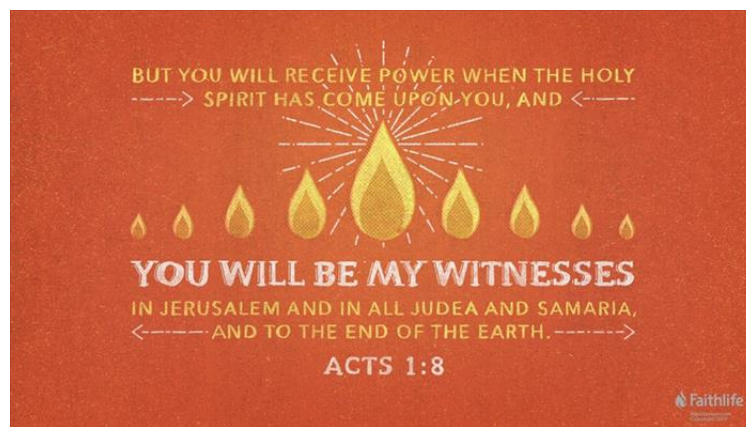


## Devotionals-10-16 September 2023

### Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8

"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."



Our identity in Methodism is rooted in Jesus Christ. Our mission is to know Him, exalt Him as Savior, Redeemer, Healer, and Coming King, and complete His Great Commission:

Jesus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge: "God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19 – The Message)

We are called to be a Christ-centered, Acts 1:8 family. What does that mean?

**CHRIST-CENTERED** — We start with Jesus. He is the source of our love, the cause of our worship, and the core of our message. Not only do we begin with Jesus, but we end with Jesus, too, and center ourselves around Him. Everything we are begins and ends with Jesus.

**ACTS 1:8** — Acts 1:8 says, "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." We rely on the Holy Spirit to fill us as we seek to fulfill our calling to every segment of society and spread the Good News.

**FAMILY** — We believe are at our best when we do this together, serving in a local church and among a community of local churches. We are a diverse family—children of God, and brothers and sisters in Christ. *Let us remember the journey:*

**1: From the very instant of creation, your Holy Spirit moved on the waters of creation, bringing to life the creative love that is God.**

**2: Even when the people were forgetful and stubborn, your Holy Spirit called to them to be unafraid, to follow. It led them through the desert to a land of sweet dwelling.**

**3: During all the times of fear and tumult, you sang the song of hope through the prophets, who called people back to you with tender forgiveness.**

**4: On a dark winter night you sang your sweetest song and birthed a Savior who came to bring us life and witness to your love and power.**

**5: At the lakeshore you called to the simple people, the fishermen, to come and follow you. They witnessed your miracles of healing and forgiving love.**

**6: When the night seemed to be the darkest, even though it was mid-day - you gave your Son to be a witness to your love. From His rugged, wooden cross He forgave those who crucified Him and reminded a thief that paradise would be his home.**

**7: On the early morning, the women were startled with the news of His resurrection. Could it be that all He had said was true?**

**8: The disciples hid in fear of what others might say, think or do. They were astonished at His presence to them.**

**9: Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness, help us to dream dreams and see visions of all that is possible for the healing and hope for this world.**

**10: Help us cross lines which divide. Lovingly unite us to proclaim boldly that you are the Spirit of Absolute Love and Peace. Emblazon our spirits. Make bold our voices. Give joy to our hearts, for we have been called to be witnesses, even to the ends of the world.**

As shocking as it may seem, many, many Christians are bored. They are somewhat committed in attending church, being good employees or retirees, raising children and grandchildren, and serving the community; and yet, they are bored. How can this be? How can followers of Jesus who appear to be doing “all the right things” be bored?

I believe at least part of the problem is that they don’t understand who they are. They know that they belong to Jesus, but they don’t understand what that means. It’s true that believers are meant to attend church, build good families, and serve their communities. The problem is that, although they were made for all those things, they were also made for MORE than those things.

One of the core identities of a follower of Jesus is to be a world changer. This can be seen from the earliest days of Abraham when he was told that all the nations on earth would be blessed through him (Genesis 12:3). When people begin to follow Jesus, they are then joined into this family of Abraham (Galatians 3:7-9, 14). This dream of all the nations of the earth being blessed is the foundation of our faith and the ultimate culmination of our faith (Revelations. 5:9). The glory of the nations of the earth is a key building block of God’s own city (Rev. 21:24-26). From these passages, it seems that all believers are made to be a part of God’s global purposes.

Acts 1:8 helps spell out the scope of God’s global glory. For many, a misunderstanding of this passage has led to a misunderstanding of who they are. In Acts 1:8 Jesus tells us that we will need the power of the Holy Spirit to be able to be witnesses of the Good News of Jesus. Then Jesus says that the gospel will go to Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria and the ends of the earth as His people serve as witnesses.

The book of Acts, penned by the physician Luke, documents the birth and expansion of the early Christian church. In Acts 1, Jesus appears to His disciples after His resurrection, providing them with final instructions before ascending into heaven. He promises them the gift of the Holy Spirit, which will empower them to spread the Gospel to the ends of the earth. To better understand the significance of Acts 1:8 in a devotional context, it is essential to explore its place within the larger theme of the book and how it introduces and sets the stage for the fulfillment of the major theme as the narrative of Acts unfolds.

Acts 1:8 states, "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." This verse serves as a pivotal moment in the book, setting the stage for the remainder of the narrative. It emphasizes the central theme of the book: the expansion of the church through the power of the Holy Spirit, as the Gospel message spreads from Jerusalem to the farthest reaches of the known world.

Acts 1:8 introduces the major theme of the Holy Spirit's empowerment and guidance of the early church, which unfolds throughout the book. The disciples receive the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, marking the beginning of their mission to spread the gospel.

In Jerusalem (Acts 2-7), the apostles preach the gospel, perform miracles, and thousands come to faith in Christ. As the message spreads to the surrounding regions of Judea and Samaria (Acts 8-12), the gospel crosses cultural and religious boundaries. Philip preaches to the Samaritans in Acts 8, and Peter brings the gospel to the Gentile centurion Cornelius in Acts 10, signaling the inclusion of both Jews and non-Jews in the church.

Finally, the gospel reaches the ends of the earth through the missionary journeys of Paul and other apostles (Acts 13-28). Paul, Barnabas, Silas, and others establish churches in Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Greece, ultimately bringing the gospel to Rome, the heart of the Roman Empire (Acts 28).

Throughout Acts, the Holy Spirit empowers the apostles and other believers to carry out Jesus' mission to be His witnesses, fulfilling the promise of Acts 1:8. For believers today, this verse serves as a reminder of our ongoing responsibility to share the good news of Jesus' resurrection and the transforming power of the gospel, guided and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

In Act 1:8, Jesus promises His followers the gift of the Holy Spirit, which will empower them to be effective witnesses for Christ. This same Spirit is available to all believers, enabling us to live out our faith and share the gospel with others.

Jesus' instructions in Acts 1:8 outline the scope of the disciples' mission, which begins in Jerusalem and extends to the ends of the earth. This call to global evangelism applies to all believers, as we are commissioned to share the good news with people of every nation and culture.

The power of the Holy Spirit enables us to be effective witnesses for Christ, giving us the courage, wisdom, and boldness needed to share our faith. As we rely on the Spirit's guidance and strength, we can make a lasting impact for God's kingdom.

To apply this passage, begin by praying for the Holy Spirit to empower and guide you in your daily life. Ask for boldness, wisdom, and discernment as you seek to share the gospel with those around you.

Embrace the call to global evangelism by supporting mission work both locally and internationally. Look for opportunities to engage with people from different cultures and backgrounds, sharing the love of Christ through your words and actions.

Finally, remember that you are not alone in your mission to be a witness for Christ. Trust in the power of the Holy Spirit to equip and sustain you and seek to cultivate a deeper relationship with God through prayer, Bible study, and fellowship with other believers. The Word of God for the people of God. Amen.

PRAYING TO OUR HEAVENLY FATHER —  
**YOU'RE NOT ALONE, LET US PRAY WITH YOU & FOR YOU**  
*PRAYERS WILL BE ANSWERED*

- **Mr. Robert (Bob) Kuhaupt** tripped and fell at an outdoor event resulting in head and back injury. He is in admitted at HSHS St. Vincent Hospital, Green Bay, WI. Loving Father, touch Mr. Bob now with your healing hands, for we believe that your will is for him to be well in mind, body, soul and spirit. Cover Mr. Bob with the most precious blood of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ from the top of his head to the soles of my feet. Heal him, dear LORD. Amen. Please send your prayers of healing and support to: **Mr. Robert (Bob) and Ms. Joy Kuhaupt, Sussex Mills Apts, W240 N6345 Maple Ave. #116, Sussex, WI 53089.**
- **Ms. Nancy Whitson'** husband, **Robert**, passed away on 30 July 2023. We extend our deepest and heartfelt condolences to Ms. Nancy and her family. She is still admitted at The Pavilion at Glacier Valley. She requests your prayers and support as she continues to journey with health concerns. Please send cards and notes of encouragement to: **Mrs. Nancy Whitson, 922 Hickory Street, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mr. Tom Damp** has been comfortable and safe in his home for years. This has been possible primarily due to home healthcare services. However, with significant changes in coverage from health insurance, availability of in-home health care personnel, and other life circumstances, Mr. Tom is having to make unexpected decisions; stay in his home or transition to assisted living. He asks for your prayers and care as God reveals, God's plan for his new season. Caring Father, we thank you for the opportunity we have as a church family to pray and care for Mr. Tom Damp. We ask that you bless him with the resources to keep safe from harm. Please surround this whole process with your wisdom and mercy, Lord. We pray for Mr. Tom's health and care in this whole process. In the name of Jesus I pray, amen. Card and noted can be mailed to: **Mr. Tom Damp, 1707 Sunset Ridge Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**
- No one enters this life a follower of Christ. If we are God's children, it is because we were born spiritually sometime after we were born physically. God uses our prayers as one of the means of drawing people, including our grandchildren, to God. We lift up prayers of healing and strength for **Mr. Ben Barth**, fiancé of Ms. Heather Wolf, granddaughter of Mr. Roger and Mrs. Mary Rogge. Mr. Ben has been given a new heart and new lungs but is experiencing kidney concerns. Cards of prayers for healing and restoration can be mailed to: **Mr. Ben Barth, 969 Tuscola Lane, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- We remain in prayer and support for **Mrs. Ann Cording**. Great Physician, you can heal us in a heartbeat. We pray for God's miraculous healing today. Take our pain away, according to Your will, in Your time. We're not promised a painless life on this earth, but You do want us to live a happy one. Send Your Spirit to help us see past our circumstances and

onto Your calling on our lives. Sickness and injury can't stop God-placed dreams. Fill our hearts with hope as we wait on You to move in our lives and flow out from our hearts. In Jesus' Name, Amen. Cards and notes of love and care can be mailed to: **Mrs. Ann Cording, 1416 S. Silverbrook Drive, West Bend WI 53095.**

- Our deepest sympathies are extended to **Mrs. Shari Weiss**, sister of Mrs. Kathy Schneider, on the passing of her husband, Mr. Mike Weiss. Mr. Mike struggled for a long time with health concerns; eternal rest grant unto Mr. Mike, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen. Cards and notes of condolences and sympathies can be mailed to: **Mrs. Shari Weiss, c/o Mrs. Kathy Schneider, 2107 Maple Dale Drive, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- **Bro. Bob Krell** is rooted in our hearts as we shower him and the Family with our love, care, and support. He is grateful and humbled for your prayers and cards of restoration, strength, and miraculous healing. Thank you, God, for hearing and answering our prayer. Cards and notes of love and encouragement can be mailed to: **Bro. Bob and Mrs. Jean Krell, 804 Lenora Drive, West Bend, WI 53090.**
- **Ms. Sandy Wamser** having been diagnosed with Epilepsy, is still working with her medical team to find the correct medications and doses to control the seizures. She is very grateful for your love, prayers, and support. Special prayers for Mr. Pat as he cares for Ms. Sandy. Cards and notes can be sent to: **Mr. Pat and Mrs. Sandy Wamser, 3742 Pleasant Valley Road, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mr. Don Walters** is still experiencing several medical challenges. We're keeping Ms. Joyce in our thoughts and prayers as well. Letters and notes of encouragement and love can be mailed to: **Mr. Don and Mrs. Joyce Walters, 5368 Woodlawn Summit, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mr. Chuck Rogge** is still on a journey of healing. He is grateful for the cards and notes of support. Please continue to flood the mailbox with love and support to: **Mr. Chuck and Mrs. Sue Rogge, 5011 Hwy. P, West Bend, WI 53095.**
- **Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf**, appreciates your continued prayers for healing and strength as she continues to struggle with illness. You can send emails of prayers and support to: [alankempf33@gmail.com](mailto:alankempf33@gmail.com); or cards and notes to **Mr. Allan and Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf, 414B. South Pleasantview Road, Plymouth, WI 53073; phone number: 920.838.1830.**

*We continue to celebrate our 175<sup>th</sup> year of service, commitment and Methodism in West Bend, Wisconsin.*

“Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Present, Anticipating Our Future”

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit, which empowers us to be effective witnesses for Christ. Help us to embrace our call to share the gospel with those around us and to support mission work both locally and globally. Fill us with boldness, wisdom, and discernment as we seek to make a lasting impact for Your kingdom. May we rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us in our mission, and may our lives be a testimony to Your love and grace. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.



**Amazing sustaining grace will see us through,**

***Pastor Clarissa & Bro. Martin***

Loving God, as my husband, Martin, celebrates another year of life, I give you all thanks and praise. I thank you for my husband and for the wonderfully awesome persons that is Martin: Dad, Brother, Uncle, Nephew, Friend, and Papa. I humbly pray that you grant him all his heart desires. Bless Martin with good health, happiness, and success. May he continue to shine and be a light to those around him. May his dreams come true, and may he never lack anything good. Thank you for his life, and I pray that you continue to guide and protect him and may Martin always feel your presence. Happy Birthday, my divine eternal love!