

Let's open our Bibles this morning to Mark 16:15. And, if you've found that, you can stick your thumb in Acts 1 where we're going to end up this morning.

We started the gospel of Mark back in March of 2016, March 6th. So if you've been with us, it's taken a long time, hasn't it? Mark was a convert to Jesus through the ministry of Peter. Mark was most moved, as he listened to Peter's testimony, about how the Lord was a Servant and how, wherever He went, that was His goal - souls. And so Mark fills his gospel not with so much the words of Jesus but His actions. In fact, the connective words constantly speak about immediacy of behavior. It's almost like you're winded by the time you get to the end of the book. The Lord was always ready to serve and reach out. If it was inconvenient, that was fine. If it led to criticism or persecution or even rejection, that was fine. The Lord was there to bear witness to His great love, and He had a great passion for souls. And that really is Mark's contribution to the church, if you will. He wants us to follow the example of the Lord.

Recently we spent three weeks, I guess, at the cross learning about the Lord's love on display. We looked (for a week) at the responses to His death - especially Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, the faithful ladies, as well as the running disciples. And then we slowly have walked through resurrection day - the morning where the Lord made Himself known, the morning appearances; the afternoon that was spent entirely with one couple heading out of Dodge for seven and a half miles to their home; and then the meeting of Jesus with the 120 or so gathered in the evening that we looked at last week, where He breathed on them, said, "Receive the Holy Spirit," opened up their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, told them that they were to be witnesses for Him and to continue the work that He began but that they should wait there, even though they were now born again, for the promise of the Holy Spirit which would endue them with power from on high.

And so this morning we come to the end of the story. Luke will (in chapter 1 of Acts) begin talking about the things that Jesus began both to do and to teach until the day that He was taken up to heaven. But afterwards He, through the Holy

Spirit, gave commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, and the work of God continued.

We ended last week in verse 14 here. Between verse 14 and 15 are forty days because we go from the evening of the resurrection until the day, really, of the ascension where the Lord said to them, "You should go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Verse 14 was the meeting that evening. Verses 15 and 16 were given actually sometime down the road in Galilee, and then, a little bit later, the resurrection from Jerusalem. So, " 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.' " So, one of the things that you run into at the end of Jesus' public ministry - both in the evening of the resurrection, both in that meeting in Galilee that the Lord scheduled with the boys, and then on the day of His ascension - is the remark that they were to go and be witnesses, to reach the world with the good news of His Son; but to not try to do so without the empowering work of the Holy Spirit. And so you find that in every place after the resurrection - the evening, during those forty days; you find it again as the Lord departs from them into the heavens as they watched Him go (and you read about that in Acts 1). But the Lord's interest is that the church continue (you and I) bearing His name to a lost world, and, for that matter, to our generation. Matthew 28:18 records the Lord saying that as well, " 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.' " Mark adds the words here, " 'Go and preach the gospel to every creature.' " There should be no doubt that your mission and mine, more than anything else, is to wait upon the Holy Spirit's power upon our lives and then go and bear His name to the world. And you find, like I said when we'll get to Acts here in a few minutes, the Lord saying that same thing to them - almost the last word He speaks to them before He disappears out of their sight.

If they are to go and do that - and remember that the Lord said last week, " 'Wait here.' " They were saved, but, " 'Wait here until you receive power from on high.' " The Lord here, as He talks about the commission (in verse 15), also tells us (in verse 17) the power of God that will follow those who believe. Notice that some will believe. " 'Go into all the world and preach.....and those who believe will be baptized, be saved. But those who don't believe will be condemned.' " And be

careful that you don't read too much into that. Notice that if you're not believing, you don't need to be baptized because you're condemned. But if you believe, then you should be baptized. But it isn't a way to save you; it's a declaration that you've been saved. We had our baptism yesterday afternoon - beautiful day. I saw many of you there. If you didn't make it, try next time. It's just a wonderful day to watch God work. But needless to say, the believers are baptized, and yet they do so because they're identifying with Christ; and yet the unbeliever will not be baptized because he's condemned - he doesn't have a relationship with the Lord.

So Jesus, in verses 17 and 18, returns to this empowering issue of the Holy Spirit to help them accomplish the work of getting the word out to the world. We're going to need some help if we're going to accomplish His will. The world is lost. They don't think much of you. They don't think much of your God. It seems to be more evident as the days pass. The Lord's going to have to empower us and speak through us. Salvation is a spiritual work. It isn't a mind work, if you will. It isn't that which you can gain by education as much as you can gain by the power of God's Spirit upon your life.

So, He listed (verse 17) to the disciples some of the authenticating signs of His power upon those who believe. You might remember, from the Scriptures, that when the Lord sent the boys out two by two (Luke 9), or later the disciples out two by two - and there were seventy of them (Luke 10), that they had experienced, literally, this power before. The Holy Spirit had anointed them for a time to do this work - authority over the demons. You remember (there in Luke 10:17) that seventy returned, and they said to the Lord, " 'Even the demons are subject to Your name.' And Jesus said, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I'm giving you authority to trample over serpents and over scorpions, all the power of the enemy, and nothing will by any means hurt you. But don't rejoice in that. That's your equipment. Rather rejoice in this - your name is written in heaven, that your name is written in His book.' " You're going to heaven. Now here's your power. It's going to be amazing what God can do through your life. But, even more importantly, you're going to get there because of your salvation, because of your trust in the Lord.

So they had had power over the demons, but now this relationship with the Holy Spirit's power was going to be permanent. He spoke about them speaking in new tongues or the gifts of tongues. In the book of Acts (chapter 2), when Pentecost fully came, this gift is initially seen in the lives of the saints. It is subsequent

throughout the book of Acts, as God's Spirit falls, that God gives to the church this gift of tongues. It is the only gift (in 1 Corinthians 14:4) that is used for personal edification. Every gift of the Holy Spirit is to serve others - they're gifts of service - except this one. This one is for your benefit. And it is my personal belief that every Christian should have this gift - only because it isn't something that is used primarily for others; it is first (primarily) used for your ability to pray when you don't understand what God is doing. God will not withhold any good thing from those who walk uprightly (Psalm 84:11). And if you go back and read 1 Corinthians 14:4, "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself." It is for your benefit. And so you find this outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and oftentimes accompanied by this gift of tongues, mentioned again and again in the book of Acts.

He then also promises to them, as they go out, divine protection. Now this isn't a directive from the Lord to showcase your spiritual faith. It isn't a call to handle dangerous snakes. You might have heard some of these little weirdos in the South that think that drinking poison really proves that you're a faith man. No. You're a dead man if you do that. This is pretty much what it'll prove. But, at the other end of the spectrum, if you are serving the Lord, and maybe that service is dangerous and difficult, God's promise is to watch over you as you go, by His Spirit. Even miraculously so. Read Acts 28 when Paul, on his way to Rome, has a crash landing in Malta. But the Lord had a purpose of reaching the people there, and so He stopped the boat. And Paul was building a fire and stuck his hand into the wood, and a serpent came out and bit upon his hand. And the natives thought, "Well, this man is a murderer. He escaped the sea, but he's not going to escape this." But he shook it off, and it didn't harm him, and then the people of Malta began to listen as God began to work. So He promises divine protection. Satan tried to use that against Jesus (Luke 4), you might remember, in the temptation in the wilderness when he takes Him, in a vision, to the pinnacle of the temple; and he said, "Why don't You jump down? The Bible says," and he quoted out of Psalm 91:11-12 about the "LORD bearing you up lest you dash your foot against a stone." And he said, "Just make a spectacle of Yourself. Draw attention to Yourself through the spectacular." And Jesus said, "You don't tempt the LORD your God." That's a foolish way to use what God has given.

So, power over the devil, gift of tongues, divine protection, laying hands on the sick. The healing work of the Holy Spirit throughout the life of the early church was one of miracles. "You have not because you ask not" (James 4:2b). And we believe in prayer, don't we? And we believe - James said (5:14), "Call the elders of

the church if you're sick. Let them anoint you with oil. Lay hands on the sick, and they'll recover." And so I realize that nobody's hands are going to heal you, nor will the oil heal you. But if obedience to the Lord brings His blessing, then obedience heals you, doesn't it? And the Lord is the Healer. He's the One that is honored. So it is a confirmation of the gospels, and you will find that these miraculous works of God are designed to protect the worker and to illuminate the hearer - that God wants to make sure that people pay attention and that they see and understand that His Word is true.

In verses 19 and 20 (at the end of Jesus' ministry), we read, "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." And then I guess Mark is done. He just says, "Amen." That's it. When Jesus had finished his forty days of post-resurrection appearances, we find Him and His disciples back in Jerusalem. In fact, Luke tells us they're on the Mount of Olives. They are near Bethany. "He led them out as far as Bethany, He lifted up His hands, He blessed them, and, as He blessed them," it says, "He was caught up into the heavens. And they returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and they continued in the temple praising the Lord" (Luke 24:50-53). And so this is the end of those forty days, but it is ten days to wait before we get to Acts 1.

So let's go there for a minute so we don't leave this portion out. Acts 1. "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.' 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.' Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their

sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.' Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey." And so they gathered together (verse 11, 12, 14), waiting for the Lord to give them this power that the Holy Spirit, this promise of God's filling, if you will, into their lives.

So Mark tells us that when Jesus ascended, He sat down at the right hand of the Father. It is a fulfillment, by the way, of Psalm 110:1 where David had written, "The LORD said to my Lord," as we read this morning, " 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.' " And so the work was done, and now the fruit could begin to be gathered. When Stephen is killed for his testimony (in Acts 7), we read something very interesting. We read Stephen looking up into the heavens, and it says that "he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (verse 55). No longer sitting. It was like He stood up to greet His first martyr.

So the Lord ascends. Forty days later, the disciples are told this, "Wait for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon your life. You're not ready to go." He's given them the commission. He's given them salvation. But they need this empowering work of the Holy Spirit. There is this personal relationship with the Holy Spirit upon my life that enables me to accomplish what the Lord wants (Acts 1:8) - to be a witness not only in Jerusalem, where they lived or where they were, but beginning from there, kind of going out in waves: Jerusalem, and then Judea was the bigger area, Samaria was the land to the north, and eventually just to the ends of the earth. It's got to go out from here to every person, to every heart, that they might hear. And so understand that, as we wait for Jesus, the job of the church is to be witnesses for Him. And, like the early church, we need the power of God's Spirit upon our lives. Everything in this life is temporary. Whatever you've gathered, whatever you own, whatever you think you are - none of that stuff gets carried forward except for your life and what you send ahead: the salvation of others, the seeds that you've planted. But I want you to notice that this birth of the church - the reason for Jesus' coming - is kind of like leaning forward at the start line. The Lord has saved them, He's opened their understanding, He's died for their sins, He's risen into glory now. And then He said, "Just wait right here." And they're all kind of, "Let's go!" But they're not

ready to go. And yet they need to go, but they're not ready to go. And the Lord tells them to wait, and they would wait till Pentecost - ten days later - when the Lord would pour out His Spirit upon the church.

So Jesus' last words to these waiting men and women - both on Easter evening, both in Galilee, and again as He ascended into heaven - was just to wait. Now, you know how the story goes. I mean, ten days later (in Acts 2), they're gathered together, at least 120 if not more. They've been waiting for ten days, they've been praying, they have been saved. The Bible makes more sense to them than it ever has. They're reading. But they're obedient. And on that first Pentecost, if you will, after the resurrection of the Lord, the Holy Spirit falls upon the church in tremendous power. And not only are they saved, but now they're empowered. And Peter stands up to preach the first sermon, and, like I said (I think last week), in a matter of a couple of minutes, so powerful is God's Word that goes forth that three thousand people get saved and come to the Lord. And these disciples - over the next thirty years - will turn the world literally upside down (Acts 17:6), preaching the gospel of Jesus. I mean, every continent, everybody had heard it because the Lord had empowered them.

Like I said, I believe every saint should be baptized in the Holy Spirit. From all that we can read in the Scriptures, the baptism of the Holy Spirit is not a reward for faithful service. It isn't power that's reserved for the 1st century church only. If they needed Him, how much more do we? It isn't given to us because we're spiritually mature. The power of the Holy Spirit is available to anyone who wants to and is willing to be God's vessel. And it is very, I think, enlightening that the Lord says to the early church (when it began), "Wait here. I'll be right with you. And when I pour out My Spirit, then you'll be My witnesses from here to the ends of the earth." If you haven't been baptized in the Holy Spirit, today could be a glorious day for you. You can ask the Lord to fill you to be a witness. John the Baptist coined that phrase back in Mark 1:7, where he said, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." The word "baptism" means to be placed into. Right? That's what the word means in Greek. So the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you're kind of placed into His power upon your life.

There are three relationships that the Holy Spirit has with man, according to the Bible. Number one - He is with every man, convicting of sin, speaking to our hearts,

inviting us to come to Jesus, convicting us of our sin. Jesus said to the disciples (in John 14:17), "The Spirit of truth," (is coming) "whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you." This "with," "*para*" is the word in Greek - the Holy Spirit is with every man upon the earth - to convict of sin, to show them who Jesus is. That relationship of the "withness" of the Holy Spirit is with you until you are born again or until you die. The Lord will not just forsake you; He'll give you every opportunity.

When you come to the Lord, then the Holy Spirit moves in you. Ezekiel 36:26, in prophecy, the LORD said, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you" (He says a second time) "and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments." I'm going to enable you. I'm going to give you a new heart. I'm going to save you. The new birth is the Holy Spirit moving within my heart. It is the Age of Grace. What did Paul say to the Corinthians? He said (in chapter 3:16 of 1 Corinthians), "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" He said the same thing to the Romans (in chapter 8:9), "You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you." So, that's the second relationship. He's with you. When you're saved, He moves in you to give you life.

But there is this third relationship - upon you. The Greek phrase is the word "*epi*." It means to land upon. You can find that kind of foreshadowed in the Old Testament. You might remember that Moses felt so overwhelmed with three million folks (there in Numbers 11), and he was so overwhelmed that he said to the LORD, "I need help. You should kill me." And the LORD said, "Gather these men together, and pick men that are known among the tribes, and I'll take of your Spirit that is upon you, and I'll put it upon them," and they began to prophesy, and God's Spirit fell upon these Old Testament saints for the purpose of serving Him. The difference was - in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit's coming upon a life was temporary, or it could be. Saul was a man that experienced the Holy Spirit's power upon his life, but walking away from the LORD, the LORD took His Spirit from him (1 Samuel 16:14). David, in his sin with Bathsheba, wrote (there in Psalm 51:11), "Take not your Holy Spirit from me." He realized that this was a gift from God that couldn't really be counted upon for the long term unless he walked with God. In the Old Testament, like I said, for wisdom, for service, for power, for insight, it was temporary. But in the New Testament, it is not so. The Holy Spirit is with

you, and He will move in. When He moves in, He's not going to forsake you. He's going to finish the work that He starts. And also this anointing of God's power upon you, you are put into a place where you now are God's representative as Jesus was. If you read Isaiah, you read (for example) in chapter 61:1, that "the LORD has anointed Me" to be His witness. "He's put His Spirit upon Me to be wise, to be understanding, to have counsel and might and knowledge and fear of the LORD" (Isaiah 11:2). It speaks of Jesus' ministry as being done by the power of the Holy Spirit who is upon Him. In the same manner, when the Lord was baptized, it's the Holy Spirit who descended upon Him. And John even said (John 1:33), "I wouldn't have known who it was except I saw the Holy Spirit descending upon Him and staying there upon Him." All of Jesus' miracles upon the earth were done by the power of the Holy Spirit - by the third Person of the trinity - not as Jesus, the Son of God. He emptied Himself. He laid aside the prerogative of being God and depended upon the Holy Spirit because that's what you and I need to do. And He's our example - we follow Him. And so we're in that same place. It was in Acts 10 where Peter is preaching, and he says, "I want to tell you about Jesus of Nazareth who, with the Holy Spirit and with power, went about doing good, healing all that were oppressed of the devil. He was anointed. God was with Him." So there was this anointing, and that's what God would have you have in your life as well.

So, Jesus died, He's risen, He spends forty days making sure that the church understands why He's come and what they're to do. He breathes on them the Holy Spirit, and they are saved. He commissions them for a work to be done, promises to send from heaven this promised power of the Holy Spirit and says, "Just wait till it shows up. Wait till it's time." And then He disappears out of their sight, and He begins a work through the church that He had begun Himself. And so Jesus saves them, the Holy Spirit is promised to them, they wait for Him to be poured out upon their lives. And then, as you go through the book of Acts, you will follow this outpouring of God's Spirit upon regular men and women (like you and me) that are saved, to see the fruit that comes when our life is led by God's Spirit to accomplish God's work. In fact, there are only two times in the book of Acts where God goes out of His way to tell us numbers. We always say numbers don't matter. And they don't. More often than not, God doesn't mention them. But when He mentions them, they're big numbers. The first day, the Holy Spirit falls - three thousand get saved. A little later on (in Acts 4), the Lord will say, "And the number of the men increased to five thousand," not even including the women and the children. He lays out for us of the glorious things that God can do in the lives of those who are filled with the Holy Spirit.

So even if you read through the book of Acts, and you begin here in Acts 2, you read of them all sitting together, that the Holy Spirit doesn't need to be worked up. He needs to be prayed down, doesn't He? And He fell (verse 3 of Acts 2), and "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." As the Holy Spirit falls and the power of God falls, Peter explains to the doubters what they are seeing. Like I said, he preaches a very short sermon, and three thousand get saved.

Now, all of these manifestations of the Spirit that you see here are really not repeated again as the church goes forward. It's kind of like when God begins a new work, there're certain things that happen that distinguish it - when the altar is built, when the fire comes from heaven. There's like these one-time works, and then God continues that work. But the lesson is learned. So you won't find this tongues of fire hovering overhead. You won't hear any more mighty rushing winds. You won't ever read of tongues being an understandable language. You speak in the Spirit mysteries that God alone understands (1 Corinthians 14:2). But that's not true of the first time. There are lots of things that are repeated, but none of these are. There's boldness and insight and fruitfulness and tongues and prophecy and healing; those are repeated but not the manifestations, if you will, that come. You will find (in Acts 4:31) this same group getting together, and as the opposition begins, and they prayed, "Lord, fill us again with Your Spirit, we need an infilling of Your Spirit," almost like you could run on empty. And "the place was shaken," we read, and the Lord again poured out upon them this anointing, this power of the Spirit. And they went out, and, it says, "They spoke the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31). In Acts 8, as the church is being scattered because Stephen has been killed, the gospel ends up going to Samaria. Remember in Judea and Samaria? And, in the person of Philip, who is running to the north, God shows up there (Acts 8). You can read it. And, again, there is this power of God at work. People are getting saved. The news filters back to Jerusalem where the apostles are, and Peter and John are actually sent from them to Samaria (Acts 8:14) with only one purpose - go and pray for the church, that they would be filled with the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit would come upon them. And you will read that, though they had gotten saved and the devil was exposed and men were delivered, the Holy Spirit had fallen upon none of them yet. And Peter and John came and laid hands on them and prayed for them. You read the same thing (in Acts 9) of Paul, who got saved on the road to Damascus, was struck blind. He was healed by a disciple sent to him by the name of Ananias. He was filled with the Holy Spirit. He writes about

his own personal experiences. He will even write to Timothy in his last letter (2 Timothy 1:6), "Hey, Timothy, come on, man. Stir up the gifts that are in you which were received by you when I laid my hands upon you to pray." You will find this same thing in Acts 10, as Peter is led by the Lord to go to the house of Cornelius, the centurion. He's so excited. He finds a whole houseful of Gentiles. He's not quite sure what to do with it. But you might remember the story of how he got there. And, again, Peter has this very short sermon. He lays out to Gentiles how God saves through His Son. And while he is speaking, the Holy Spirit falls upon them; as they're just open, man. They get saved and filled at the same time. When he's done, you will see the gift of tongues again. Water baptism will follow. And then, in chapter 11, Peter is called back to Jerusalem to explain himself. "What are you doing preaching to Gentiles?" Because they were not aware of that yet. That wasn't really an open door for them. And Peter goes, "Well, I can't stop it, man. I was just over there sharing. Look what the Lord did." And he told the whole story. And everybody went, "All right, I guess God's into saving everybody by His Holy Spirit." You'll find it in Acts 19, as Paul comes to Ephesus, and he runs into some guys that aren't born again, but they've been baptized by John. That's all they know. And he preaches Jesus to them, and they accept the Lord. They get baptized in water, and then (in verse 6) he prays for them, and the Holy Spirit falls upon their lives. Again and again. So the evidence, in Scripture, of the need to be baptized in the Holy Spirit - overwhelming. You can follow it through the early church. Why do you think Jesus made such an issue of it towards the end of His earthly ministry? Why did He mention it the very day of the resurrection? Why did He go to Galilee when He met with the folks? Why does He say that on His way out? "Wait. You need power to reach the world." Because without His work in us, we're going to fail to do His work.

Let me end with this. In John 7, there is an account of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem which was to remind people of God's preservation of the nation through the wilderness for forty years. They would build booths, they would sit inside them for a week (outside). God provided all that we need. But as they were in Jerusalem, they would take (every morning) down to the Pool of Siloam, and they would bring water in these earthen jars, and they would pour them out on the steps of the temple to say, "The LORD brought water out of the rock for us." And they did that for a week, singing the Hallel psalms. But on the eighth day, they didn't do it because they celebrated that they came to where they were going - to the Land of Promise. And on the eighth day, it is that day that Jesus stood up at the feast and said (verse 37), " 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who

believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' " And John, writing it after the fact, said, "He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." He hadn't ascended. And he speaks about this outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the life of God's people.

So to be baptized in the Holy Spirit is, I think, very necessary. If you really want the Lord to use you, and you want the boldness and the power of God to be a witness, rely on Him, not on yourself. Obey the Lord. Ask in prayer. Be open to receive the gifts. But be available so that God might use you. We'll have some of our pastors up front after the service. Before you go home, if you haven't been baptized in the Holy Spirit, ask them to pray for you. You don't have to wait ten days anymore. He's available this morning if you'll ask.

Submitted by Maureen Dickson
August 14, 2017