used to describe those who witnessed to the point of death (Stephen as a witness = Acts 22:20, Antipas as a witness = Rev 2:13. Witnesses of Jesus apparently also martyred during the Tribulation - Rev 17:6). The fact that so many who bore testimony to the truth of the Gospel paid with their lives probably explains how martus gave rise to our English word "martyr", one who voluntarily suffers death as the penalty of witnessing to and refusing to renounce some truth (especially belief that Jesus is the only Way to eternal life - cp Mt 16:24-25, 24:9, Rev 6:9, Rev 20:4 - yes, being Jesus' witness can be costly!). As alluded to earlier the apostles are repeatedly described as **witnesses** of Jesus, His acts, His resurrection (Lk 24:48, Acts 1:8, 1:22, 2:32, 5:32, 10:39, 41, 13:31, 1Pe 5:1 = Peter) In a similar usage, Paul was charged to be a witness for Jesus after seeing Him on the Damascus road (Acts 22:15, 26:16)

The Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary writes that **witness**...

> Refers generally to something or someone that bears testimony to things seen, heard, transacted, or experienced. The bearing of testimony can be either passive (as when one is present as a spectator or bystander—Gen. 21:30; Ruth 4:7; Heb. 12:1) or active (as when one gives evidence as a witness). The conventional meaning and usage pertains to the legal sphere but can also refer to the moral sphere. Bearing witness may also denote the content and/or the significance of the testimony. Additionally, a witness (testimony) may refer to facts about which a person is firmly convinced by faith and for which that person would willingly die. In this last sense such a person would be referred to as a martyr. The distinction between witness (marturion, marturia) and martyr (martus) consists only in the degree of their testimony, since both words are cognates of the same Greek verb meaning, “I testify/bear witness” (martureo).

G Campbell Morgan...

What is a witness? The light we need here is light that we have by our common use of the Anglicized form of this Greek word “martyr.” “Ye shall be martyrs.” I do not wish to suggest that Jesus meant necessarily that these men would all die for Him. We have come to use that word “martyr” as referring only to such as seal their testimony with their blood. I am not suggesting that we should abandon that particular use of the word, for it is a great and glorious use of the word to-day. The men who sealed their testimony with their blood were **martyrs**, but they were **martyrs** before they died. Smithfield’s fires never made martyrs:**they revealed martyrs**. Persecution never makes a martyr: it finds him out and wraps him in the glory of flame that we may see him for evermore.

David Peterson writes that...

The word '**witness**' (**martys**) is almost exclusively applied to the Twelve in Acts (Acts 1:8, 22; 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39, 41; 13:31), though related terms are used in connection with the ministry of others...The Twelve occupy a unique place in history as witnesses of Christ because of the time they spent with him—especially after his resurrection—and because of their commissioning by him (cf. 1:21-26 note). As 'eyewitnesses' (Lk. 1:2; cf. Acts 1:3a), they guarantee the historicity of the major events in Jesus' life, and as those uniquely instructed by him (Lk. 24:44-48; Acts 1:3b-5), they pass on Jesus' own understanding of his person and work. Even though Paul is called 'a witness' by the risen Christ (Acts 22:15; 26:16), Luke makes it clear that his experience and calling are different from that of the Twelve. Other characters in Acts are witnesses to Christ only in a secondary or derived sense, sharing with unbelievers the testimony of the apostles that they have come to believe for themselves. (The Acts of the Apostles. Pillar)

Martus - found 35x in 35v (NAS) - Translated - witness(12), witnesses(23).

Matthew 18:16 "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE **WITNESSES** EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.

Eerdman's Dictionary of the Bible comments: One who helps establish the truthfulness of a matter by testifying firsthand about what was seen or heard. The necessity of recollecting and reiterating what happened implies that witness bearing includes a historical dimension. Although this activity originated in legal contexts, its vocabulary (Greek - martus/martys) quickly expanded to other social and religious settings. The Mosaic law ensured truthfulness by requiring two or three witnesses to convict a person of a criminal offense and obligating them to lead in the execution of capital sentences (Dt. 17:6–7). Furthermore, it made bearing false witness punishable by lex talionis (Dt. 19:15–19).

Matthew 26:65 Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of **witnesses**? Behold, you have now heard the blasphemy;

Mark 14:63 Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, "What further need do we have of**witnesses**?

Luke 11:48 "So you are **witnesses** and approve the deeds of your fathers; because it was they who killed them, and you build their tombs.

Luke 24:48 "You are **witnesses** of these things.

Acts 1:8 but 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 1:22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us-- one of these must become a **witness** with us of His resurrection."

Acts 2:32 "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all **witnesses**.

Acts 3:15 but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are **witnesses**.

Acts 5:32 "And we are **witnesses** of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

Acts 6:13 They put forward false **witnesses** who said, "This man incessantly speaks against this holy place and the Law;

Acts 7:58 When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the**witnesses** laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

Acts 10:39 "We are **witnesses** of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They

also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.

Acts 10:41 not to all the people, but to **witnesses** who were chosen beforehand by God, that is, to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

Acts 13:31 and for many days He appeared to those who came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, the very ones who are now His **witnesses** to the people.

Acts 22:15 'For you will be a witness for Him to all men of what you have seen and heard.

Acts 22:20 'And when the blood of Your **witness** Stephen was being shed, I also was standing by approving, and watching out for the coats of those who were slaying him.'

Acts 26:16 'But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a **witness** not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you;

Romans 1:9-note For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my **witness** as to how unceasingly I make mention of you,

2 Corinthians 1:23 But I call God as **witness** to my soul, that to spare you I did not come again to Corinth.

2 Corinthians 13:1 This is the third time I am coming to you. EVERY FACT IS TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE **WITNESSES**.

Philippians 1:8-note For God is my **witness**, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 2:5-note For we never came with flattering speech, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed--God is **witness**--

1 Thessalonians 2:10-note You are **witnesses**, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers;

1 Timothy 5:19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three **witnesses**.

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many **witnesses**.

2 Timothy 2:2-note The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many **witnesses**, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

Hebrews 10:28-note Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three **witnesses**.

Hebrews 12:1-note Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of **witnesses** surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

Wuest comments: The heroes of faith of 11:4–40 are the cloud of witnesses, testifying to the efficacy of the faith way of salvation and victory. The writer calls them, so to speak, to the witness stand to bear testimony to what they have seen and heard and felt as to what faith could and did do for them, so that this first century Jew might become convinced that the salvation which Messiah wrought out on the Cross, must be appropriated by faith, not works.

1 Peter 5:1-note Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and **witness** of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,

Revelation 1:5-note and from Jesus Christ, the faithful **Witness**, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood--

Revelation 2:13-note 'I know where you dwell, where Satan's throne is; and you hold fast My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days of Antipas, My **witness**, My faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

Revelation 3:14-note "To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: The Amen, the faithful and true **Witness**, the Beginning of the creation of God, says this:

Revelation 11:3-note "And I will grant authority to my two **witnesses**, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

Revelation 17:6-note And I saw the woman drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the **witnesses** of Jesus. When I saw her, I wondered greatly.

Martus/martys - 45x in the non-apocryphal Septuagint - Gen 31:44, 47; Exod 23:1; Lev 5:1; Num 5:13; 23:18; 35:30; Deut 17:6f; 19:15f, 18; Josh 24:22; Ruth 4:9, 10, 11; 1 Sam 12:5f; 20:23, 42; 1 Kgs 17:20; Job 16:19; Ps 27:12; 35:11; 89:37; Pr 6:19; 12:17, 19; 14:5, 25; 19:5, 9; 21:28; 24:28; Isa 8:2; 43:9, 10, 12; 44:8; Jer 29:23; 32:10, 25, 44; 42:5; Mal 3:5.

Isaiah 43:10 "You are **My witnesses** (**martus/martys**)," declares the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, So that you may know and believe Me And understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, And there will be none after Me.

Isaiah 43:12 "It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed, And there was no strange god among you; So you are **My witnesses** (**martus/martys**)," declares the LORD, "And I am God.

Isaiah 44:8 'Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are **My witnesses** (**martus/martys**). Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any other Rock? I know of none.'"

Comment: In each of these passages God is speaking to **Israel** calling them His **witnesses** (martus). Some commentators feel that the in the very fact of their exile, Israel was evidence that God is truly God. Certainly God had predicted their exile to Babylon and its coming to pass was testimony that Jehovah alone is God for only God could predict the future. **Thomas Constable** for example writes that "God had told them that they would return from captivity as well as go into it. When they did return, they would be able to witness to the world that the Lord had predicted and performed both events."

Hastings writes that our...

witness must be in the Holy Spirit. Without the gift and presence of the Holy Spirit our witness is bound to be a failure and a disappointment. Let none of us be content with a lower spiritual experience than God is willing to give us. As long as we keep our witness within the bounds of what we can obviously succeed in, we shall accomplish little, but when in abandonment of self, and in reliance on the Holy Spirit, we attempt great things for God, our success will exceed our highest hopes.

Attempt great things for God
Expect great things from God.
--William Carey

S D Gordon...

There has come to you some bit of a call to service, to teach a class, or to write a special letter, or speak a word, or take up something needing to be done. And you hesitate. You think that you cannot. You are not fit, you think; not qualified. The thing to do is to do it. If the call is clear, go ahead. Need is one of the strong calling voices of God. It is always safe to respond. Put out your foot in the answering swing, even though you cannot see clearly the place to put it down. God attends to that part. Power comes as we go.

C. C. Albertson

There is an interesting story of **Gustave Doré**, the artist, that once, crossing the Italian frontier, he had mislaid his passport and was called upon to prove his identity. This he did by taking a sheet of common paper and a piece of charcoal, and tracing the homely, manly features of Victor Emmanuel. The officers knew that only Doré could draw like that. Challenged by the world as we are, is it not for us to trace, here and now, on the rough surface of our common lives, with only such instruments as our ordinary circumstances afford, the character of our King? "**By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples**."

BOTH IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDEA AND SAMARIA AND EVEN TO THE REMOTEST PART OF THE EARTH: en te Ierousalem kai [en] pase te Ioudaia kai Samareia kai eos eschatou tes ges:

- **Samaria**: Acts 8:5-25
- **Into**: Ps 22:27 98:3 Isa 42:10 49:6 52:10 66:19 Jer 16:19 Mt 24:14 Ro 10:18 15:19

SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL IN THE BOOK OF ACTS				
SCRIPTURE	**CENTER**	**MAIN WITNESS**	**GEOGRAPHY**	**RACE**
Acts 1-12	**Jerusalem**	**Peter**	**Judea & Samaria**	**Jews**
Acts 13-28	**Antioch**	**Paul**	**Remotest part of the earth**	**Gentiles**

Pfeiffer writes that Acts 1:8 is a

> **table of contents** of the book of Acts: in Jerusalem Acts1:1-7:58; in all Judea, and in Samaria covers Acts 8:1-11:18; and unto the uttermost part of the earth covers 11:19 to the end of the book." (The Wycliffe Bible Commentary)

Another division is suggested by **Merrill Unger**...

> Acts 1:1-8:3 - Jerusalem
>
> Acts 8:4-12:24 Judea and Samaria
>
> Acts 12:25-28:31 Paul as a witness "to the remotest part of the earth"

A T Robertson writes...

> "*The Acts themselves form the best commentary on these words, and the words themselves might be given as the best summary of the Acts*" (Page). The events follow this outline (Jerusalem till the end of Acts 7, with the martyrdom of Stephen, the scattering of the saints through Judea and Samaria in Acts 8, the conversion of Saul, Acts 9, the spread of the gospel to Romans in Caesarea by Peter (Acts 10), to Greeks in Antioch (Acts 11), finally Paul's world tours and arrest and arrival in Rome (Acts 11 to 28).

Jerusalem - Also known as Salem, Ariel, Jebus, the "city of God," the "holy city," Zion, "City of David,". This is the most important city in the Bible, the specific name Jerusalem occurring 810 times in 762 verses in the NASB (1977).

Judea - In New Testament times Judea designated the southern portion of Israel, south of Samaria, and comprising land from what had been the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Dan, Simeon, and part of Ephraim.

Samaria - The district between Galilee and Judea, and between the Jordan river and the Mediterranean Sea. **A T Robertson** observes that once the Jews...

> had been commanded to avoid **Samaria** (Matthew 10:5), but now it is included in the world program as already outlined on the mountain in Galilee (Mt 28:19; Mk 16:15). Jesus is on Olivet (Mount of Olives just east of Temple Mount and the Old City of Jerusalem) as he points to **Jerusalem**, **Judea**, **Samaria**, **the uttermost** (Greek = *eschatos* = *last*, compare "*eschatology*" the study of last things, i.e., prophecy) **part of the earth**. The program still beckons us on to world conquest for Christ.

The remotest parts of the earth (*eos eschatou tes ges*) - Some commentaries consider this phrase to be a Jewish idiom for Gentiles. Jesus instructs His apostles (and by application all disciples) to cross all regional, cultural, and geographical barriers to share His Gospel of grace which has the inherent power to give spiritual life to the spiritually dead. **The remotest parts of the earth** recalls God's words to His **Son** in Isaiah...

> It is too small a thing that **You** (God the Son) should be My **Servant** to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make **You** (Jesus) a light (Jn 8:12, 9:5) of the (Gentile) nations so that **My salvation may reach to the end of the earth**. (Lxx =*eos eschatou tes ges*)" (Isaiah 49:6)
>
> **Comment**: In the Septuagint translation of this verse the phrase "**to the end of the earth**" is identical to the Greek phrase in Acts 1:8. It is as if in the Isaiah passage the Father gives this charge to His Son and in Acts the Son gives the charge to His disciples. Is notable that the apostle Paul applied Isaiah 49:6 to his ministry to the Gentiles in Acts 13:47 (Paul's First Missionary Journey).

JESUS' WITNESS
OUR EXAMPLE

Spurgeon's devotional "And ye shall be witnesses unto me."

In order to learn how to discharge your duty as a**witness for Christ**, look at His example. He is always witnessing: by the well of Samaria, or in the Temple of Jerusalem: by the lake of Gennesaret, or on the mountain's brow. He is witnessing night and day; His mighty prayers are as vocal to God as His daily services. He witnesses under all circumstances; Scribes and Pharisees cannot shut His mouth; even before Pilate He witnesses a good confession. He witnesses so clearly, and distinctly that there is no mistake in Him.

Christian, make your life
a clear testimony.

Be you as the brook wherein you may see every stone at the bottom-not as the muddy creek, of which you only see the surface-but clear and transparent, so that your heart's love to God and man may be visible to all. You need not say, "I am true:" Be true. Boast not of integrity, but be upright. **So shall your testimony be such that men cannot help seeing it.**

Never, for fear of feeble man, restrain your witness. Your lips have been warmed with a coal from off the altar; let them speak as like heaven-touched lips should do.

"In the morning sow thy seed,
and in the evening withhold not thine hand."

Watch not the clouds, consult not the wind-in season and out of season witness for the Saviour, and if it shall come to pass that for Christ's sake and the Gospel's you shall endure suffering in any shape, shrink not, but rejoice in the honour thus conferred upon you, that you are counted worthy to suffer with your Lord; and joy also in this-that your sufferings, your losses, and persecutions shall make you a platform, from which the more vigorously and with greater power you shall witness for Christ Jesus.

Study your great Exemplar,
and be filled with his Spirit.

Remember that you need much teaching, much upholding, much grace, and much humility, if your witnessing is to be to your Master's glory.

THE CHURCH'S GREATEST NEED:
THE POWER OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT

Earnest Reisinger's article "**The Church's Greatest Need**" (Founder's Journal)

Let me state at the outset what I believe to be the church's greatest need, and I do so without fear of contradiction by any serious, discerning observer.

The greatest need and one of deepest importance is for the continual manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. I did not say theological theory about the Holy Spirit, or just intellectual understanding -- I said, the power of the Holy Spirit; that has to do with **experience** not **words**. When we begin thinking and studying what the Bible has to say about the Holy Spirit and the believer, we are immediately into experimental awareness. I am talking about that which makes men aware of and sure of the reality of Jesus--the Living Christ.

Many preachers have little or nothing to say about experimental awareness of God. Not much is heard in our churches about the anointing through which men are made sure of the reality of Jesus as proclaimed by the apostles. 1Jn 2:20,27 is what I am talking about: "But you have an anointing from the Holy One...But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you."

THE SOURCE OF ALL
SPIRITUAL LIFE...

The Holy Spirit is a live subject on the contemporary scene, and many of the **qualified** people are not saying enough about Him. And some **unqualified** people are often saying too much and often saying many inaccurate things which sometimes leads to fanaticism and hypocrisy. There are few subjects more important to the Christian and the Christian minister because the Holy Spirit is the source of all spiritual life, all spiritual worship, all spiritual ordinances, all spiritual witnessing and all spiritual service; He is also the "Divine Agent of Evangelism."

The Holy Spirit is to the life of the Christian what the Creator is to the world. Without God the Creator the world

would not exist and without His continuing, sustaining, and preserving work the world would crash out of existence. So likewise, without the Holy Spirit there would be no Christians in the world and without His continual sanctifying influence the Christian would know no spiritual growth or power.

The churches of the reformation gave much emphasis to the work of the Holy Spirit. The reformers stressed that what is necessary for correct interpretation of the Bible is not the church, but rather the illuminating work of the Holy Spirit on man's mind.

Spurgeon said,

One of the most effectual ways for a church to revive herself is to preach much about the Holy Spirit; after all He is the very breath of the church. And when a church, a minister or a Christian finds that it is winter time in his soul they must turn to the Holy Spirit and cry, "Quicken Thou me in the Way."

May that be our cry these days of the great need for reality in our lives and the life of the church.

Luther and **Calvin** set forth with clarity that it is the Holy Spirit that is necessary in applying the sacrifice of Christ in our lives--not the mass but the Spirit.

FILLING OF THE SPIRIT
OVER AND OVER AGAIN...

How many churches are seeking: The power of the Spirit. The wisdom of the Spirit. The grace of the Spirit. The love of the Spirit. To pray in the Spirit? I am not talking about some second experience subsequent to conversion. I am talking about seeking to experience the filling of the Spirit over and over and over again for Gospel purposes.

In Romans 15:13,19 the great apostle shows the absolute necessity of the work of the Spirit for the internal growth of the church and for all the outside work of gathering God's elect from the world. In Ro 15:13 he attributes the power to be filled with joy and peace and abound in hope to the Holy Spirit.

"Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit" (NKJV).

In Ro 15:19 he shows the necessity of the Holy Spirit for outside Gospel work:

"in mighty signs and wonders by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" (NKJV).

You see, my dear reader, that first of all, to keep the church happy and holy within herself there must be a manifestation of the power of the Spirit. Secondly, in order for the church to invade the territories of the enemy and conquer sinners for Christ she must be clothed with the same mighty power. And let me underscore one thing, that is, the power of the church for her external work will be proportionate with the power which dwells within herself.

What I am saying is this: gauge the power of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers and you may fairly judge their influence on unbelievers. Let the church be illuminated by the Holy Spirit and she will be sure to reflect light and power to the unbelieving world. Why?? Because we, ourselves, must first drink of the living water before the rivers of living water will flow to the unconverted. (Jn 7:37, 38, 39) We cannot distribute loaves and fishes out of an empty basket.

Oh, the absolute necessity
of the power of the Holy Spirit!

When we were baptized we were baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. When we pronounce couples "man and wife" we do so in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. When we affirm our faith in the creed, we say that we believe in God the Father, and in God the Son and in God the Holy Ghost. Yes, and the last words pronounced over our coffin before the mourners turn from our grave and the cold earth goes over our dead body, the last words to the mourners will be, "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you."

When we think of the incarnation we immediately think of the virgin Mary and how the Holy Ghost came upon her and the power of the Highest overshadowed her (Luke 1:35). When we consider the earthly ministry of our Lord we remember before that ministry began the Spirit "descended from heaven like a dove and abode upon him." The Bible says that God anointed Him with the Holy Ghost; again, that the Father gave Him the Spirit

above measure and that He was "full of the Holy Spirit" (John 1:32; Acts 10:38; John 3:34; Luke 4:1). When the Scripture takes us to the Cross, where He suffered vicariously, we learn in Heb 9:14 that it was "through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God. " When we think of the keystone of Christian truth, the seal and topstone of all His work (the resurrection), the Scripture again underscores the absolute necessity of the work of the Spirit. It is written that "He was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." When we view His departure from this world and the tremendous pain and sorrow that filled His disciples--how did He comfort that little orphan family? Well, it was with that gracious promise that He gave to them the night before He died: "I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of truth." And when we think of His final mandate to the apostles to preach the gospel to all the world we again see the necessary place of the Holy Spirit. Hear His own words to them. "Wait for the promise of the Father." They were unfit to go forth with His message until they were "filled with the Holy Ghost." And we too are unfit.

What do you think of the whole dispensation under which we Christians live? You know we are privileged far above the Jews in that we are told in 2Cor 3:8 that we live under the "ministration of the Spirit."

Why do I say this is the need of the hour?

1.Without the Spirit there will be no conviction.

2.Without the Spirit there will be no conversions.

3.Without the Spirit there will be no Spiritual growth.

4.Without the Spirit all preaching and witnessing is in vain.

5.Even the preaching of our Lord did not produce one convert apart from this life-giving power, though He Himself had the Spirit without measure.

The Bible says, "You shall receive power." When? When the Holy Spirit shall come upon you." (Acts 1:8) When we think of evangelism we think of the Holy Spirit promised in Acts 1:8. Immediately our minds run to two things. First, to Pentecost where 3000 souls were evangelized, and secondly, to the effectual call that (1) enlightened their minds, (2) convicted, and convinced their consciences, and (3) renewed their wills. Well, my dear reader, I trust that you can understand my assertion that the greatest need in the church today is a manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit. Pentecost was a Holy Spirit event--an evangelistic event. When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost God laid the whole world in the lap of the church as her responsibility to witness. Just think what the Holy Spirit produced at Pentecost.

What Did The Holy Spirit Produce at Pentecost?

I hear someone saying, "tongues." Well, we will see that tongues is the least thing it produced--almost insignificant by comparison.

First, **the Holy Spirit at Pentecost produced powerful, evangelistic preaching.** See it immediately in Acts 2:14-36. This preaching was not only powerful but it was relevant; it made them ask the right questions. One of the things that serious preachers must always be concerned about is that their preaching be relevant. There is much preaching which is answering questions that no one is asking. That is like scratching where it doesn't itch.

One of the fundamental problems of our generation, both in the world and in the church, is that people are not asking the right questions. They are not itching in the right place. Well, what is the answer to that problem? The answer is Spirit-breathed, Christ-centered, Bible preaching in the power and unction of the Holy Spirit. Only the Spirit can bring conviction. The New Testament and the history of revival clearly testify to that fact.

John 16:8: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."

Under the powerful Holy Ghost preaching there is never any problem with people itching in the wrong places, and they will be asking the right questions (Acts 2:37). "What must I do to be saved?" Did any one ever ask a more important question? N.B. (Note well) They did not ask any questions about tongues or anything about the phenomena. They asked a much more important question--verse 37: "Men and brethren what must we do?"

Some think of Pentecost as producing tongues. It did that, but tongues did not produce converts. No. It was the powerful preaching induced by the Holy Spirit that made people itch in the right place, ask the right questions, and find the right answers. This powerful preaching produced converts, thousands of them. If you

never understand tongues it will not make one bit of difference. But if you never experience Spirit-anointed preaching it makes all the difference in the world--yes, the difference between life and death, heaven and hell.

The second thing the Holy Spirit produced at Pentecost was an "Apostolic Church." See Acts 2:42-47. The Holy Spirit is not just an "Evangelist" drawing people to Christ. The Holy Spirit is also a "Church Planter" and a "Church Builder." The Holy Spirit draws people into the fellowship of the church. The Holy Spirit creates the communion of obedient, teachable, worshiping, and witnessing Christians. Christians who are learning to love God, love God's people, and God's Church.

What is an Apostolic church? It is a church experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit. This is apparent by what is revealed in Acts 2:42-47. The converts were steadfast. "They continued steadfastly." That is, they were not a church that was carried away with every novelty and every new gimmick or method of evangelism. An apostolic church knows what it believes and why it believes what it believes.

MARKS OF AN APOSTOLIC CHURCH

There are four areas or four distinct marks of an apostolic church set forth in these verses.

1. (Acts 2:42) - They were continually devoting themselves to Apostolic teaching. Perhaps this is the primary mark. A real church will be submitting to apostolic truth. They will be interested in what the Bible says, what it means and how it applies to faith and practice.

2. (Acts 2:42) - They were distinguished by God-honoring worship --"Breaking of bread, prayer and praise." I wish all ministers and church officers were as much concerned about the power of the Holy Spirit in our worship services as they are about a lot of minute details. There would be much more peace and true worship and far less pharisaic quibbling about secondary matters. All the forms and ceremonies--even baptism and the Lord's Supper--though properly managed, will be empty and unedifying, and they will bring no glory to God or good to His people without the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches that the first concern in the official order of divine worship is the Holy Spirit. The hymn writer was correct when he wrote

"All is vain unless the Holy One come down."

No ordinance has any effective spiritual power except the Spirit gives it. No Christian's heart is ever in the proper frame to worship without the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the worship of God issues in joy and gladness. They were distinguished by God-honoring worship.

3. (Acts 2:44, 45) - They were marked by Christ-like love and unity. They did not forsake the assembling of themselves together.

4. (Acts 2:47) - They not only applied themselves to sound doctrine, and engaged in true worship, and were united by Christ-like love, but fourthly, they were increased by God-centered evangelism. The Lord added to the church. That is God-centered evangelism.

Did they just sit under apostolic teaching, worship and pray, and say the Lord saves? No, there was something else going on daily. Cf.

Acts 2:47. Every day or day by day the Lord added because every day...from house to house they kept teaching and preaching about Jesus.

Acts 5:42 (NKJV): "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ." This was God-centered, Holy Ghost, God-honoring evangelism.

The Father has sent us the Comforter that He may dwell in us till the coming of the Lord. The Holy Ghost has never returned, for He came in accordance with the Saviour's prayer and the Saviour's promise, to abide with us forever. The gift of the Comforter was not temporary, and the display of His power was not to be once seen and never again.

The Holy Ghost is here and we ought to expect His divine working among us; and if He does not so work we should search ourselves to see what it is that hinders, and whether there may not be somewhat in ourselves which vexes Him, so that He restrains His sacred energy, and does not work among us as He did before.

Spurgeon's Hymn says it well:

The Holy Ghost is here, where saints in prayer agree,

As Jesus' parting Gift is near each pleading company.

Not far away is He to be by prayer brought nigh,
But here in present majesty, as in His courts on high.

He dwells within our soul, an ever welcome guest;
He reigns with absolute control, as monarch in the breast.

Obedient to Thy will, we wait to feel Thy power
O Lord of life, our hopes fulfill, and bless this hallowed hour.

What we long for supremely is to be empowered by the Holy Spirit--to know the fulness of the Spirit. Organization is helpful, but one thing is essential and that is the power of the Spirit.

With the fullness of the Spirit:

1.Our organization will be filled with power, peace and prosperity.

2.Our orthodoxy will pulsate with love. There will be no legalism or Pharisaism. Our liberty will serve the interests of truth and godliness, not self-indulgence.

3.A fuller tide of the Spirit means spiritual discernment, deeper insight into the Scriptures.

4.The church will be "glorious in holiness," for wherever the Spirit of God dwells He is as the refiner's fire.

5.Peace, harmony, and unity will be insured. Fidelity to truth will carry no pride or bitterness.

6.The church will have a real missionary vision.

7. With the fulness of the Spirit the church will not use carnal and unworthy methods in worship or witness.

Whatever means you use to get people into the church is precisely what you must use to keep them. If you get them with a religious circus then you must keep the circus going--keep up the entertainment. If you get them with biblical preaching and teaching, then that will keep them and you will not need the entertainment.

The church will have an attractive power. When the fruit of the Spirit abounds men will be drawn as bees to the apple blossom. Preaching will be "in the demonstration of the Spirit and power."

But I think I hear someone say, "O, that was an apostolic promise, you are talking about apostolic times." No, my friend, I am speaking to you about something that not only happened in the far distant past, I am speaking about a promise that is far-reaching, yes, the promise of the Spirit is a far-reaching promise.

Let me give you just two verses to establish that fact.

Acts 2:38,39 (NKJV): "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'"

Please note the words "to all who are afar off." If those words are not sufficient to convince you then underscore the rest of the words in the passage, "as many as the Lord our God will call." Oh, I am glad for this "far-reaching promise."

Do you realize that all that has been done by God the Father and all that has been done by God the Son will not accomplish one thing unless the Spirit makes them effectual? Surely this is the greatest need in the church. No acceptable action of the Christian life can be performed without the Holy Spirit.

How Shall We Hope to Obtain
The Power or Fullness of the Spirit?

The Bible makes two things very, very clear in connection with fullness and power of the Spirit.

First, there is some relationship between the fullness and power of the Spirit and prayer. Two passages underscore this statement.

Luke 11:13 (NKJV): "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Acts 4:31 (NKJV): "And when they had prayed (and not before) the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

The Holy Ghost does not flow through methods but through men. He does not come on machinery but on men. He does not anoint plans but men. It is not great talent nor great learning that God needs but men great in holiness, great in faith, great in love, great in fidelity, great for God. These men can mold a generation for God.

Secondly, the Bible also teaches that there is some relationship to the power of the Spirit and obedience.

Acts 5:32 (NKJV): "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him. "

Our Lord condemned the religious crowd in His day on two counts (Mt. 22:29). He said to them, "You do err [or you are mistaken], not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God." They lacked knowledge and power. When the disciples could not heal the man in the gospels it was not a lack of knowledge but power. We do not lack knowledge--we lack power.

Knowledge comes by studying.
Power comes by prayer and fasting.

It is possible to know the plan (knowledge) and not know the power. You will not get power by attending meetings even though you may get the principle for receiving the power by the meeting; you will get the power by waiting on God. You may get the inspiration to seek the power in the meeting, but the power itself comes by waiting, not going.

Yes, it is true, the wind blows where it will. And there certainly is a sense in which the Spirit is sovereign to blow when, where and how He will. But the supernatural does have some laws just as the natural world does:

1. Everything that grieves the Spirit must be put away. To use biblical language "all malice and all guile and all hypocrisies and all unbelief, worldly mindedness, pride" --everything opposed to the simplicity, the charity and purity of Christ.

2. We will not have the power of the Spirit without importunate earnest prayer (Acts 1:14 preceded Acts 2)--prayer that has in it some intensity of desire; the kind of prayer expressed in Luke 11:9-13 (NKJV)

"And I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

This kind of prayer links together the whole communion of the faithful and knows no stopping till the answer comes. We cannot stop at mere theological consideration of the Holy Spirit. Why? Because sound theology without the Spirit will make you dry up. The Spirit without sound theology will make you blow up. But with both sound theology and the Spirit you will grow up.

My whole motive and effort in this article is to create within us a genuine desire for the power of the Spirit in our ministry and in our places of service.

The old Latin hymn of the 10th century expressed it well. May it be the desire of our hearts.

Come, O Creator Spirit blest,
And in our hearts take up thy rest;
Spirit of grace, with heavenly aid
Come to the souls whom thou hast made.

Thou art the Comforter, we cry,
Sent to the earth from God Most High,
Fountain of life and Fire of love,
And our anointing from above.

Make our dull minds with rapture glow,
Let human hearts with love o'erflow;
And, when our feeble flesh would fail

May shine immortal strength prevail.

Show us the Father, Holy One,
Help us to know the Eternal Son;
Spirit Divine, for evermore
Thee will we trust and thee adore.

(**The Church's Greatest Need - Founders Journal**)

Illustration - No, this isn't a Seinfeld episode—it is real life. The U.S. Postal Service in a surprise audit discovered that some local managers temporarily stashed unprocessed mail in parked trailers so that the letters and packages so supervisors wouldn't notice it as delayed. Auditors found millions of pieces of undelivered mail, including 2.3 million bulk-business letters, some of which were delayed nine days, and 800,000 first-class letters, which had been held for three days.

What should the penalty be when the people entrusted with the news fail to make the delivery?

The world may not be expecting the delivery, but they are at home awaiting the message of the good news concerning God sending His Son. We must be faithful to deliver the message.

http:www.time.comtimemagazinearticle0,9171,981188,00.html Illustration by Jim L. Wilson and Rodger Russell

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

What a Difference an Infusion of Power Makes! - Wade C. Graber, a Baptist pastor, said that years ago he was in school, driving fifty-eight miles round trip every day for his classes. He was getting up early and going to bed late, and he was also employed on a part-time basis in a ministry. One morning, he said, during his time alone with God, his tired eyes read Ephesians 3:16. "The instant I finished reading this verse, I experienced an 'infusion.' It was electrical... I was immediately empowered, energized, and invigorated by the indwelling Spirit." Many years have passed since then, but Graber wrote, "I continue to quote Ephesians 3:16 on multiple occasions. The electric physical sensation is not always experienced, but the strengthening ministry of the Spirit still occurs in my times of need." (**Wade C. Graber, The Mission of the Holy Spirit**, 2010)

> Jesus said about the people of His day, "You are ***mistaken*** (Greek = planao) because you do not know the Scriptures or the power (Greek = dunamis) of God." (Mark 12:24) Are you ***mistaken*** dear child of God? Ignorance is not bliss when it comes to a true knowledge of the Holy Spirit.

Rob Morgan in his discussion of how "The Holy Spirit Works through Us" tells a story that literally changed the course of Billy Graham's ministry - ....In our Christian work and in our personal ministry, it is the Holy Spirit Who works through us. Jesus told the disciples in Acts 1:8: "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses…." If you ever want to pursue an interesting personal Bible study, just read the book of Acts and underline or highlight every reference to the Holy Spirit. You could make a strong case that the book of the Acts of the Apostles ought to be called the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

In the book, **The Leadership Secrets of Billy Graham**, Harold Myra and Marshall Shelly said that when Billy Graham was a young man he accepted every speaking engagement that came his way, and he was full of passion as he preached the Gospel and invited people to receive Christ as their Savior. But there was still something missing, and he knew that his personal charisma was not enough to fulfill the calling of God on his life. During a preaching mission to the British Isles, he met a young Welsh evangelist named **Stephen Olford** who had the spiritual qualities that Billy longed to have. (Ed note: Graham called him "the man who most influenced my ministry.") One day Billy listened as Olford preached on the subject of being filled with the Holy Spirit. "You've spoken of something that I don't have," said Billy. I want the fullness of the Holy spirit in my life, too." Olford agreed to set two days aside during Billy's campaign. During the day the two men talked and at night the paused long enough for Billy to preach. In a small stone hotel, Olford led Billy step by step through the Bible verses on the power of the Holy Spirit. The first night when Billy preached, Olford thought that his sermon was ordinary and not particularly effective. The next day Olford continued the instruction, telling Billy that he must be broken like the apostle Paul, letting God turn him inside out. Olford shared his own testimony, and Billy's eyes filled with tears. "Stephen, I see it," he said, "That's what I want. That's what I need in my life." They knelt, and Billy poured out his heart in a prayer of total dedication to the Lord. And finally he said, "My heart is so flooded with the Holy Spirit! I have it! (Ed: Better "I have Him") I'm filled. **This is a turning point in my life.**" The two men went on to the meeting where Billy was to preach and for reasons known only to God, the place which was only moderately filled the night before was packed to the door. **When Billy gave the invitation, practically the entire crowd rushed forward. And it was, indeed, a turning point in his ministry**. Now we're

obviously not all evangelists like that, but **we all need the power and the anointing of the Holy Spirit**, and the work that we do for Christ is nothing except the work that Jesus Christ Himself is doing through us. My grandfather ran a waterwheel beside a small creek in Roan Mountain, Tennessee. He ground corn into cornmeal for his own family and for others. The water hit the wheel, and that turned the mechanism that did the work. It would have been very difficult work if my grandfather had tried to turn that wheel in his own power. But it was the power of the perpetually flowing water that turned the wheel and produced the results.

You say, how do I experience the fullness and the power of the Holy Spirit?

- Confess and turn from all of your sins, including those sins that so easily beset you.
- Open every part of your life to Him in full yieldedness and surrender.
- Pray and ask God for His fullness.
- Trust Him to do as He has promised

There's an old hymn that puts this in the form of a prayer:

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with thee I will Thy will
To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine.
Till all this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine

There are about 200 million non-churched people in America, making America one of the four largest 'unchurched' nations in the world." --John Piper, in a Jan 31 sermon titled "I will build My church." Quoted in World February 27, 2010 p.16 Illustration by Jim L. Wilson and Rodger Russell

While we need to keep looking to the spiritual needs of the world, missions and evangelism start right where we live. Jesus said we are to be his witnesses "both" at home and abroad. (see Acts 1:8)

John 4:35 (NKJV) "Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

What began in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost was not tied to geography, peace, or prosperity. It was the Spirit in them fulfilling Jesus' promise in Acts 1:8, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

When God allows difficult circumstances in our lives—a lost job, a demanding family need, a relocation to another city, state, or country—can we see His hand and sense His power? May we be like those early Christians, accepting the Lord's leading and joyfully proclaiming His Word wherever we are.

The Holy Spirit gives us power
To witness far and wide,
Equipping us to do God's work
And changing us inside.
—Sper

The power that compels us
comes from the Spirit who indwells us.

Change The World! - John, do you want to spend the rest of your life selling sugared water, or do you want a chance to change the world?"

That was the challenge Steve Jobs issued in 1983 to John Sculley, then president of Pepsi-Cola. Mr. Jobs was the creative genius behind Apple Computer. He knew that the soft-drink executive could help Apple make its mark on the computer world. Sculley accepted the bold challenge.

Jesus issued a challenge to three fishermen as they tended their nets. He commanded, “Follow Me!” (Mk. 1:17). They did, and with a handful of other ordinary men they changed the world. On the Day of Pentecost the promised Holy Spirit began a new work through them, and 3,000 were saved (Acts 2). Eventually critics would charge that they had turned the world “upside down” (Acts 17:6).

Our world is wrong-side up and right-side down, living by principles opposed to our Lord’s teachings. We can either follow the world’s dead-end philosophies, or we can accept Jesus’ challenge to bring change to the world.

Today let’s serve God by praying, giving, and witnessing in our small corner. One day the King of kings will return and transform the whole world! — by Vernon C. Grounds

Christ calls to us, "Come follow Me,
And don't look back to yesterday;
Fresh grace I'll give to change your world,
My joy you'll find as You obey."
—DJD

A disciple is known not for what he gives up, but for what he takes up.

Have We Learned? - What happens when we keep to ourselves something that, if shared with others, would enrich their lives? We not only fail to increase their happiness, but we rob ourselves of the joy that generosity brings.

Luigi Tarisio, who loved violins passionately, never learned that lesson. He spent his limited income buying the finest instruments he could find. He owned 246 exquisite violins, which were crammed into every corner of his otherwise barren little house. And they were never played! His obsession prevented those instruments from bringing pleasure and inspiration to other music lovers.

Instead of following Luigi’s example, we need to be motivated by the admonition of Proverbs 3:27 to keep ourselves free from the guilt of withholding good. Even more, we should be motivated by grateful obedience to Jesus Christ. And obedience, the Savior assures us, brings joy (John 15:10-11).

As Christians, we have a message that makes the melodies of heaven flood our souls. Our Lord gave us the mandate to share that message with everybody everywhere (Mark 16:15). Are we keeping the heavenly harmonies of saving grace sealed up inside ourselves, or are we obediently letting them ring out through our lips and lives?

O you who are trusting Jesus,
Redeemed at infinite cost,
Are you showing Christ to others
And seeking to win the lost? —Gilmore

Joy is a byproduct of obedience.

Lesson Of The 18-Wheeler - I was talking with a veteran truck driver about his life on the road. We discussed interstates, cities, truck stops, engines, and tractors.

As he spoke about his huge rig, he referred several times to steering axles and drive axles. I asked him to explain the difference. He told me that the front axle of a truck is the steering axle. The drive axles, located under the rear of the cab, transfer the power that is generated by the diesel engine. It’s the drive axles that enable the semi to climb steep grades, inch down dangerous slopes, and barrel down the highway to get the load in on time.

My discussion with that trucker gave me a new appreciation for those 18-wheelers, and it reminded me of a spiritual truth. Just as steering axles and drive axles are essential to a tractor-trailer, so also direction and power are vital to followers of Christ as we travel through life. The Holy Spirit provides us with both. He was sent to guide us into all truth (Jn. 16:13) and to teach us (1 Cor. 2:10-16). We are empowered by the Spirit to witness (Acts 1:8), to pray (Rom. 8:26), and to live a hope-filled life (15:13).

The next time one of those big semis blows by you on the highway, think about the lesson of the 18-wheeler. Call on the direction and power of the Holy Spirit. — by David C. Egner

The Spirit gives us power to live
A life that's pleasing to the Lord;
He also guides us and provides
Direction in God's holy Word.
—Sper

The power that drives us
comes from the Spirit inside us.

Power Failure - I felt mechanically illiterate. I was struggling with a videocassette player for a study group at church and couldn't make it work. Fortunately, someone saw my plight. I stood there appreciatively as he sized up the situation—and then plugged the power cord into the wall outlet.

Why hadn't I thought of that? I was so preoccupied with patch cords and monitors that I overlooked the obvious. I forgot about the power.

If I looked foolish there, it's nothing compared to what the angels see as they observe me. They must be astounded by my efforts to make life work without God's power. I join them in sad wonder. How can I forget that the infinite, personal Spirit of Christ lives within me to guide my life and give me power?

The answer is regretfully clear. There's a loose cord somewhere. When I am preoccupied with pleasing myself, I miss the power that comes from a healthy relationship with Christ. His Spirit enables me to do the will of God, to show His attitudes, and to fulfill His purpose. But I have to stay plugged in through prayer, reflection on God's Word, and complete reliance on His power—not my own.

Lord, help us to see the big picture and stay plugged in to the Source of Power—the Holy Spirit. — by Mart De Haan

I'm weak and helpless in life's fray;
Lord, may Your power be my stay,
And may I always seek to be
Renewed in strength for victory.
—DJD

A Christian who forgets the Holy Spirit
is like an unplugged power cord.

Let the Whole World Hear! - Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962), the world-famous violinist, earned a fortune with his concerts and compositions, but he generously gave most of it away. So, when he discovered an exquisite violin on one of his trips, he wasn't able to buy it.

Later, having raised enough money to meet the asking price, he returned to the seller, hoping to purchase that beautiful instrument. But to his great dismay it had been sold to a collector. Kreisler made his way to the new owner's home and offered to buy the violin. The collector said it had become his prized possession and he would not sell it. Keenly disappointed, Kreisler was about to leave when he had an idea. "Could I play the instrument once more before it is consigned to silence?" he asked. Permission was granted, and the great virtuoso filled the room with such heart-moving music that the collector's emotions were deeply stirred. "I have no right to keep that to myself," he exclaimed. "It's yours, Mr. Kreisler. Take it into the world, and let people hear it."

To sinners saved by grace, the gospel is like the rapturous harmonies of heaven. We have no right to keep it to ourselves. Jesus tells us to take it out into the world, and let it be heard.— by Vernon C. Grounds

I'll tell the world how Jesus saved me
And how He gave me a life brand new;
And I know that if you trust Him
That all He gave me He'll give to you.
—Fox © 1958, 1963 Fox Music Publications

Someone told you about Christ.
Have you told anyone lately?

The Missionary Option - There are two kinds of people when it comes to missions—those who need to share Christ and those who

need to hear about Him.

H. A. Ironside used to tell a story about a meeting in which a missionary offering was taken. When the collection plate was handed to a wealthy man, he brushed it aside and said, “I do not believe in missions.” “Then take something out,” said the usher. “This is for the heathen.”

As a boy I looked up to missionaries as godly people who sailed to some far-off, uncivilized land and didn’t return for several years. Being a missionary was the ultimate calling—nothing could be more noble or admirable. I still believe that God calls men and women to missionary service in other lands, and I still have great respect for them, but my idea of missionaries has changed.

Every Christian is part of Christ’s mission in the world. What Jesus told His disciples in Acts 1 applies also to us. We are His witnesses and therefore must speak and live so that others will glorify Him when they hear our message and see our faith in action.

Being a missionary is not an option—it’s what we are called to be. — by Dennis J. De Haan

I am a missionary, Lord,
Wherever I may be;
At home or in a distant land,
I'll tell the world of Thee.
—Brandt

One thing you cannot do about missions—
escape your responsibility.

Home Missions - One morning as I was strolling along the shore of the Gulf of Mexico, I saw a middle-aged man sitting in the water. We exchanged greetings, and then he painfully struggled to his feet and began to talk.

What a story of angry resentment! As a young man, he was about to set up a law practice when he was called into the armed forces during World War II. While in the military, he contracted a disease that left him maimed in body and bitter in soul.

Tears streamed down his cheeks. Sensing that he needed to know God’s love, I explained the gospel to him. Then I asked, “Wouldn’t you like to trust Christ as your Savior?” I was thrilled when he said, “Yes, I would.” So right there, standing knee-deep in the Gulf of Mexico under a golden morning sun, we prayed. When we finished, he looked at me and made this shocking statement: “Do you realize that no one has ever talked like this to me before!”

That educated man had never been told of God’s saving grace. This seems hard to believe, doesn’t it? Yet, what if we all were asked, “How long has it been since you personally spoke a word for Christ?” In our enthusiasm to reach lost multitudes across the sea, we must not forget that lost person nearby. —R W De Haan

As You have loved me, let me love
Lost souls in darkness dwelling;
To draw the needy ones to You,
Lord, give a zeal compelling.
—Bosch

Do we have a burden for the lost
or have we lost our burden?

Witnesses - In a criminal court case, witnesses provide vital information about a possible crime. Being a witness means telling the court the truth about what you know.

Just as the criminal justice system relies heavily on witnesses, Jesus uses bold, faithful, and credible witnesses to spread His Word and build His church.

Before Jesus ascended to His Father, He gave His disciples a final command—to launch a worldwide witnessing campaign. The Holy Spirit would come upon them and give them supernatural power to be His witnesses throughout the world (Acts 1:8).

Jesus called these early apostles to go into a world where people did not know about Him and to give a truthful account of what they had seen, heard, and experienced (Acts 4:19-20). Since they had witnessed His perfect life, teachings, suffering, death, burial, and resurrection (Luke 24:48; Acts 1–5), they were to go out and give a truthful testimony about Him.

In taking the gospel to the ends of the world, we are called to testify to the truth about Jesus and how He has changed our lives. “How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?” (Rom. 10:14). What are you doing to tell others? — by Marvin Williams

Lord and Savior, Christ divine,
Reign within this heart of mine;
May my witness ever be
Always, only, Lord, for Thee.
—Brandt

God has left us in the world to witness to the world.

He Wanted To - In his book Love Is Now, Peter Gilquist mentioned that he and several other friends were invited to speak to a group of UCLA students. After the meeting, a young man expressed a desire to discuss the matter of salvation. So Gilquist arranged to meet with him the next morning.

The student said that he really wanted what he saw in the lives of believers. But he hesitated to make a commitment because he thought he would have to tell others about Jesus. Gilquist, however, assured him that to become a Christian he was not required to do anything but place his trust in Christ.

Realizing that salvation is by God’s grace through faith, the student gladly received the Lord Jesus as his Savior. But a strange thing happened as he went back to his fraternity house. He met a friend and told him of his newfound faith in Christ. Before the day was over, he had testified to every one of his fraternity brothers about Jesus.

Our witness for Christ should reflect a grateful heart—a sincere desire to share salvation’s blessings with others. If we shrink from giving a word of testimony, let’s ask God to give us the desire to speak out for Him. Then we’ll witness because we want to.

Lead me to some soul today;
O teach me, Lord, just what to say.
Friends of mine are lost in sin
And cannot find their way.
—Houghton

If you know Christ,
you’ll want others to know Him too.

The Power Of Pentecost - A pastor I know and love is discouraged. Although he is diligent in prayer and works hard, his church remains small while a new congregation nearby is rapidly developing into a megachurch. Yet when I think of the alcoholics, drug addicts, and sexually immoral people he has led to the Savior and a new way of life, I see him as one who witnesses in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Because of what happened on the Day of Pentecost (described in Acts 2), we tend to associate the Holy Spirit’s presence and power with amazing phenomena and large numbers. We forget that a little later the same people filled with the same Holy Spirit were rejected, flogged, imprisoned, even executed. But through it all they were powerful witnesses!

The Holy Spirit’s presence and power can be evidenced in a dynamic preacher who attracts great audiences. But it is seen as well in the volunteer who carries on a one-on-one prison ministry, in the person who witnesses to a co-worker or a neighbor, and in the Sunday school teacher who faithfully teaches week after week.

The power of Pentecost is not reserved for the highly gifted. It is available to all believers in Christ who want to serve Him.

God's guidance and help that we need day to day
Are given to all who believe;
The Spirit has come and He is the source
Of power that we can receive.
—Branon

The power of God's Spirit
gives power to our witness.

Derek Tidball writes that **D L Moody** was a very ordinary man but adds that...

> one of his very attractive qualities is precisely his ordinariness, his humanity and his limitations. And yet, he became a remarkable evangelist who in his 1875 mission to London alone would preach to two and a half million people. Even his critics agreed that he 'reduced the population of hell by a million souls'. God surprisingly transformed this humble, ordinary shoe salesman into a preacher who could proclaim the gospel persuasively to peers and paupers, to duchesses and dockers alike. Why was this? How? What made the difference? The answer is the Holy Spirit. No doubt, there were other factors involved. He had, for example, learned through the example of Harry Moorhouse, a Lancashire lad, to preach the love of God rather than to harass people into heaven through the harsh threat of hell. But others knew how to do that without the same effect. D. L. Moody, however, was the one called in God's sovereign purposes to be the chosen instrument of revival in his day and to be anointed by the Holy Spirit with remarkable power....he exhorts the believers of his own day, and ours, to seek not just the Holy Spirit 'in' them but also 'on' them. In his sermon, 'Power—"In" and "Upon" ' he sets out the need to the church. The greatest lack of the church, (Moody) claims, is a want of power. How could believers see their relatives and neighbours going to eternal ruin and not be concerned to speak to them about Christ? Something, surely, must be wrong with a church like that. Yet, from what he writes it is apparent that not all would agree with him that the problem lay in a lack of power. Many saw the source of the trouble as lying elsewhere.
>
>> A great many people are thinking we need new measures, that we need new churches, that we need new organs, and that we need new choirs, and all these new things. That is not what the church of God needs today. It is the old power that the Apostles had, which we want; and if we have that in our churches, there will be new life. Then we shall have new ministers, not the same old ministers, renewed with power; filled with the Spirit.
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> Not many people today would attribute the decline of the church in the United Kingdom to the need for new organs and choirs....Today it is, 'Let's get rid of the organs, choirs and buildings which smack of yesteryear and let's restore popular culture, language and dress codes to the church through the use of guitars, worship bands, modern technology, contemporary songs and through pastors and priests that look like ordinary human beings.' But we still believe that the adjustment of the outward packaging of the gospel, the adoption of new methods, holds the secret to successful evangelism. The truth is, we have tried it all and it has proved to be no more successful than old-fashioned ways. The answer does not appear to lie in methods, but as Moody correctly diagnosed, in a want of power. To bypass that answer is to condemn the church to yet more failure....They have not lacked innovation. But they have lacked the old power. Moody pointed out that churches needed spiritual irrigation if they were to produce fruitful crops....
>
> Our churches, he said, needed to be irrigated with the Holy Spirit. But, even more particularly, we needed to be 'artesian wells'. Other pumps demanded pumping, pumping, pumping, as he obviously well remembered. That was hard work, but unproductive. And many ministers appeared to be doing just that in their pulpits. But, oh for a continual flow of God's grace that did not depend on resorting to such methods. 'You cannot get water out of a dry well,' he proclaimed, 'there must be something in the well, or you cannot get anything out.' And that was exactly the problem with so much energetic but unanointed activity in the church. All the new measures in Christendom will prove futile, if the well is dry.
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> So the greatest need now, as then, is the need of power. But how is power to be obtained? Moody's answer is to **wait** on God until it comes. That demands we resist the temptation to activity. David Bebbington has taught us that 'activism' is one of the cardinal characteristics of the Evangelical movement. Our activism arises from the best of motives. We desire to see others converted and therefore use every means and all our energy and ingenuity to that end. It results in busy lives and busy churches. Mark Noll has made a similar comment in reference to America. 'The tendency of American evangelicals, when confronted with a problem, is to act.' His concern is that as a result of this tendency Evangelicals frequently fail to think, deeply, wisely or strategically. So, he wryly adds, 'For the sake of Christian thinking, that tendency must be suppressed.' Moody was equally concerned about resisting the temptation of activism, but for a different reason. Activism frequently led to fruitlessness because it was not impregnated with the Spirit's power....
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>> 'Some people think that they are losing time if they wait on God for His power; and so they go and work, without unction; they are working without any anointing; they are working without any power.' (Quote from D L Moody)
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> To waiting, Moody added thirsting as a precondition for the Spirit's anointing. He asked whether people really

wanted the power. ‘The great question before us now is, Do we want it?’ In Moody’s view it was the absence of any serious hunger and thirst for power that prevented the church from experiencing it. They were not committed to seeking it, even if they glibly acknowledged that it would be a good thing to have. He was convinced that if the church genuinely sought power from God they would receive it.

We all need it together; and let us rest not day nor night until we possess it. If that is the uppermost thought in our hearts, God will give it to us; He will grant us the blessing, if we just hunger and thirst for it, and say, ‘God helping me, I will not rest until endued with power from on high’.

Why should people not want such power? The question remains a pertinent one for the contemporary church. It is one to which there are several answers.

First, we often prefer to do things our way rather than God’s. We neither want to give up control, nor status. We are more comfortable in thinking that we should be able to organize a response to the gospel by more conventional, worldly means—like advertising, good publicity, contemporary music, academic argument, entertaining speakers and by getting celebrities to give their testimonies—than in God’s way which, consistent with the cross of Christ, is through weakness. That way we feel much more on a level with the world and we shake off the very thing that the early church took glory in, namely, that they were among the poor, weak, insignificant and powerless in the world. We will demonstrate our power, our cleverness and our importance. But the one thing this will not do is to demonstrate the ‘knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ Jesus’ since such an approach is not compatible with his gospel. It will not display the glory of God for we cannot display his glory and our own at the same time.

Second, we often want the power but are not prepared to meet the conditions of receiving it. God will not give his power to those who tolerate sin in their lives. Arrogant impatience for power for its own sake and selfish ambition will not yield the desired result.

Third, many do not thirst for God with the passion Moody commended lest God should quench their thirst, meet them powerfully in their request and change them.

Of one thing Moody was sure. God wanted to bless his people. He wanted to shine on his world, to lift up his work, to give his people power. If we seek his blessing with all our hearts, we will obtain it. The blockage does not lie with God. It lies in the half-hearted desire of his people and their lack of seriousness about the work of God.

Keep filled: we leak

Is this waiting on God and thirsting for his anointing, once granted, a one-off second blessing, as some would teach? Having experienced it, does it guarantee fruitfulness from then on? Not for Moody. He was aware that we needed to keep on seeking such anointing. We need to keep fresh. The fact is, to use Moody’s typically down-to-earth way of putting it, that when the Holy Spirit comes, he comes to ‘leaky vessels’. We may be filled now, but we lose the Holy Spirit within and ‘we have to keep right under the fountain all the time and so have a fresh supply’. The supply of ten years ago will not do. Because we leak we need to seek the Holy Spirit for today. We are in constant need of fresh power, fresh supplies, fresh anointing.

The result of such anointing is that we shall preach Christ and preach him effectively. We will not be talking of self. We shall not exhibit anything of self. We shall be concerned for God and his glory alone.

We may wish to argue about the finer points of Moody’s theology. We may want to express things differently than he did. We may not feel as easy about the rigid distinction between power ‘in’ and power ‘upon’ as he was. But the evidence is surely all around that what we desperately need is the power, whatever language we use, and whether ‘in’ or ‘upon’. We need the fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit and Moody challenges us to ask for it. He challenges us as to whether we are going to wait for it, hunger and thirst for it, find it and then seek it again, or not. Without it, all our other activity will have no value.

Moody finished his exhortation by wishing that the spirit of Elijah that fell on Elisha and gave to Elisha a double portion of Elijah’s God, would fall again. He urged his hearers, and us through them, to cry out until we too received a double portion of Elijah’s God, confident that ‘If we seek for it we shall have it’. (**George, Timothy. Mr Moody and the Evangelical Tradition. London; New York: T&T Clark**)