



LESSON 47

Foundations Curriculum

The Holy Spirit and the Apostles

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Introduction

The Holy Spirit and the Apostles

In this forty-seventh lesson, we will talk about the Holy Spirit and the apostles. Through the reading of several biblical texts, we will see the revolution that took place in their lives when they received the Holy Spirit, and how their ministry was shaped by total dependence on the Spirit.

In previous lessons, we learned that the Holy Spirit is God, and not a “force.” He is the God of history, and we cannot have Christian life without His presence. It is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and who leads us to repentance.

Our goal with these studies is to cooperate with the Church so that it may abound in experience with the Holy Spirit. This lesson is about the Holy Spirit in the life and ministry of the apostles. We have chosen to have a lesson with few explanations and many biblical texts.

Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles.

Luke 6:12–13 (NKJV)

This was the first use of the word “apostles.” I find myself imagining the scene: those men had been won over by the Lord and had surrendered to Christ Jesus. They were chosen after Jesus went up to the mountain and prayed in order to choose the twelve.

Did those disciples clearly understand what the challenge of that calling meant? Did those who were chosen truly have in mind the magnitude of that choice?

It is very important that we remember the history in this way, remembering the circumstances in which they were called: recent converts, together with others who had also given their lives to Jesus, and from among these, some were chosen to be apostles. What a challenge it was for Jesus to communicate the whole heart of the Father to these men in such a short period of time!

How many limitations they had, inherent to the fact that Jesus was outside of them, because the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out on all flesh.

For the purposes of our study, let us divide this apostolic experience into two parts: the Holy Spirit in their lives, and the Holy Spirit in their ministry.

1) THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE APOSTLES' LIVES

Some time passed for them to be converted, to be chosen, and to be with Jesus. It is not possible to determine that time with precision, but it was enough for these men to have contact with the Word of Life, even though they had not yet had an experience with the Holy Spirit.

For this reason, the vision they had of Jesus was extremely limited and earthly, both concerning Jesus and His ministry, and even concerning themselves; they did not possess a spiritual vision, but an earthly one.

As the day of Jesus' death drew near, a little more than three years later, even after seeing Jesus performing miracles, raising the dead, healing, and walking on water, they still continued to have an earthly view of Jesus' ministry.

Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father." And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers.

Matthew 20:20–24 (NKJV)

The mother of Zebedee's sons was thinking of a kingdom in which her sons would be recognized alongside the King. She was thinking of the kingdom of Israel, not of an eternal, spiritual kingdom. The reaction of the other ten was the same. They too wanted to sit in that same place.

The fact that they had been chosen did not mean that they had clarity or revelation of Jesus, of His ministry, and of their own personal lives. They only understood afterward that their calling was not for this worldly, earthly kingdom, but for an eternal kingdom.

Let us remember the arrest of Jesus. What did Peter do? He denied Him. And the rest fled, abandoning the Messiah.

Personally, they could not produce courage, boldness, or valor, because it was not something human, but spiritual. They could not face the Roman Empire with human strength. How could they face that band of soldiers, being so few? When Jesus is crucified, the disciples are seized with fear.

Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

John 20:19–20 (NKJV)

Their fear was exchanged for joy when they saw Jesus. Their spirits were revived. The disciples' joy is restored by the presence of the Lord. They still needed the physical, tangible presence of Jesus, because they had not yet had an experience with the Holy Spirit.

For forty days, this risen Jesus was here on earth among them, reinforcing the need for them not to depart from Jerusalem, so that they might receive the promise of being baptized with the Holy Spirit, for only then would they receive that courage, that valor, that boldness. Until that happened, they were ordinary men, unable to escape the harsh reality of fear and cowardice.

The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

Acts 1:1–5 (NKJV)

The commandments were given through the Holy Spirit. Even as they heard the reaffirming of the promise that Jesus had already made, as recorded by John in the Gospel, what was their reaction? Fear, doubt, astonishment. They had been with the Word of Life, they had had experiences with many powerful manifestations of Christ. And now they see the Word of Life risen again, and the reaction they had at the end of the forty days was still limited, because the Holy Spirit was not yet within them. Let us see:

Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 1:6–8 (NKJV)

They were still thinking of a human kingdom. They had not had revelation of what kingdom Jesus was speaking about. The word witnesses is the same as martyrs — power to die in the name of Jesus.

God wants us to have this same experience that He had promised to the apostles.

Let us look at another passage of Jesus concerning this need for the experience with the Holy Spirit.

Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

Luke 24:44–49 (NKJV)

See how clear Jesus' awareness was. He knew that those men needed a powerful experience with the Holy Spirit. They needed to receive power to fulfill the ministry entrusted to them. It was impossible for them to fulfill this ministry they had received from the Lord if they were not endued with power from on high.

They would go on being fearful, withdrawn. It is amazing how this experience with the Holy Spirit was going to change the lives of these men. They were not yet, in themselves, a temple of the Holy Spirit. All their experience was with God on the outside, through the person of Jesus, but in Acts 2, the promise that Jesus had made to them is fulfilled.

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:1–4 (NKJV)

There was an audible manifestation. From that point on, from this personal experience with the Holy Spirit, there came a powerful impulse in the life and ministry of these men. They would never be the same again. There was a special touch of power that changed their life and their ministry.

Let us remember Peter, the one who cowardly denied Jesus; now, boldly, he proclaims Jesus to that people, even charging them with the death of the Lamb, the death of the Messiah. From coward to bold. From the one who fled to the one who confronted, by the power and authority of the Holy Spirit.

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

Acts 4:13 (NKJV)

People saw the change; they could not ignore what had happened in the personal lives of these men. There was something inexplicable from a human point of view. They went through a change

that led them to have a boldness, a gladness, an exuberant joy, an unrestrained desire to preach the gospel and to manifest the power of God.

God wants us, as we look at this history, to be able to see that it is possible for this to happen with us as well.

2) THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE APOSTLES' MINISTRY

So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

Mark 16:19–20 (NKJV)

The Holy Spirit was sent, they were baptized in the Holy Spirit, they overflowed with the power of God, and they went out to preach everywhere. As they went out preaching, the Lord confirmed the gospel through signs, as they went about working and evangelizing.

how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

Hebrews 2:3–4 (NKJV)

The Holy Spirit distributed gifts and signs through the life of the apostles. They were seized by a boldness, a power, an authority that was not human. Indeed, it had nothing to do with personal capability. It was a spiritual, extraordinary, unspeakable, and humanly inexplicable enablement. This personal experience led to the abundant ministry they had in the presence of the Lord.

Let us look at some of these experiences.

Preaching and baptizing

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath: blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord. And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know — Him,

being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.' Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool."' Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

Acts 2:14–41 (NKJV)

Now they even had the courage to say what they had done to the Word of Life. This is what the Holy Spirit produced in the life, and now in the ministry, of these men: boldness and courage to open their lips and declare the power of God. Do you know what the result of that boldness and that proclamation was? A wonderful harvest. What boldness these men had! They gathered three thousand in that single catch. They cast the net, and they gathered three thousand.

Healing the sick

Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour. And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple; who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms. And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us." So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.” And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them — walking, leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God. Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

Acts 3:1–10 (NKJV)

How interesting it is to see the Holy Spirit using these men in the manifestation of the gifts of healing!

Now as Peter went through all parts of the country, he also came down to the saints who dwelt in Lydda. There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed. And Peter said to him, “Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed.” Then he arose immediately. So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

Acts 9:32–35 (NKJV)

The Holy Spirit giving boldness and confirming the ministry through signs and wonders.

Preaching and baptizing

Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed. So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: “Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go. But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses. And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers. But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said to the fathers, ‘The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’ Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which

God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities."

Acts 3:11–26 (NKJV)

Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

Acts 4:1–4 (NKJV)

We take a long time to grow to a hundred, two hundred, three hundred. When we hear that a congregation has three thousand people, we are amazed, thinking it enormous! One with five hundred people, we consider large.

We have seen that, as these men were taken hold of by the Holy Spirit, they proclaim the word with boldness and courage, and so the Lord adds to their number.

We need to look at this model so that we may experience it in our own lives.

They prayed, and the Holy Spirit filled them with power to proclaim the Word.

And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them, who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, and the people plot vain things? The kings of the earth took their stand, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord and against His Christ.' For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done. Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:23–31 (NKJV)

Sometimes men want to pray in order to see the place shake. But the experience God wants us to have is greater than the shaking of a place; He wants to fill us with boldness, as He did with those brothers, to proclaim the word of God.

The Holy Spirit brings revelation.

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things. And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him. Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much." Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband. So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

Acts 5:1–11 (NKJV)

The Holy Spirit did not negotiate with the lie. Someone might think: they were bringing an amount of money to be laid at the apostles' feet, which would be useful, which would bless someone. No. The Holy Spirit does not let that situation pass.

The husband and wife die because the Holy Spirit brings revelation, and He does not accept the lie. See the importance of the Holy Spirit in bringing revelation into the ministerial life of those brothers.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit flowed through their lives.

And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

Acts 5:12–16 (NKJV)

They had boldness to preach the gospel, and they knew who had anointed them for it.

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree. Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."

Acts 5:29–32 (NKJV)

Once again they attributed to the Holy Spirit the anointing and the boldness by which they proclaimed the gospel.

The Holy Spirit uses Philip to preach the gospel, cast out demons, heal the sick, and manifest signs and wonders.

Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed. And there was great joy in that city. But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time. But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized. Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

Acts 8:4–13 (NKJV)

Peter and John laid hands on people, and the brothers were baptized with the Holy Spirit, and they evangelized many.

Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:14–17 (NKJV)

The Spirit tells Peter to go, without hesitation, to preach to Cornelius and to his household.

Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. And he told us how he had seen an angel standing in his house, who said to him, 'Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon whose surname is Peter, who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.' And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."

Acts 11:12–18 (NKJV)

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Acts 10:44–48 (NKJV)

The Holy Spirit would speak concerning who should be set apart and sent out for the ministry.

As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away. So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus.

Acts 13:2–4 (NKJV)

Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, is used with authority and with a sign.

Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord? And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand. Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

Acts 13:9–12 (NKJV)

They proclaimed the word, even while suffering persecution, but there they were, overflowing with joy from the word of the Lord, being used with a sign of authority and a wonder.

And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region. But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium. And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 13:49–52 (NKJV)

They proclaimed the Word, they suffered persecution, but they overflowed with joy and with the Holy Spirit.

Our reaction to suffering and persecution should be one of joy from the Holy Spirit.

Now it happened in Iconium that they went together to the synagogue of the Jews, and so spoke that a great multitude both of the Jews and of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brethren. Therefore they stayed there a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord,

who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

Acts 14:1–3 (NKJV)

It is very common to see people complaining about the lack of manifestation of power, of signs and wonders. But among us there is much manifestation of signs and wonders — only it is within the congregation. When we go out to preach, we find people who are possessed, people in need of deliverance and healing. If we go and visit hospitals, we will see the number of signs, wonders, and healings that will take place through our lives.

Let us do as the apostles did. Let us be where the needy are, and we will see the abundance of the manifestation of signs and wonders.

Paul and Barnabas in Lystra — more healings

And in Lystra a certain man without strength in his feet was sitting, a cripple from his mother's womb, who had never walked. This man heard Paul speaking. Paul, observing him intently and seeing that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, "Stand up straight on your feet!" And he leaped and walked.

Acts 14:8–10 (NKJV)

We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who will also report the same things by word of mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.

Acts 15:27–29 (NKJV)

They were kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the Word.

Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them.

Acts 16:6–7 (NKJV)

They wanted to go to a certain place, but the Holy Spirit had the liberty to speak to the apostles and cause them to change their minds.

They laid hands on people, and they were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Acts 19:6 (NKJV)

They raised the dead

Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.

Acts 19:11–12 (NKJV)

Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together. And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, "Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him." Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked a long while, even till daybreak, he departed. And they brought the young man in alive, and they were not a little comforted.

Acts 20:7–12 (NKJV)

The Holy Spirit foretold what was going to happen to them.

And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.

Acts 20:22–23 (NKJV)

The Holy Spirit foretells what is to come. We should pay attention to the guidance He gives us that we will be persecuted, and that the end of the age is near. Afterward, we cannot say that we were not warned.

He made the Holy Spirit a witness of his own conscience.

I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 9:1 (NKJV)

He prophesied that the brothers would be rich in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13 (NKJV)

An indispensable part in the list of the ministry of those who carried it out.

Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient — in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. And so I have made it my aim to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build on another man's foundation.

Romans 15:17–20 (NKJV)

The word he proclaimed was not based on human wisdom or persuasion, but on the demonstration of power in the Holy Spirit.

And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

1 Corinthians 2:4 (NKJV)

For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake. And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit.

1 Thessalonians 1:5–6 (NKJV)

His personal ministry being commended in various respects, including the Holy Spirit.

but in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God: in much patience, in tribulations, in needs, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in fastings; by purity, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love.

2 Corinthians 6:4–6 (NKJV)

He placed fellowship with the Holy Spirit as part of his farewell to the brothers.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

2 Corinthians 13:14 (NKJV)

The apostle took care to place the communion of the Holy Spirit as part of his farewell to his brothers.

We need to look at what we have studied today and see how much the apostles depended on the Holy Spirit, both in their personal lives and in their ministry.

As we reflect on these examples, may we be reminded that the same God who worked powerfully through the apostles is at work today. Their lives are not merely stories to admire, but examples that inspire us to believe that, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, we too can live with boldness, walk in God's grace, and faithfully exercise the gifts He has given for the proclamation of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

May God bless you with these words. May we learn to grow in this fellowship and in this intimacy with God the Spirit in our lives.

REVIEW OF THE CONTENT

In this forty-seventh lesson, we learned about the work of the Holy Spirit in the life and ministry of the apostles. We studied the drastic changes that took place in their lives after they received the Holy Spirit, breaking free from the limitations inherent to the fact that Jesus was outside of them, before the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh. The Holy Spirit gave a special touch of power that changed the life and ministry of these men.

CONSIDER CAREFULLY

- 01** According to today's teaching, what was it that the apostles lacked in order to see Jesus and His kingdom from a spiritual point of view?
- 02** What happened in the lives of the apostles that transformed them?
- 03** When the apostles were baptized in the Holy Spirit, they became bold and proclaimed the gospel. Have you experienced this?
- 04** Even in the face of adversity and persecution, the apostles did not lose their boldness. Can we experience this today?

*having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.*

Ephesians 2:20 (NKJV)

Foundations Curriculum — Lesson 47
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