

TAKING YOU INTO THE WORLD

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I have introduced you to the Wheel of Discipleship (the components of a life that fully follows Christ), and presented the role of the Holy Spirit in developing those qualities and their demonstration.

The Father has sent the Holy Spirit to you in order to...

- Awaken your devotion to Christ
- Anoint your friendships, turning them into fruitful connections
- Edify the Church through your participation in training and service

Today, we consider the fourth quadrant. Jesus, the One who came to seek and to save those who are lost, has sent to you His Holy Spirit so that He can *take you into the world* as His ambassador, to re-present Jesus to those who are lost and least.

Jesus said, "Follow Me and I will show you how to fish for people's souls." That's what followers of Jesus do! If you are not fishing for people's souls—if you are not longing for them to know Jesus, if you are not praying for their blinders to be removed, if you are not presenting them with the life-giving words of God—how then can you say that you are following Jesus?

Waiting for...

Are you just waiting for something to happen in your life? Are you waiting for God to act?

What stands between you and the dedication of your entire life to Jesus? Do you feel like you need something more before you can move forward? What is it? Time? Money? A revival?

Will Rogers is credited with this poem:

*The Clock of Life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop,
At late or early hour.
Now is the only time we own;
Love life, toil with a will;
Do not wait until tomorrow,
For the Clock may then be still.*

Such needs—time, money—may be real, but are they actually *pre-requisites*? Can you *not* move until they arrive?

Do you really think God will give you a large block of free time, and then ask you to fill it, if you have not been working for Him with the time you have now?

Do you really think God will drop a ton of money in your lap, and then ask you how you want to spend it, if you have not been faithfully managing what you have right now?

Do you really think God will send a widespread revival, and then ask you how you want to serve Him, if you haven't been serving Him with the energy you have now?

Time is in His hands! The silver and the gold are His! He already is the way, the truth, and the life! If you have Christ, then you have all that you need from the outside. You simply need to start moving from the inside.

Time to Act

Just do something! Open your eyes and see the needs right in front of you. Don't wait for grand opportunities; small opportunities lead to bigger opportunities. Remember, Jesus said, "*If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones*" (Luke 16:10).

The Church—the *Ecclesia*—has been gathered together *out from* the world, in order to be sent *back into* the world to re-present Christ on mission. After His resurrection, Jesus said, "*As the Father has sent me, I am now sending you. Receive the Holy Spirit*" (John 20:21-22). We are not to love the world or to be like the world or "*let it squeeze us into its mold,*" but we are to be in the world as salt and light, revealing Jesus and spreading the fragrance of His grace.

The Key

The key to our success is receiving and keeping in step with the Holy Spirit.

After His resurrection and before He ascended back to Heaven, Jesus told His disciples, "*Now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city (of Jerusalem) **until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven***" (Luke 24:49).

This future aspect of Christ's work intrigued the disciples. They became curious about Jesus' plans.

Acts 1:6-11

⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?”

⁷ He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. ⁸ **But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses**, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

⁹ After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. ¹⁰ As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven?”

And I say to you today, Why are you sitting here staring into Heaven? Do you expect Christ to come down again just for you? Did He leave something undone?

God sent the Holy Spirit down 1980 years ago. He’s already here! Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? Because, if you did, in Him you have everything that you need.

It Is High Time

It’s time now to move out! The mantle is on your shoulders now. The world is waiting for you! You should be growing, praying, giving, and going.

We sing “Sweet Hour of Prayer”— and content ourselves with a few minutes of prayer each day, if even that much.

We sing “Onward, Christian Soldiers”— and wait to be pushed into the Lord’s service.

We sing “O For a Thousand Tongues”— without rightly using the tongue we have.

We sing “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”—and let the least little offense sever it.

We sing “Serve the Lord With Gladness”— and gripe about all we have to do.

We sing “I Love to Tell the Story”— and never mention it all year to our friends and associates.

We sing “Take Your Burden To the Lord”— and worry ourselves into nervous breakdowns.

We sing “The Whole Wide World for Jesus”— and never invite our next-door neighbors to church.

We sing “Throw Out the Life Line”— but prefer to throw out a bucket of golf balls on Sunday.

Look at all that Jesus has done for you:

- Jesus died, so you could be forgiven.
- Jesus rose, so you could be born again.
- Jesus ascended, so you could be filled with the Spirit.
- Jesus is returning, so you can reign in life forever.

If you are lacking anything, it is because you have not asked God for it (“*You have not because you ask not*” James 4:2). Or you have asked inappropriately, so that you could satisfy your own desires or have your own way (James 4:3). When you ask in faith, so that *God’s* desires may be fulfilled, then you will have it (1 John 5:14-15).

1980 years ago, Jesus said, “*You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.*”

In response to that promise, the Assemblies of God was born on a sweltering August day in Hot Springs, Arkansas, 99 years ago, for the express purpose of developing “the greatest evangelism the world has ever seen.”

And in 99 years, the Assemblies of God has grown from 300 leaders to over 65 million adherents worldwide. And the Pentecostal/Charismatic family of churches now stands at over 584 million participants. More than half a billion people *today* baptized with the Holy Spirit’s power. What can be accomplished if we are really turned loose on the world with the love and power of our Risen Lord?

What do you really need? Three things:

- *Insight* – recognition of the needs and opportunities that surround you, and compassion to get involved in helping.
- *Wisdom* – understanding of the Lord’s plans and ways, and inspiration to participate with Him.
- *Power* – courage to move beyond your “comfort zone” in faith, and the Spirit’s anointing to make your efforts effective.

If you have the desire and the vision—God can make the way, even if there seems to be no way.

Do you want to help others on a missions trip? Start saving your money now! Don’t wait for a trip to be planned or announced, just start putting your money aside, and see what God will do.

Do you want to get involved in a ministry you’re your church doesn’t offer yet? Start praying now! Don’t wait for someone else to announce a plan, just start asking God to open the door.

While you save and pray, start keeping notes now! Things the Lord says to you in the preparation phase, things He reveals to you, should be recorded, so you can look back and see how God led and provided.

Reach out in Jesus’ name! Get started now! You have nothing to lose but apathy and inactivity. Don’t wait for time, because time isn’t waiting for you.