

# Our Risen and Ascendant King: Promises (Part 2)

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## Introduction

### The Text

<sup>1</sup>In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, <sup>2</sup>until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. <sup>3</sup>He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.

<sup>4</sup>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; <sup>5</sup>for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” (Acts 1:1–5)

### Part 2

- A. This is now part 2 in our consideration of this “promise of the Father” Jesus references there in v. 4—a promise which, as he makes plain for us in v. 5, concerns the outpouring of the “Holy Spirit”.
  - 1. Last time we considered this promise and its fulfillment in a broader more generalized sense.
  - 2. This morning, we’re really going to home in on this particular idea of baptism in the Spirit. “[Y]ou will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (v. 5).
- B. It’s a complex notion. Indeed, its great significance for the Christian life, we could say, is matched, tragically, only by the great confusion there is regarding it.
  - 1. That’s it’s important, we have no doubt. What it means, we haven’t a clue.
    - a. Perhaps I overstate the issue, but, at least according to my limited research, there seems almost to be as many opinions on the subject as there are books written about it.
- C. And so I’ll do my best, but as even the renowned biblical scholar R.C. Sproul said when approaching the matter: Sometimes it seems that attempting to parse through these issues “requires a knife sharper than the one I own.”
  - 1. I love that. I tend to cook with dull knives as it is. So a dull knife, I suppose, is all you’re going to get.
    - a. Nevertheless, I do hope to be of some help. And, of course, I pray that God would come in this place and pour out his Spirit afresh upon us today, as we all have need of him.
- D. So I’m going to organize all of my thinking this morning under two headings: (1) What Does It Mean?; and (2) How Do We Get It?

1. We'll spend the great majority of our time on the first one and then come in for landing quickly with the second.

## (1) What Does It Mean?

- A. Now, under this first heading, I want to ask yet three more questions that will help us move towards the meaning of all of this . . .

### Question #1: What Does This Spirit Baptism Imply about the Spirit's Activity Before the Day of Pentecost?

- A. When Jesus tells his disciples: "Wait, don't go anywhere, the Spirit's coming"—we might at first be inclined to think the Spirit's not been here at all to this point, as if perhaps he hasn't been active really before [Acts 2](#).

1. But to conclude such would be a grave error. And I think this is the first thing, so far as the baptism of the Spirit is concerned, that we must get right.

### Evidence of Activity Before Pentecost

- A. The Holy Spirit has been active, as I even showed you last time, from the opening pages of the Bible . . .

1. "<sup>1</sup>In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup>The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters" ([Gen. 1:1-2](#)).
2. But it's not just creation he's engaged in. It's redemption as well. [Isa. 63](#) is particularly striking on this point, as the whole Exodus narrative is there portrayed as a work of the Spirit: "<sup>11</sup>Where is he who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds of his flock? Where is he who put in the midst of them his Holy Spirit, <sup>12</sup> who caused his glorious arm to go at the right hand of Moses, who divided the waters before them to make for himself an everlasting name, <sup>13</sup> who led them through the depths? Like a horse in the desert, they did not stumble. <sup>14</sup> Like livestock that go down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So you led your people, to make for yourself a glorious name" ([vv. 11b-14](#)).
3. And, of course, who could forget that agonizing cry of King David when once he had come to see the foul nature of his sin with Bathsheba: "[Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me](#)" ([Ps. 51:11](#)). God can't take from him what he's not already given to him in some sense, right? Such a plea would be nonsensical.
  - a. So clearly, in view of these things, the Spirit was already given in some sense, already at play in the world, long before Pentecost—maybe with a view to it, but nevertheless before it.

- B. Perhaps the most compelling way to drive all this home is to simply show you how this is the case even within Luke's two volumes themselves—his gospel, and this book of Acts.

1. Many years before Pentecost, Luke is already writing of the Spirit . . .
  - a. So, in [Luke 1:15](#), speaking of John the Baptist, you remember, the angel Gabriel tells his father Zechariah: “[H]e will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.”
  - b. And then in [Luke 1:35](#), Gabriel, speaking to Mary of Jesus, says: “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you . . . .”
  - c. And then in [Luke 1:41](#), when Mary comes to visit her relative Elizabeth, Zechariah’s wife, John the Baptist’s mother, we read this: “And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby [John] leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit . . . .”
  - d. Or in [Luke 1:67](#), on the day of John’s circumcision, we’re told that “Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied . . . .”
  - e. And in [Luke 2:25-28](#), when the newborn Jesus is now being presented in the temple we’re introduced to this man named Simeon, and Luke describes him like this: “<sup>25</sup> Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.<sup>26</sup> And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.<sup>27</sup> And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law,<sup>28</sup> he took him up in his arms and blessed God . . . .”
    - i. So the Holy Spirit is undoubtedly saturating the narrative and Jesus has barely just arrived on the scene. We’re still decades away from [Acts 2](#).
  
2. Furthermore, even in the book of Acts, we have unmistakable indicators that the Spirit is understood to have been at work in previous generations, long before Pentecost.
  - a. So, in [Acts 1:16](#), just a few verses down from where we are this morning, Peter says this: “Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.”
    - i. So the Holy Spirit has been speaking through people, inspiring, breathing out, Holy Scripture.
  - b. What’s more we come to [Acts 7:51](#), and here Stephen is rebuking his fellow Jews for their rejection of Jesus and he says this: “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you.”
    - i. The implication is clear: they are resisting the Holy Spirit now after Pentecost, just as their forefathers had resisted the Holy Spirit for however many generations prior to Pentecost.
  
3. Therefore, it is abundantly clear by now I hope: Luke does not think of the Holy Spirit as entering the historical situation at 9:00am on Pentecost morning. Neither, of course, does

Jesus think such a thing—nor does he mean to imply it by what he says about waiting for the baptism of the Spirit.

## Continuity and Contrast

- A. So what's the point then? Why make a big deal about the day of Pentecost and the baptism of the Spirit, if the Spirit's already been at work in the world and in the lives of men?
1. Well, and here's the point I think, while there is continuity in the Spirit's work before and after Pentecost, there is also stunning contrast.
- B. We must not err on either side of the matter.
1. On the one hand, we dare not say that the Holy Spirit wasn't at work before Pentecost. This is to err on the side of contrast and so miss the continuity.
  2. But on the other hand, neither should we say the Spirit is at work in just the same way after Pentecost as before. This is to err on the side of continuity and so miss the contrast.
- C. Make no mistake: Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension has changed everything for us! And yet, at the same time, it's irrevocably connected to all that's come before.
1. The difference so far as the Spirit of God is concerned, as we transition from the Old Covenant and into the New isn't a difference in kind so much as a difference in degree.
    - a. You might think of it like a dimmer switch. It's the same switch, the same light, but what began a bit dimmer in the OT is thrown up to full wattage in the NT when Jesus ascends the throne in heaven and turns the dial, as it were.
- D. Perhaps I could put another image on this for you. . .
1. Many of you know, last week we actually went for a quick trip to New Orleans for Megan's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. She wanted to meet one of her close friends there and explore the swamps and the city and the jazz and things. And it was a great time.
  2. And it was awesome, the rental car place upgraded us from a standard sedan to a jeep where you could pull off the top. And the weather was great, so we did that.
  3. And we were cruising around and I wanted to check out Lake Pontchartrain, it's a huge estuary just north of the city.
  4. And as we're driving along the bank of it I see this bridge off in the distance, and of course it's calling my name. And it was funny, I thought maybe it would go for a mile or so, I couldn't tell, turns out it's the longest bridge over a body of water in the world—just about 24 miles. We were driving on that thing, there and back, for close to an hour. I loved every minute of it.
  5. And one of the things you notice when you're driving out there are the levees they'd built up to keep the water from spilling over and flooding the city.
  6. And for some reason, as I was noticing these things, I thought of that old Led Zeppelin song "When the Levee Breaks": "If it keeps on raining, levee's going to break."
  7. Well, some of you may remember, with Hurricane Katrina in 2005, those levees broke.

- E. And, of course, that's a catastrophic thing. But if we flip the image, and imagine something good coming from the spillover, it does provide a picture of what happens with the Spirit after Jesus and the cross.
1. Through the years prior, the Spirit of God was at work, but in smaller ways. Hemmed in. With levees built around it. Some people could still access it, enjoy the water and what not, but it was limited.
  2. Then at Calvary, the hurricane hit, and in the resurrection and ascension, the levee broke. The Spirit of God breaks the boundaries that once held it and overflows from Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria and to the ends of the earth.
- F. In a very real sense, this is likely what's being pictured in the tearing of the curtain as Luke describes it upon Jesus' death ([Luke 23:45](#)).
1. God's presence was once walled off from folks and only a select few could draw near and experience and only after you did all these sacrifices and washings and all these other things.
  2. But after our Lord offered up his own life as a sacrifice for sin, after he was pierced and crushed for our transgressions, as we saw last time in [Zech. 12-13](#), a great fountain for our cleansing was opened, the presence of God, the Spirit of God, is breaking out.
    - a. And it's no longer come and find God here in Jerusalem.
    - b. It's God is on mission now to go and find you, wherever you are.
      - i. The barriers have been removed. In Jesus the levee has broken and the Spirit of God, once carefully hemmed, in is now rushing forth with unprecedented vitality and vigor.
- G. You know, I think in our text back in [Acts 1](#), this continuity and contrast is in view when Jesus goes on to mention the difference between his baptism in the Spirit and John's with water. Did you catch that? "[F]or John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (v. 5). You see it don't you?
1. There's continuity . . .
    - a. John spoke about this. What Jesus is doing with the dawning of the new era of the Spirit was at the same time still anticipated and prepared for by the old. So John says in [Luke 3:16](#): "I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."
    - b. And what's more, you remember, it's as Jesus was submitting to John's baptism in particular that the Spirit falls upon him and marks him off as the one who will baptize with the Spirit. So John goes on to say: "<sup>32</sup> I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him.<sup>33</sup> I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit'" ([John 1:32-33](#)).

- i. There's continuity. John was to point to Jesus. The Old Covenant made way for the New.
- 2. But there is more than continuity here, right? There is also great contrast . . .
  - a. After all, John's was a baptism of repentance. But Jesus' was a baptism of the Spirit and of fire.
    - i. The former is a baptism of preparation and anticipation.
    - ii. The other is a baptism of arrival and fulfillment.
  - b. This is why Jesus, though he clearly thought highly of John, would say this in [Luke 7:28](#): "I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."
    - i. John is still a part of the old era, before Pentecost, and he would be killed by Herod before the outpouring of the Spirit ever occurred.
    - ii. Those who live now on the other side of Pentecost, Jesus is saying, they have transitioned with him from one epoch to the other. And, in this sense, even the least of the lot shall surpass John in greatness and power. Because they have the Spirit in a way that he simply did not and could not.
- H. That's a crazy thought. Because you and I are in the number. We live post-Pentecost. We have access to the Spirit of God through Christ in a way John did not. We are therefore, so far as the economy of the kingdom is concerned, greater than him—however fragile and frail and insignificant we may feel.
  - 1. The levee has broken. The living water of God's fullness is flowing. We can be caught up in it, immersed in it, baptized in it.
    - a. So I'm just going to keep asking throughout the course of this sermon: Is this what you're experiencing—the fullness of the Spirit in this way? Don't you want to?!

## Question #2: How Does This Spirit Baptism Relate to Conversion?

- A. We know from what Jesus says to Nicodemus in [John 3](#) that a person cannot enter nor less even see the kingdom of God unless he's born again from above by the Spirit ([vv. 1-8](#)).
  - 1. Theologians refer to this as regeneration. You could talk about it in terms of conversion. But it's the new birth and it happens by way of the Holy Spirit.
    - a. And so the question that presses itself upon us at this point is this: Is this baptism in the Spirit to which Jesus is referring in [Acts 1](#) the same thing as being born again by the Spirit from [John 3](#)? Or is it something distinct in some way? How are we to put all this together?

## Avoiding the Extremes

- A. Similar to the previous question, there are two extremes we need to avoid at this point:
1. On the one hand, some overplay the connection between this Spirit baptism and conversion so much that they virtually just absorb the one into the other and see no distinction at all. Baptism in the Spirit virtually coterminous with being born again by the Spirit. That's it. And they give it no second thought.
  2. On the other hand, some overplay the distinction between the two to such a degree that they are virtually separate and disconnected altogether.
    - a. In fact, some of the Pentecostal variety will go so far as to say this baptism in the Spirit is a second experience that we should pursue, but not all Christians get it. It's a sort of upper level Christianity that you enter into, a supercharged discipleship, like moving from Junior Varsity where you're just born again by the Spirit to Varsity where you've been baptized in the Spirit and you're speaking in tongues and things like this.
- B. Well, what are we to make of this? I happen to think that neither extreme is on the mark. The answer is somewhere down the middle. It's not so much an either/or as much as a both/and. But let me explain . . .

## What About the Disciples?

- A. One of the first issues we have to deal with along the way to an answer here is whether we think the disciples were, in fact, born again believers already to this point.
- B. I think the case can clearly be made that they are. They have faith and faith is a gift of grace by way of the Spirit. They are regenerate, saved . . . before Pentecost.
1. There's so much I could show you here (cf. [Matt. 16:17](#); [John 15:3](#)), but just consider the way Luke portrays these disciples at the end of his gospel, in [Luke 24:52-53](#): “<sup>52</sup> And they worshiped him [Jesus] and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, <sup>53</sup> and were continually in the temple blessing God.”
    - a. These are the markings of regenerate people, born again by the Spirit. And yet Jesus says to these same folks: they must wait because they have not yet been baptized by the Spirit.
      - i. What do we do with that? Are the Pentecostals right? Is this a second experience only, disconnected from regeneration altogether?
- C. Hold on. Here is where we must remember that the disciples are, in some sense at least, a fringe case. They stand in this unique position in redemptive-history where they actually straddle the ages as it were.

1. They walk with Jesus through the transition from the Old Covenant era to that of the New Covenant. They existed in this “murky middle” space.
  - a. Their experience it seems to me, should, therefore, not be set out as normative or paradigmatic for ours.
    - i. Their experience of the Spirit was necessarily progressive in character, developing, intensifying along with the life and ministry of Jesus. As Jesus transitioned from the state of humiliation to the state of exaltation and glory, as he proceeded from Man of Sorrows to Lord of Glory, as he progressed from the one anointed by the Spirit to the source and steward of the Spirit, their experience of the Spirit changed as well.

### Post-Pentecost Christians

- A. But it’s not the same for you and I post-Pentecost.
- B. This is why in most other instances, so far as we can tell, in the NT, the two ideas of being born in the Spirit and baptized in the Spirit start to converge. The experiences once separated for the disciples begin to merge into one for subsequent Christians.
  1. That’s what we see already at the close of [Acts 2](#) (cf. [vv. 37-38](#)), but I want to take you to [Acts 10](#), because I think it’s amazing. Peter, you remember, was sent by God to preach the gospel to the Gentile Cornelius and his household and then in [vv. 44-47](#) we read this: “<sup>44</sup> While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.<sup>45</sup> And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles.<sup>46</sup> For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared,<sup>47</sup> ‘Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?’”
    - a. They hear, they believe, and they’re baptized, not just in water, but in the Holy Spirit. And these experiences are not separated by days or months or years. It’s all happening at once!
- C. Elsewhere in the NT, this sort of thing seems to be referred to again and again:
  1. [Eph. 1:13-14](#): “<sup>13</sup> In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit,<sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.”
  2. [1 Thess. 1:4-5](#): “<sup>4</sup> For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you,<sup>5</sup> because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.”
  3. [Titus 3:4-6](#): “<sup>4</sup> But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,<sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,<sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior . . . .”



D. Paul, in [1 Cor. 12:12-13](#) puts the matter in the most clear and certain terms for us I think: “<sup>12</sup> For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”

1. If you are in the body of Christ, you have been baptized in the Spirit of Christ. Case closed!

a. I agree with Christopher Ash’s conclusion on the matter: “This baptism happens first, and most dramatically, to the disciples on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). Since then, it is the birthright of every believer at the very start of a truly Christian life.”

E. So, listen, before I move on . . . I don’t know if you’ve ever been told you’re a second class citizen in the kingdom of heaven, or treated as such. If you have the Spirit of Christ, you’re not. Full stop.

1. Paul says in [Eph. 2](#), if you are in Christ, you have the Spirit, and you have, in essence, already been seated with him in the heavenly places. You get Jesus’ seat because you have Jesus’ Spirit.

a. He’s not like: “Nah, you get the nosebleeds. I reserve the front row for those who have been baptized in the Spirit, the super-Christians.” They’ve got capes flowing off their back and bulging muscles and things. No!

b. We’re all front row. We’re all VIP. Not because we belong there. Not because we deserve it. But because we’ve all been baptized in the Spirit.

## The Gift That Keeps on Giving

A. Now, does this mean there’s no place for second experience in the Spirit? No.

1. I’m not siding with the Pentecostals.

2. But I’m not siding with the other extreme either.

a. I think there’s clear indication, even within the book of Acts itself that we should be expecting and pursuing fresh outpourings of the Holy Spirit in our life as we follow Jesus.

B. I don’t know if you’ve ever seen [National Lampoon’s Christmas Vacation](#). But Clark is thinking he’s going to get a big Christmas bonus and instead he gets a one year membership in the Jelly of the Month Club. And Uncle Eddy tries to encourage him: “Clark, that’s the gift that keeps on giving the whole year.”

1. And I know that’s a joke, but, in a sense, it’s a great way to understand the gift of the Spirit as its presented in the Scriptures.

a. You receive it upon conversion and initial faith.

b. But you continue to open that gift throughout your years as a follower of Jesus. You get fresh “baptisms” if you will, or perhaps better put: fresh “fillings.”

- C. You see this happen with the disciples in the book of Acts in particular. It's interesting, their initial baptism with the Spirit it's described in many different ways . . .
- a. It's described as the pouring out of the Spirit ([Acts 2:17, 18, 33](#); cf. [10:45](#));
  - b. or the falling of the Spirit ([Acts 11:15](#); cf. [8:16](#); [10:44](#));
  - c. or the receiving the gift of the Spirit ([Acts 10:47](#); [11:17](#); cf. [2:28](#); [8:15, 17](#); [10:45](#); also [5:32](#));
  - d. and even as the experience of being the filled with the Spirit ([Acts 2:4](#)).
- D. It's this latter phrase that is most significant for the matter under investigation at this point. For it makes unmistakable for us the connection between this initial baptism to the subsequent experiences.
1. You see, the filling of the Spirit doesn't happen just this once for the disciples on the day of Pentecost. No, the careful reader will observe: it happens over and over again.
    - a. So in [Acts 2:4](#), on the day of Pentecost we read that *"they were all filled with the Holy Spirit . . ."*
    - b. But then in [Acts 4:8](#), we're told that Peter was *"filled with the Holy Spirit"* and he speaks out boldly once more to the religious powers that be.
    - c. Then in [Acts 4:31](#), when the disciples are facing serious opposition and they're scared, they gather and they pray: *"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."*
    - d. And the story just goes on like this ([Acts 7:55](#); [13:52](#); cf. [9:17](#) alongside [13:9](#)).
  2. So while there is this initial filling, there is this clear sense that we need more, that we should pursue more. Hence, Paul's exhortation to us in [Eph. 5:18](#): *"[D]o not get drunk with wine . . . but be filled with the Spirit . . ."*
- E. This baptism with the Spirit, then, is not so distinguished from conversion as to be secondary and separated from it, nor is it so connected to conversion as to be merely absorbed into and conflated with it.
1. It's the gift, initially given in regeneration, that keeps on giving with fresh fillings as we go.
    - a. So again let me ask you: Are you experiencing this? Don't you want to?!

### Question #3: What Does This Spirit Baptism Effect in a Person's Life?

- A. What happens when the Spirit falls or fills? What does this effect in the hearts and lives of believers?
1. I don't have time to address the issue of tongues here. We'll have to tackle that at some later point.
  2. All I want to do is quickly give you three effects of this baptism and any subsequent fillings of the Spirit . . .

## Effect #1: Power

A. God gives you uncharacteristic power for effective ministry and the advancement of his kingdom.

1. This is the clear implication of his words back in [Acts 1](#). Look at [v. 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.”
2. In Luke’s gospel, when he’s summarizing this same discussion, he does so using a bit different language. [Luke 24:49](#): “And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

B. Do you feel weak? Do you feel unable? In and of yourself, you are. But Jesus knows that. That’s why he supplies the Spirit to you in power.

1. So there’s going to be a freedom There’s going to be a growth in godliness. There’s going to be a boldness in witness. There’s going to be power.

C. But more than just power. The Spirit leads us to praise . . .

## Effect #2: Praise

A. If you’ve noticed, that’s what’s happening there on the day of Pentecost, and that’s what happens throughout this book whenever the Spirit falls.

1. So in [Acts 2](#), they’re speaking in various tongues, and we get all worked up about this and distracted by it, and we might miss what it is that they’re actually saying. Do you remember this? The people in the crowd say with surprise: “[W]e hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God” ([v. 11](#)).
  - a. It’s not just power here to speak boldly in a foreign language. It’s praise. They’re talking about Jesus and about what he’s accomplished. The glory of his grace.
2. It’s the same thing in [Acts 10:46](#). The Spirit is poured out upon the Gentiles there and suddenly they start doing what? “[E]xtolling God.”
3. Paul, back in [Eph. 5](#) that we just looked at, after calling us to be filled with the Holy Spirit, tells us what that will look like. We’ll start: “<sup>19</sup> addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with [our] heart, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ ([vv. 19–20](#)).

B. Are you given more to grumbling than gratitude? Do you see more reasons to complain than to praise? You need the Spirit of God, poured out afresh in your heart.

C. But I would say all of this stems out from something that the Spirit effects at an even deeper level. Something that we might appropriately call pleasure . . .

## Effect #3: Pleasure

- A. The Spirit doesn't force us to praise or drag us along out into mission and things. We sing and speak because we want to. We go because we want to. He opens our eyes to the glory of God, to the love of God for us in Jesus. He satisfies in the deepest places and that pleasure overflows into words of praise and a life marked by power.
1. So, it's very interesting, in [Acts 13:52](#), we're told that the disciples there in Antioch in Pisidia "were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit." The two come together as a package deal it would seem. The filling with the Spirit and the filling with joy.
  2. I'm reminded of what Paul says in [Rom. 5:5](#) how "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." When God fills us with his Spirit, he fills us with a fresh sense of his love for us, and we delight in it, take joy in it, we find pleasure in it.
- B. When's the last time, you were struck speechless in view of the love of God for a sinner like yourself? When's the last time you heard the gospel preached and you wept for joy?
1. If your heart has been calloused, your eyes have been scaled, you need a fresh filling of the Holy Spirit. You need him to pour out his love upon you, within you.
- C. So power, praise, and pleasure. Again I ask: Are you experiencing anything like this? Don't you want to?!
1. If so, how do we get it? That's the last question I want to take up real quick as we close . . .

## (2) How Do We Get It?

### Four Steps

- A. I'll give you four steps real quick, taken straight from our text there in [Acts 1](#) . . .

#### Step #1: Hear the Word

- A. The disciples hear Jesus' word, his promise here. That's where it begins. Every time the Spirit falls in the book of Acts, God's word is involved. Oftentimes it's in the very act of hearing the gospel that the Spirit breaks onto the scene with power and filling (cf. [Acts 10:44](#); [11:15](#)).
- B. And it's no different for us. If you want to put yourself in the way of the Spirit you put yourself in the words of the Bible. Don't expect to be filled with the Spirit of God if you are not attending to the Word of God.

#### Step #2: Wait for God

- A. Jesus tells these disciples to wait.
1. And I think there's something in that that's still relevant for us. You don't run off ahead like you know, like you've got this figured out, like you can do it, you get on your face, you hold out your empty hand, you wait for him, you wait on him.

### Step #3: Pray with Passion

A. We don't just sit around waiting though, right? These disciples are praying in the upper room with passion, on the basis of this promise. "Jesus come. Jesus pour out your Spirit. Be true to your word."

1. And we should be doing the same.

### Step #4: Get Ready to Go

A. Last thing: Jesus pours out his Spirit upon those who truly want to live on mission for him. These disciples are waiting and praying not just for an experience but for power so they can go.

1. Too often, we after the experience alone. We just want the warm-fuzzies where the Spirit moves in our midst and we get chill bumps or whatever, but we aren't concerned with his mission and obedience and all of this.

- a. Listen, if you are not ready to go, I don't think Jesus will fill us. He pours out his Spirit on those who desperately want to be on his mission. We're not to be dams of his grace, but conduits of it. He pours out on us and we go and pour out on others.

\* \* \*

A. Bottom line: Jesus has broken down every barrier to make this possible for us. He was baptized into death, so we could be baptized in the Spirit.

1. But sometimes we come to find we've built up our own barriers in one way or another. We keep him at a distance, or in a box, or behind a levee.
  - a. Let's just let it all go. We need the Spirit and his fullness—whether for the very first time, or in a new and fresh way. So let's hear the word, wait for God, pray with passion, and let's get ready to go!