

The Extraordinary Church **An Empowered Church**

I. Introduction

- A. "To the Greeks, the message of these Christians was mad. To the Romans, it was weak; and to the Jews, it was incredible. Everywhere Christians were opposed as anti-social, atheistic, and depraved. They had very bad press." (Michael Green)
- B. "At the beginning of Acts, chapter 12, King Herod is on the rampage - - arresting and persecuting church leaders. And at the end of chapter 12, Herod is himself struck down and he dies. The chapter opens with James dead, Peter in prison, and Herod triumphing. It closes with Herod dead, Peter free, and the Word of God triumphing. Such is the power of God to overthrow hostile human plans and to establish His own in their place." (John Stott)

II. The Holy Spirit Is the Star of the Book of Acts!

- A. Acts 2:1-4 (NAS) *¹When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. ⁴And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.*
- B. Acts 2:16-18 (NAS) *¹⁶But this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS; ¹⁸EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT and they shall prophesy.'*
- C. "People are all melted together - - made one lump, one bread, all one body in Jesus Christ. There is no Jew or Gentile, bond or free, in the Azusa Street mission. The Holy Spirit is no respecter of persons or places." (William Seymour)

III. Christianity Involves an Experience With the Holy Spirit!

- A. Acts 2:2 (NAS) *And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.*
 - 1. The Holy Spirit is not subject to human control!
 - 2. When the Holy Spirit comes, He also brings a regenerating experience!
 - 3. The Holy Spirit comes as an empowering experience!
- B. Acts 2:3 (NAS) *And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.*

- C. "I am convinced that the Holy Spirit in the Apostle Paul's experience in theology was always thought of in terms of the personal presence of God. The Spirit is God's way of being present, powerfully present, in our lives and communities as we await the consummation of the Kingdom of God. Whatever else -- for Paul -- the Spirit was an experienced reality. Without an experience of the Holy Spirit, we are living sub-New Testament lives." (Gordon Fee)
- D. Luke 11:13 (NAS) *"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"*

IV. Conclusion