

The Church Birthed by the Spirit

I. Introduction

1. Marty on "Supernatural"
 - a. World view
 - b. Spiritual Warfare
 - c. Battle for your mind
 - d. Satan & Demons
 - e. Angels
 - f. Holy Spirit - past 3 messages
 - i. Part I: The Holy Spirit as a Person
 - ii. Part II: How the Holy Spirit works within a believer - followed last week by Morgan giving an example of that process as the HS (guide, teacher, counselor) shapes our journey to develop Courage, Integrity, and Generosity/Servitude
 - ii. This week Part III: How the Holy Spirit works within the group of people that form a local church.
 2. This should prompt a question: Can the Holy Spirit indwell a people (a group of people) as well as an individual person?
 - a. We can go to scripture to find the answer: Ps 22:3, "The Lord inhabits [dwells, lives] within the praises of his [gathered] people."
 - b. Mt 18:20, "...where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."
 3. Four basic premises:
 1. We can "receive" the Holy Spirit [John 20:22, "...he [Jesus] breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'] - This is like lighting the pilot light on a water heater or gas stove.
 2. We can be "filled" with the Holy Spirit [Acts 2:4] - this is like turning on the burner in the water heater or gas stove - a little or a lot
 3. Both individuals and groups can be "filled" with the Holy Spirit
 4. The first in-filling of the group of believers formed the first church - and what God initially forms is what he wants - ex: Adam in the Garden
 4. All of that to say this, Acts 2 gives us a picture of what God wants a church filled by the Spirit to look like. The question then becomes, do we look like that?
- II. 14 marks (vital signs) from Acts 2 of what a church filled by [with] the Holy Spirit should look like**

- Preaching class - “no more than 3 points” for 2 reasons
 - “the mind cannot absorb longer than the butt can endure.”
 - “people can’t remember more than 3 points”
- You pick 3 points to remember out of 14 mentioned
 1. You see this being done well at Reveal - make it part of your prayers for God to continue to bless it so that it endures and grows
 2. You hear something that you do not think Reveal is doing well - make it part of your prayers for God to turn up the heat until this begins to blaze at Reveal
 3. Ask for the Holy Spirit to “nudge” you about 1 point that he is personally calling you to become involved in

[14 marks (vital signs) from Acts 2 of what a church filled by [with] the Holy Spirit should look like]

1. v. 1 “...they were all together in one place...” v. 14 “Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd”
 - Implication, a church that is filled with the Spirit leaves its meeting place and goes into the market place
2. v. 4 “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues [languages] as the Spirit enabled them.” People from 14 different nations [people groups] (v. 11) “...[heard] them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues [languages]!”
 - Not what Pentecostals call “speaking in tongues” - 1 Cor 12:10 calls that “other *KINDS* of tongues”
 - 1 Cor 13:1 refers to this as the tongues of angels
 - 1 Cor 14:2 says that when this happens, “no one understands him” - so it’s not a human language
 - a church that is filled with the Spirit speaks to those outside the church in ways that they can understand
 - **that includes “actions speak louder than words”**
 - Service Sunday 8 weeks ago and our on-going focus on serving El Mirage
 - St. Francis, “All day, every day I proclaim the gospel - and sometimes I speak.”
 - just as missionaries learn a new language and culture before they go out to bring the Good News to people, so the church must learn to speak in ways relevant to our culture
3. Peter’s sermon (vv. 14-36) focused on the significance of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

- In a church that is filled with the Spirit the preaching (how to be reconciled to God) and teaching (how to live after being reconciled to God) must be Christocentric - focused on Jesus, the Christ
4. v. 37 "...what shall we do?" v. 38, "Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized...'"
- The church that is filled with the Spirit calls for a response from those who hear the gospel
 - Repent = change your mind to Jesus' way of thinking (Jesus as Savior)
 - be baptized = obey Jesus command(s) (Jesus as Lord)
- v. 42 "They devoted themselves..." This is the key phrase for the next 4 signs
- Early Christians didn't just add Christ to their already busy lives, they devoted themselves (were dedicated) to living in a new experience – the life of Christ through the HS in each of them and in their midst
5. In a church that is filled by the Spirit we are to be devoted to studying the teaching of the apostles (rather than pop-psychology and trendy spirituality that "tickles their itching ears" 2 Tim 4:3)
- Mtt 28:20 (NIV) "teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you"
 - Jesus tells those he sends (apostles) to teach a new way of living. The Message "Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life ... Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you.
6. They weren't devoted to fellowship (hanging out), they were devoted to the fellowship
- they were concerned for the health and well-being of the community of faith and each person in it
 - we don't get how communitarian God is – you (singular) are not the bride of Christ, we (the community of faith) are the bride of Christ
7. "breaking of bread" = The Lord's Table (Communion)
8. "Prayer & The prayers"
- Prayer = private prayer - usually extemporaneous
 - only 7 kinds of prayer - Wow, Please, Thanks, Oops, Sorry, Help, & Whatever
 - The Prayers = (1) public prayer at specific times and places
 - The prayers = structured, studied, meditated-on prayers.
 - Church Fathers
 - Liturgies
 - When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, he said, "When you pray, say, "Our Father, who is in heaven..."

9. v. 43 “Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous sign were done by the apostles.”

- In a church that is filled with the Spirit the ministry of signs and wonders is to be normative
 - I can’t guarantee that everyone will get well if you pray for them, but I can guarantee that more people will get well sooner if you pray for them
 - Notice the order of v43, “everyone was filled with awe and many wonders and miraculous signs were done”
 - Living in awe = living in faith – faith more easily produces signs and wonders than signs and wonders produce faith.

10. v. 44-45, “All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.”

- The church filled with the Spirit is to be characterized by generosity
- This is not primitive communism
- This means that people were concerned about everyone’s well-being, not just their own

v. 46 has 3 points about the church that is filled with the Spirit

11. v. 46a, “Everyday they continued to meet together in the temple courts.”

- the church that is filled with the Spirit meets together regularly at appointed times and public places

12. v. 46b, “...They broke bread in their homes and ate together...”

- They met in each others homes = Community Groups

13. b. 46c “...with glad and sincere hearts...”

- the church filled with the Spirit is characterized by joy and gratitude

14. v. 47 “...praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people”

- The church filled with the Holy Spirit is looked on as a blessing by its culture rather than something that’s irrelevant

What was the result? v. 47 “The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”

- the “proof of the pudding” of a church that’s filled with the Holy Spirit is that God entrusts his born-again babies to them to continue to grow in discipleship through the nurture of the Lord that is found in his people