

The Wonders of the Fullness of the Spirit

Act 2:1-4

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When the day of Pentecost came, the earliest Christians were all together in one place. Suddenly they heard a sound like the blowing of a violent wind coming from heaven and filling the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

As the Spirit enabled them, astonishing things happened. As the Spirit enabled them, wonders of heaven were disclosed.

The brand new Christian church began with the fullness of the Spirit. The very first church ever in human history was inaugurated with the Holy Spirit like the blowing of a violent wind. The first church did not begin with any institutional endeavors. It did not begin with any logo-centric intellectual exercise. The first church did not begin with any doctrinal campaign. I am not negating all these important factors for church development. But I am declaring the priority for the extension of the church.

The brand new Christian church began with the fullness of the Spirit. It began with the blowing of a violent wind of the Spirit. The first church began with the tongues of fire of the Spirit. It began with the Spirit that filled the whole house. Indeed, the very first Christian church began with the fullness of the Spirit.

The fullness of the Spirit was the enabling Spirit. The power of acceleration to spread the church so quickly to the Asia minor and Mediterranean world was the enabling Spirit. As the Spirit enabled them, wonders of heaven were disclosed to them. As the Spirit enabled them, astonishing things happened to them. What they did were outrageously winning activities. What they did were furiously prevailing accomplish-ments as they were enabled by the Holy Spirit.

I. Now we can say that the first wonder of the fullness of the Spirit is the enabling Spirit.

When the Spirit came down like a violent wind from Heaven, then they were enabled to do astonishing things. They were utterly amazed. They asked, “Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?” People declared the wonders of God in their own tongues. They were amazed and perplexed. Then they asked one another, what does this mean?

Peter was the person who knew the nature of the fullness of the Spirit. Peter knew that the fullness of the Spirit was the enabling Spirit. Peter knew that the fullness of the Spirit was the empowering Spirit. Peter could not be silent at this extraordinary event. Peter stood up and raised his voice, and addressed the crowd. He boldly declared the wonders of the Spirit to the people.

God will pour out His Spirit on all people. Sons and daughters with the fullness of the Spirit will prophesy. Young men with the empowering Spirit will see visions. Old men with the enabling

Spirit will dream dreams.

Here are no discriminations on men and women, old people and young people, and Jew and Gentile. There are no prejudices on sons or daughters, east or west, and masters or servants. Indeed, God pours out the Spirit even upon the women, old men, and even servants. The young servants will receive fullness of the Spirit and see the visions. Even old men and female servants will be enabled to dream dreams and will prophesy by the fullness of the Spirit.

There were so many fully spiritually charged Christians, fully empowered believers, fully envisioned people. There were so many dreaming Christians and prophesying believers through the work of the Holy Spirit. These enabled Christians were the fundamental seed members for spreading the Gospel so rapidly to all over the Asia minor and Mediterranean world. Some of them, who were enabled by the Spirit, even dared to give their lives for spreading the Gospel to the world. Spiritually charged people were so strong and enthusiastic to perform those extraordinary evangelism.

Korean mega-churches and super churches, which have tens of thousands of members, practice exactly the same principle with what the brand new Christian church did. Whenever I meet the pastors of the huge churches, almost all of them say exactly the same principle. When the church has the fullness of the Spirit, believers are enthusiastic for winning the people. It is a definitely proven fact that the spiritual church is a live church and a winning church. The prime biblical church was the spiritual church, which was a powerful church. Indeed, a spiritual church is a rapidly growing church. A spiritual church, which has the enabling Spirit, will quickly accelerate to multiply believers.

II. The second wonder of the fullness of the Spirit is the prevailing Spirit.

1) Before the brand new Christian church was established, Jesus was filled with the Spirit. It was even before Jesus began his ministry that he had the fullness of the Spirit. The Spirit which filled Jesus was a furiously prevailing Spirit. At the baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:9-10), “as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.” And a voice came from heaven: “You are my son, whom I love, with you I am well pleased.” The Spirit was descending on him like a dove. Jesus was filled by the Spirit.

According to the Gospel of Luke, “Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan” (Luke 4:1). St. Luke describes Jesus as full of the Holy Spirit. This fullness of the Spirit in Jesus was the prevailing Spirit. “He was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil.” Jesus ate nothing for forty days while praying in the desert. At the end of the days, he was so hungry. The devil tempted Jesus at the very vulnerable moment, “if you are son of God, tell this stone to become bread.” He was extremely hungry; the stones might look like bread for him. But Jesus outrageously said, “Man does not live on bread alone.” Man does not live on materialistic wealth alone.

The Spirit with which Jesus was filled was the prevailing Spirit. It was the prevailing Spirit to triumph over the temptation. It was the temptation of having materialistic wealth. It was the temptation of having financial prosperity. It is very hard for ordinary people to resist this in this materialistic society. Jesus outrageously said, “It is written, ‘Man does not live on bread alone.’” Man does not live on materialistic wealth alone.

Jesus did not abuse his “super-power” to achieve his personal satisfaction. But Jesus furiously prevailed against the temptation. Jesus, with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, triumphed over the materialistic temptation.

2) The devil led Jesus on a high place. He said, “I will give you all their authority and splendor,

if you worship me.” It was a temptation of sitting on a high place of authority. It was a temptation of taking a powerful position. Jesus, with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, positively prevailed against the temptation of having a power-based authority. Jesus, with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, prevailed against the temptation of having an artificial splendor of dominating power.

We appreciate finer things in this world. We appreciate good things in this society. But we do know that money is nothing but a product of an exchange system. Power is nothing but an element of a control system in society. Money and power are merely sociological entities. They are not the fundamental entities. The fundamental entities for life are the Word and the Spirit. The Word and the Spirit are prior to any supplemental elements for life.

The symbol of the super power was struck by the evil spirit. The symbol of renowned prosperity was struck by the evil spirit. Now we know that the symbol of a super power is destructible. The symbol of renowned prosperity can be easily destroyed. I hope this does not irritate any patriotic Americans. A super power is not a real power but a finite human power. It is a vulnerable power. It is a limited power. Indeed, it is a finite power.

So many people rely upon this finite temporal power. So many people have arrogant dignity believing in this power. Those who believe in this power think that they are on the high place of authority and splendor. But now the symbol of the renowned prosperity turned into ashes. Oh, it is a so highly expensive lesson. But it is true that money and power are not the everlasting realities.

We believe that there is the real super power. We believe that there is the almighty power. We trust that there is the everlasting power. We are fully aware that no evil spirit can defeat the almighty power. We are fully aware that there is no devil that can destroy the everlasting power upon which we can absolutely trust.

Jesus outrageously prevailed against the earthly temptations with the help of almighty God through the power and the fullness of the Spirit. Oh, what a wonder the fullness of the Spirit is.

3) There was a temptation of being at the highest point of the temple. It was a temptation of climbing up to the highest place of religious authority. It was a temptation of taking a religiously exclusive position. Again, Jesus, with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, prevailed against the temptation of having a religious authority. Jesus, with the fullness of the Holy Spirit, triumphed over the temptation of having a religious power. The fullness of the Spirit is the ultimately prevailing Spirit. The second wonder of the fullness of the Spirit is the prevailing Spirit.

III. The third wonder of the fullness of the Spirit is the purifying Spirit

The Spirit comes down upon us for astonishing things to happen. It enables us to do utterly amazing things. The Spirit fills us to prevail over the jeopardizing temptations and it triumphs over the hampering challenges of the world. The Spirit emanates into us to purify the bitterness of the egocentric sinful nature. The fullness of the Spirit is the cleansing Spirit. The fullness of the Spirit is the purifying Spirit. The fullness of the Spirit cleans the selfish desires and egocentric attachments. The fullness of the Spirit purifies our intention in consciousness to have right relationship with God and others.

“What every individual heart must have is the baptism of Jesus with the Holy Spirit.” The individual heart must be purified by the baptism with the Holy Spirit. We believe that the Pentecost was the time of entire sanctification of the 120 disciples.

The fullness of the Spirit creates a cleansing event in the believer’s consciousness. The fullness of the Spirit causes a purifying event in the Christian’s heart. It is not a discarding process, like

becoming a sage in Confucianism. It is not a detaching process, like having a negated self in Buddhism. It is not a discarding process by the endeavor of self cultivation. It is not a detachment process by harshly negating self.

But it is a cleansing event by the Holy Spirit. It is a purifying event in our consciousness. Indeed, the fullness of the Spirit is an event of cleansing of the selfish desires and having right relationship with God and others.

The Divine Grace is coming to us first with the initial aim of salvation of human beings. The Divine Grace consistently persuades us to encounter the Spirit. The Divine Grace persistently lures us to experience the sanctifying grace.

Now, it is our turn to turn to the Grace. It is our intentionality to come to the Spiritual Grace. We come to the Spirit with sheer intentionality. We come to the Spirit with solitary attitude, not with mixed mindedness, not with double mindedness, but with a simple and solitary mind. We come to the Spirit with sacred condition, not with the secular-associated spirit but with a set apart condition from worldliness. We come to the Spirit with a desperate and positive mind.

Then, there will be awe and wonder of encountering the Spirit. There will be the splendor of the fullness of the Spirit in our consciousness.

The fullness of the Spirit entails the purity of heart in the believer's consciousness. Indeed, a life of holiness emerges at the bottom and profound level of our consciousness. The fullness of the Spirit is an experience of the wonders of heaven. The fullness of the Spirit is highly operative for a life of holiness.

When the church is full of excitement with the envisioning Spirit, when the church is full of joyfulness with the enabling Spirit, when the church is full of positiveness with the prevailing Spirit, when the church is full of holiness with the purifying Spirit, our church will definitely grow. Our church will be prosperous beyond our imagination.

If the church is full of members who are filled with the enabling, the envisioning, and the empowering Spirit, then the church must rapidly grow. If the church is full of members who are filled with the dreaming, prevailing, and purifying Spirit, then the church must incredibly grow. We believe the prime biblical church was the spiritual church. When the spiritual wonders of heaven flourish in the church, our church will be a highly motivating, highly successful, and highly winning Christian church.