

- During the depression, a Texas couple named Ira and Ann Yates owned a sheep ranch.
 - Things were not going well and they were not able to make enough on their ranching operation to pay the principal and interest on the mortgage, so he was in danger of losing his property.
 - There was little money to pay the bills, buy clothes, to even live.
 - Then a seismographic crew from an oil company came into the area and informed him there might be oil on his land. They asked permission to drill a wildcat well, and he signed a lease contract.
 - As they drilled past the 1000 foot mark they struck a huge oil reserve.
 - The first well came in at 80,000 barrels a day. Many subsequent wells were more than twice as large.
 - In fact, 30 years after the discovery, about 1 billion barrels of oil have been harvested from what is now called the Yates oilfields.
 - And the Yates' owned it all.
 - The day he purchased the ranch land he had received all the oil and mineral rights.
 - Yet, he had been barely scraping by. A multimillionaire living in poverty.
 - The problem? He didn't know the oil was there even though he owned it. He was not aware of the miracle that laid within his own property.
 - It is easy for us as Christ-followers to fall into the same trap, and to live lives that are devoid of the power that is available when we are filled with the Holy Spirit.
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- Today is part 2 of our series on the Holy Spirit.
 - In week 1 we talked about the difference between receiving the Holy Spirit, which we do when we decide to follow Jesus, and being filled with the Holy Spirit, which is something that is supposed to be an ongoing, complete and supernatural filling up of the Spirit in our lives.
 - When I was young, some of my most vivid memories of church were when missionaries came to speak. They would come and share about what God was doing, but what grabbed my attention were the stories and pictures.
 - Usually they were coming from Africa (which is where most of the missionaries that our church supported were serving) and they would show pictures of barely dressed natives, grass huts, African countryside and the like. They would have a table in the hallway with stuff from the local country. It would fire up my imagination.
 - They would share stories about what God was doing. About people with leprosy, witch doctors who would come to know Jesus, and some spectacular stories of miraculous things and events that God had done among the people there.
 - I would think, "That's amazing. I would love to see God do stuff like that."
 - But that is about as far as it went and when we left it was home to watch the Wonderful World of Disney.
 - As I got older and matured in my faith, sadly, my view did not change much. I would still hear stories of God doing amazing things elsewhere. I read my bible over and over and the way God worked and the miracles he did seemed as far off and unreachable as stories of King Arthur or the fall of Troy.
 - I learned that this was OK because God didn't really do stuff like that anymore anyway.
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- The older I get, the more I am convinced of the error of this kind of teaching.
 - God is a God of miracles. Of the supernatural. Of the amazing. He is a God of power.
 - That power is released through the Holy Spirit in and through our lives.
 - **THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS POWER.**

- Once when Peter was talking to some non-Jews about Jesus, he described what Jesus did when he was alive.

Acts 10:37 You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached – 38 how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

- Last week we saw about the need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:4 On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

- The word used for baptism is not a religious word. It means to immerse, to submerge and to overwhelm.
- In fact, the word was used when describing how to make pickles by a Greek poet and physician who said the vegetable should be “baptized” in a vinegar solution. The idea is of being fully immersed such that it produces a permanent change.
- Jesus used the verb the same way, that baptism with the Holy Spirit is to be filled up, immersed in, and totally changed by him as a result.
- When Paul wrote to the Ephesian church, he used a different word that meant the same thing.

Ephesians 5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. 18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- To be filled up is to be consumed with something (such as an emotion - fear, compassion, anger). Something so dominates us that it affects how we think and act. It is filling through or permeating.
- We also saw last week that we are to pursue this filling. It was not just for the disciples. It is not a one-time thing. We are to put our whole being into this pursuit.
- What happens when we are filled? What are the results? What are the signs? What should we be looking for?
- What happens when we are fully plugged in to the Spirit’s power. When we are being filled regularly.
- There are some things that happen when we follow Jesus. The Spirit is in us and he makes changes in us. He is constantly working to convict us, to grow us, to change us. It is part of the maturing in faith process.
- But when you read through the accounts of the church, there seem to be certain things that happen when people were filled with the Spirit. Something more. Something significant.

Acts 1:8 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.”

- When we are filled with the Spirit:

I. There is a supernatural boldness.

- Particularly as it relates to Jesus.
“you will be my witnesses”
- Consider what happened to Peter.
- Peter had a lot of bravado, and a lot of boasting. He told Jesus was the man and wouldn’t fail even when everyone else did.

- Then he folded like a cheap suit and backed down to a young servant girl.
- He denied knowing Jesus. He was timid as Jesus was crucified. He ran back to fishing. He was terrified of being caught by the authorities and arrested. Even after Jesus came back from the dead, they met in secret so as to not be caught.
- Then the Holy Spirit came.
- Peter got up and began to preach in front of thousands. If that wasn't enough, there is immediate opposition. Not only did they have more boldness, but their words had more weight. The people were "cut to the heart" and 3,000 came to follow Jesus.
- Then the SAME PEOPLE that had Jesus killed arrested Peter and John and told them to stop preaching. They were courteous and respectful but told them they could not NOT talk about Jesus.

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:13)

- They could see the effects of the Spirit – there was something different about these men.
- There is something that happens when we are filled with the Spirit that changes how we share our lives and faith.
- When we are Spirit filled, we experience the present reality of Jesus in our lives – simply want others to know about it.
- Otherwise, it is a duty. An obligation. An exercise and most often a distasteful one.

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- When we are filled with the Spirit:

II. We receive power.

- Whenever you see the Scripture talk about someone being filled with the Spirit, there is a supernatural power that is associated with it.
- The promise Jesus made in Acts 1:8 was that when the Spirit came upon them, their lives were to be characterized by power. That power came come a number of ways.
- There is power for witness. We already saw this. There was a power to the words shared. People came to know Jesus.
- There is power in prayer. When people were prayed for, things changed. People were released from prison. Other people received the Holy Spirit. Prayer was not a religious obligation, but a connection with God through the Holy Spirit that changed things.
- There is power for healing. Over and over where God's people are filled with the Spirit, people are healed. Not only was Jesus life characterized by healing of many, it's what he instructed his disciples to do.
- When Jesus was training his disciples, he gave them an assignment.

Luke 9:1 Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. 2 He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

- It wasn't just the 12 disciples.

Luke 10:1 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. . . 9 Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'

- When Jesus commissioned his disciples at the end of his time on earth:

Mark 16:15 He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. 17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18 they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly

poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

- Peter and John and Stephen and others.
- There is power to know love and love other. Sometimes the Holy Spirit's power results in a great outpouring of supernatural love – power to know love and love others.

Romans 5:5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

- There is a difference between knowing God loves me theologically and knowing that God loves me experientially. When we know God loves us through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are changed.
- No one can encounter the fullness of God's love without being markedly different.
- There is power for joy. Supernatural joy. It is only through the filling of the Holy Spirit that we can have this kind of joy.
- When Paul and Barnabas were expelled from the city of Antioch, and there was no reason to be happy, we are told they were filled with the Holy Spirit and joy.
- Far too often we are doing ministry with human wisdom and the gifts and abilities God has given us, but without this supernatural empowerment that comes from being filled and walking in the fullness of the Spirit.
- One of the signs that it is his power at work in us is that His power brings attention to himself. His power is not for our benefit. It is not to make us look good nor to show how godly we are. It always results in the focus being on him.
- **THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS POWER.**
- When we are filled with the Spirit:

III. We hear from the Spirit and pass it on.

- The Spirit had come at Pentecost, and Peter was preaching to all the people. In explaining what was happening (because they were all speaking in different languages and some were mocking them for being drunk), he said:

Acts 2:16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 17 “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.”

- People who are filled with the Spirit hear God's voice and they speak it. It is called prophecy.
- The prophecy that is mentioned here is different than the prophets of the OT. A Prophet made a prediction supernaturally inspired by God. It was a grave thing because the law said if they were wrong they were to be put to death.
- Prophecy as mentioned here is an inspired utterance where we hear God's whispers and proclaim them to others.
- It happened all through the book of Acts.
- Ananias – God spoke to him to visit Paul to pray over him.
- Saul (Paul) – also received a vision about who was coming to pray over him.
- Peter – receives a vision to go to Cornelius' house.
- Paul / Barnabas – they were commissioned to go on a missions trip
- Agabus – prophesied over Paul about impending persecution.
- Those who are living filled with the Spirit WILL hear God's voice.
- It's making a call right when it's needed because we felt prompted. It is saying something we could have no way of knowing and it helps another person.

- This is such a big deal for us that all of next week is devoted to hearing from the Spirit, the different ways this happens, and acting on it.
- When we are filled by the Holy Spirit, he captivates us. Being Spirit-filled is allowing God to influence us.
- We end up being so captivated by God that the problems, needs, and stresses of life just don't seem as important anymore. As a result, circumstances lose their power over us.
- The Holy Spirit motivates us to do what we normally might not do. He gets us to do what God wants us to do.
- **THE FILLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT BRINGS POWER** and when we pursue God, seeking to be filled, his power is evidenced in our lives. We have a supernatural boldness. We hear his voice increasingly clearly.
- One last caveat. We are not pursuing power. We are pursuing God.
- Jesus' death for my sins so that I could gain his forgiveness for those messes and follow him is all about relationship. The focus is on knowing him and being filled by him.
- It would be like someone being friends with you only because you could get backstage passes, or free tickets, or a deal on furniture, or because they can help you with all your projects.
- We need to be ever grateful for every good thing that God gives to us but never satisfied.
- *"Grace is not opposed to effort, it is opposed to earning. Earning is an attitude. Effort is an action."* (Dallas Willard)
- Our hearts will grow hard, and it will impede our progress.
- Pursue the filling of the Spirit. Have expectation without agenda
- Fast – let yourself be empty of food that normally fills you and ask him to fill you instead.
- Spend time in silence, and instead of letting the noise of the world fill you, let him.
- Pray, worship – practice any and all of these.
- Live to the level of the Spirit you have now, but always be pursuing more.
- *"We can have as much of God as we want and no more than we are willing to pay the price for."* (Rob Reimer)
- We will never know the power of God unless we risk it all for the good news of Jesus.
- When we are filled, we will have supernatural boldness. We will have power. We will hear and speak God's voice.
- Next week we are going to look specifically at what hearing the Spirit looks like. How do we know if we've heard him? Can we get better at it?