

Sermon Outline

“Filled with the Holy Spirit”

“Desperate” series, Part 7 – Acts 3-4 – Joshua Harris – November 21, 2010

Introduction

1. There's a simple pattern in the Christian life—when we are more aware of our need for God, we pray and ask God for help. And the more we pray and ask God to work, the more God answers and shows his power. People who ask God for his help get more of his help than people who don't ask.
 - a. Luke 11:10 – *“For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, it will be opened.”*
 - b. James 4:2 – *“You do not have because you do not ask.”*
 - c. James 4:8 – *“Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.”*
2. God's nearness, God's power, God's provision, God's mighty work come to those who go looking for them—who ask for them. So why don't we ask more?
 - a. One reason is that we are proud, and we think we can handle the Christian life on our own. In other words, we are self-sufficient.
 - b. Another reason is that we have very low expectations of God. We don't expect God to work powerfully in and around us, so we don't ask him to. And when he doesn't act powerfully, instead of being distraught, we're completely content with serving and praying to a small God.

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit ... we see like Jesus (Acts 3:1-10; 4:7-13)

1. Peter and John are different men. They've witnessed the resurrected Jesus Christ, and the promised Holy Spirit has come with power on the day of Pentecost. The first aspect of Spirit-birthed transformation is how they see the world around them. Verse 4 says that Peter *“directed his gaze”* at the lame man. And as he looks at him, he sees an opportunity for the glory and power of Jesus to be displayed.
2. We need to be like Peter. We need the Holy Spirit to fill us so that we will see—really see—the hurting people around us. One of the marks of a Spirit-filled Christian is that they see the lost; their heart breaks for the lost, and they expect God to act—they ask God to act.

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit ... we are bold like Jesus (Acts 3:11-20)

1. When we're filled with the Holy Spirit, we're empowered to do what we can't do by ourselves. We are energized and enabled to do all the things God calls us to

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do in his strength—to turn from sin, to love others, and to boldly bear witness to Jesus Christ. And that’s what we see in the transformed Peter.

2. What does this boldness look like?
 - a. Bold is not overbearing. Bold is not self-righteous. Bold does not need to be loud and obnoxious. And it’s not just needed for speaking to crowds.
 - b. Boldness in Christian witness is born from a quiet heart of faith that believes that the power of the gospel is not hindered by our weakness and inadequacy.
 - c. Boldness asks for God to show us doors that are slightly ajar and that we can push on!
 - d. Bold looks different for each of us. It doesn’t mean that we will take on a totally different personality or speak in a different voice. It means that God’s Spirit will empower us with our own voice and our own unique personality to speak about him to others.

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit...we proclaim the gospel of Jesus

1. Our boldness is a boldness to speak a particular message. Peter’s two messages show us the content of Spirit-empowered witness. In each of his sermons, he communicates the following:
 - a. Jesus is the Holy Righteous One, the Author of Life—God in the flesh.
 - b. Jesus was rejected, crucified and died.
 - c. God raised Jesus from the dead.
 - d. We must all repent. If we turn from our sin and believe on Jesus, we’ll be saved and our sins blotted out. Faith in Jesus is the only way for anyone to be saved.
2. Boldness to befriend, a commitment to serve, and a sacrificial care for others must be accompanied by the saving message of the gospel.

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit...We Ask Jesus To Do Even More (Acts 4:29-31)

1. As soon as Peter and John were released, they go and report all that happened to the other believers. When they do, an impromptu prayer meeting breaks out. They don’t pray to be delivered from their circumstances. They don’t ask God to wipe out their enemies ... just that he’d take note of them. For what do they ask?

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For God to do even more—more power, more boldness, more healing, more signs and wonders.

2. They are not content. They are desperate for God to continue his great work. They don't say, "Well, Peter and John are safe, they preached to the Sanhedrin, let's take a break." They say, "Lord, continue to let us boldly proclaim the gospel!"

Concluding Exhortation

1. Friends, do we see how massive the mission God has called his church to? We are surrounded by people who give no thought to Jesus Christ and are on their way to hell. Could it be that we're not desperate to be filled with the Holy Spirit because we're content with not seeing our neighbors saved, content that the unreached nations won't be reached, content that we'll never speak about Jesus to our friends and family?
2. Let's not be content. Let's cry out to God to stir a great longing to see his power at work. Let's seek him for the same work of the Spirit that gave the early church boldness and zeal to preach the gospel even in the face of opposition.

Fellowship Starters

1. Josh shared that a Spirit-filled believer sees the hurting and lost world as Jesus sees them. Whom do you walk by every day that the Lord is calling you to reach out to, to pray for, to serve, and share the gospel with?
 - a. Ask God to give you Spirit-empowered vision of what Jesus could do in their lives.
2. Josh stated that when we are filled with the Spirit, we are bold like Jesus. Is this Spirit-empowered boldness your experience, or have you grown satisfied with timidity and silence?
 - a. Ask God for yourself and for our church that we would raise our expectations of what the Holy Spirit can do in weak, fearful people to proclaim the gospel boldly.
3. Josh shared that a boldness to befriend, a commitment to serve, and a sacrificial care for others must be accompanied by the saving message of the gospel (see Acts 3:12-26; 4:8-12). What do you communicate when one of the doors into someone's life is slightly ajar? How can you grow in sharing the gospel with unbelievers?
4. Josh said that God's nearness, power, and provision come to those who go looking for it—who ask for it. Are you asking for more? Are you asking God to

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stir a great longing for more of Jesus, for more power, more boldness, more zeal, and more gifts of his Spirit?