



A Spirit- Empowered Church

Pastor Ed Walker, DSOM Instructor

What is a Spirit-Empowered Church, and why is it important to the believer's faith and work? In this lecture, you will be introduced to a biblical-theological framework that illuminates God's plan and purpose for His Church.

OVERVIEW

The Holy Spirit

The Empowered Church

The Empowered Church
and the World

The Empowered Church
and their Leaders

Ed Walker
Racine Assembly of God
1325 Airline Road
Racine, WI 53406

Email: ewalker@racineassembly.com
Cell: 262-321-1530

Web Resources: <https://racineassembly.com/resources/dsom>



The aim of this class is to examine the Scriptures in order to identify God's purpose and plan for His Church. The church is more than an institution or a building. It is more than a social gathering of people. The Church is God's plan to reach the world with the life-transforming message of Jesus Christ.

Many churches in America have plateaued, have become stagnate, or are on the decline. According to Gallup, "as of 2021, 47% of Americans are members of a church. This is the lowest percentage Gallup has ever measured in its 80-year history. 73% of U.S. citizens were church members when Gallup first measured that statistic in 1937."

What are your concerns about the present condition of the church in America?

Revelation 3:1-3 (ESV)

1 "And to the angel of the church in Sardis write: 'The words of him who has the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. " 'I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. 2 Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.

"We cannot give what we do not have. We cannot impart values we do not hold. We cannot do until we are. To be the church--our highest calling--depends on understanding the vary character of the body of Christ on earth. Only then can we understand what it means to lives as the people of God, serving God in today's World."

Charles Colson, 1992.

HOLY SPIRIT

In *The Holy Spirit: An Introduction* by John Bevere, he makes several statements about the Holy Spirit and the life of a Christian and the Church.

"Without the Holy Spirit, _____ is dry, monotonous, and mundane."

"Without the Holy Spirit, our _____ is draining and wearisome."

"Without the Holy Spirit, there is no _____ with God."

In *A Spirit-Empowered Church* by Alton Garrison, he reminds the reader that "the Spirit's power is the fulfilment of Jesus' promise that those who believe in Him would do the same works He did--and even greater."

According to the Scripture, "the Holy Spirit is a _____ being...."

The Holy Spirit is a member of the Trinity, which means He is fully _____ like the Father and the Son."

John 14:15-17 (ESV)

15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

παράκλητος, ου m: (a title for the Holy Spirit) one who _____ , by consoling, encouraging, or mediating on behalf of--'Helper, Encourager, Mediator.' **ὁ δὲ παράκλητος, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ὃ πέμψει ὁ πατὴρ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου** 'the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name' Jn 14:26.

These functions [of the Holy Spirit] include comforting the disciples after Jesus' departure (16-17), teaching them (26), testifying on behalf of Jesus (15:26), convincing the world of sin, righteousness and judgment (16:7-11), guiding the disciples into all truth, and telling them about things to come (16:13).

John 15:26-27 (ESV)

26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.

John 16:8-11 (ESV)

8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: 9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; 10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; 11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.



John 16:13-14 (ESV)

13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. 14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

Why should the believer and the church recognize the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit?



The Spirit-Empowered Church

"The Holy Spirit and the Church are inseparable. Wherever the true Church is, there is also the Holy Spirit at work."

Acts 1:4-5 (ESV)

4 And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Jesus instructed the apostles to stay in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the Father. Here promise means concretely ‘the thing promised by the Father’ and must refer to the Holy Spirit (2:33, 38f.; Gal. 3:14; Eph. 1:13); the Father’s promise is contained in the Scriptures, Isaiah 32:15 (cf. Luke 24:49) and Joel 2:28-32.

Acts 1:7-8 (ESV)

7 He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. 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.”

According to Acts 1:8, what is a purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit? The Spirit has come to convince us to go. We need power to serve effectively, to heal the sick, and to deliver those possessed of unclean spirits. But let us first receive the Holy Spirit’s first anointing—power to act—to go. Then, He will give

- 1) power to find the _____;
- 2) authority to _____ declare Jesus as the Son of God; and
- 3) power to establish His _____—locally and worldwide.

Acts 2:1-4 (ESV)

1 When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. 3 And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.



Acts 2:16-21 (ESV)

16 But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: 17 “ ‘And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; 18 even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. 19 And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; 20 the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. 21 And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.’

(1) In the OT, “the last days” were considered the time when God would act in a powerful way to judge evil and save his people (cf. Isa 2:2-21; 3:18-4:6; 10:20-23; Hos 1-2; Joel 1-3; Am 8:9-11; 9:9-12).

(2) The NT reveals that “the last days” began with the first coming of Christ (by birth) and the first outpouring of the Spirit on God’s people. These last days will end with the Lord’s second coming (Mk 1:15; Lk 4:18-21; Heb 1:1-2).

(a) God’s work in these “last days” will be accomplished by the power of the Spirit (Mt 12:28).

(b) “The last days” involve God’s power working through Christ’s followers to invade the realm of Satan, to destroy the devil’s work and to reclaim lives for God.

(c) “The last days” represent a time of bold evangelistic ministry that will spread Christ’s message of spiritual salvation to those throughout the world who do not yet have a personal relationship with him.

(d) “The last days” officially bring the active presence and activity of the kingdom of God, which now comes with full power (see Lk 11:20).



Acts 2:42-47 (ESV)

42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

FELLOWSHIP



Many churches today desire to pattern themselves after the NT church in hopes of experiencing the same power, growth and effectiveness that it had. This passage gives a general overview of the things that gave the NT church the ability to experience God's miraculous power (v. 43) and consistent growth (v. 47). Remarkably, these things were quite plain and practical.



(1) **Apostles' Teaching** (v. 42a). The first Christians were deeply devoted to Christ's message.

(2) **Fellowship** (Gk koinonia; v. 42b). Not only were Christ's followers in the early church devoted to their primary relationship with God, but they also were committed to building open, honest and spiritually encouraging relationships with God's people (Eph 4:3, 13, 14, see notes).

(3) **Breaking of Bread** (vv. 42c, 46). This common expression in Acts and the early church seems to have several applications. It could refer simply to sharing meals in one another's homes. It could also refer to the agape love meal (see 1Co 11:21, note) or to the Lord's Supper (i.e., communion) itself.

(4) **Prayer** (v. 42d; cf. 1:14; 4:23-31). Prayer was clearly a high priority and a major part of life for the early church.



As a result of the Christian disciplines mentioned above, the early church experienced the following powerful and effective ministry results:

- (1) Miraculous Signs and Wonders (v. 43).
- (2) Community and _____ (v. 44-47a).
- (3) Growth and _____ (v. 47b).





The Spirit-Empowered Church and the World



Matthew 28:18-20 (ESV)

18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Jesus promises that his followers—now his representatives on earth—would have his authority and power to proclaim and spread his message throughout the world (vv. 19-20).

Acts 4:29-31 (ESV)

29 And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, **30** while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” **31** And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:32-35 (ESV)

32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. **33** And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. **34** There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold **35** and laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

- 1) **a supernatural fullness**—all present experienced the fullness of the Holy Spirit;
- 2) **a supernatural boldness**—this prayer led to a baptism of forthright fearlessness to proclaim the Word of God (v. 31);
- 3) **a supernatural unity**—the prayer participants were of “one heart and one soul” (v. 32);
- 4) **a supernatural submission**;
- 5) **a supernatural fruitfulness**—with a new power they went boldly, and fruit was produced for God’s glory (v. 33);
- 6) **a supernatural generosity**—they were baptized into a spirit of sacrifice and generosity (vv. 34, 35).