

4 Characteristics of a Spirit Filled Church

Welcome/ I'm so glad you made it to church today...

Intro: Columbia, Holy Spirit revival.

Text: **Acts 4:31-5:11**

1. Boldness. Verse 31

Explain: The place shook, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, they preached the word of God with boldness. They could not keep it to themselves. If we build, intentionally, over time the kind of relationship God wants for us, we cannot help but talk about it. They spent three years following Jesus, they waited and prayed for 50 days, they trusted God despite their suffering and then they had an experience with God that was transformational.

Illustrate: I talk about my marriage often because Tina and I have built, intentionally, over time, through our suffering, a relationship that is amazing. The truth is, I cannot help but talk about it. I want all of you to experience something similar. This is true in your relationship with your spouse and in your relationship with Jesus.

Argue: **Acts 1:8**, You shall be my *witness*... (What do you know, what did you see, hear, experience) That is what it means to be a witness. Not only that but when I share it builds and reinforces my faith.

Argue: **Phil 1:6 NIV, Acts 20:22-27**

Illustrate: Tina and I did not build our relationship in Cancun. Relationships are not mountain top experiences. Relationships can lead to mountain top experiences but you can only afford to go to Cancun once a year. In fact, it took me 4 years of dating to get Tina to Cancun. The Bible can be like looking at Instagram, highlights.

Apply: Create an intentional plan and work that plan!

2. Humility. Verse 32a

Explain: When God is present, there is no place for pride.

Illustrate: Chris Hodges- I'm thinking, "why are you talking, be quiet."

How do people in scripture respond to the presence of God?

- **Fear:** "Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God." (**Exodus 3:6**)
- **Bowing:** "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead." (**Revelation 1:17**)
- **Hiding:** Peter: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (**Luke 5:8**)
- **Silence:** "I lay my hand over my mouth." (**Job 40:4**)
- **Worship:** "They fell down and worshiped." (**Matthew 28:9**)

Argue: "Do not be afraid." (**Genesis 15:1; Luke 2:10; Revelation 1:17**)

Apply: The church belongs to Jesus. Our vision is to discern and fulfill His vision. Let's have enough humility to acknowledge, Jesus is head of the Church, the church is His bride, He died for the church. Our objective is to hear, follow, obey Jesus.

3. Generosity. Verses 32b-37

Explain: Perspective is everything. Are you a glass half empty or a glass half full person? I am definitely a glass half full guy. I can always see a silver lining!

Illustrate: Duke Fans, you lead for 39 minutes, 59.6 seconds. That's good.

Why were they so generous? Despite their suffering, they were forgiven, they were the children of God, they were investing in eternity! That is why we give.

Campaign- Build His House update!

- **Update:** Pledged (7.2 million) given (2.5 million). Originally the banks wanted us to have 13 in pledges and 10 million in hand. **What are we going to do?**
- **We will reduce the total cost of the project.** We are going to attempt to trim off 5 million dollars without compromising the function or experience of the building. If we are able to do that, we will only need 4 million more in pledges and to collect 5 million more of what has been pledged to begin. Those of you who have pledged. Let's get that money in as quickly as possible. Money Market Account, Weslyn Financial, pays 4.0%.
- **Increase our income.** The bank wants to make sure we have enough income to cover the increased mortgage payment. How do we increase income?
 - a. **Grow!**
 - Renovations this spring
 - Invite a friend, 80%
 - Attend 8:00am, make space in the second and third service
 - b. **Grow in generosity.** Some of you give sacrificially but others...if everyone does what they can, together we can bridge the gap and get this project started. Let me explain.
 - c. **Some of you make less but give more**
 - We currently have 1,300 giving units who gave 4.5 million in 2025.
 - 60% of our families give less than 100/month. If those 779 families are average meaning their household income was \$67,000 and they were to increase their giving to 5% or 292/month. This would increase our income 2.5 million/year, a 60% increase.
 - Some of you do not make much and are giving sacrificially. Some of you make a lot and you give 10-20k/year but it is a small percentage of your income. My point is simply this, if we all work together, if we all do our part, we could do this now. We have a clear vision but you determine the speed.
 - **They were giving everything! Why?**

The giving of the early church was driven by a Biblical, missional Perspective:

Argue: **Acts 20:35**, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Quote: You make a living by what you get and a life by what you give.

""He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose," Jim Elliot

Apply: Live generously- like everything else, create a plan. What's your next step?

4. Authenticity. 5:1-11

Explain: Why did they die? God is trying to emphasize the danger of hypocrisy in the church. They were giving and giving generously. They were free to not sell, to sell and keep it all, or to sell and keep most of it. However, after they sold, they pretended to give it all. Hypocrisy offends God.

What is hypocrisy so offensive? Hypocrisy is not imperfection. We are all imperfect. Remember, "God loves you like you are, not as you should be. None of us are as we should be." Hypocrisy is pretending, in order to impress others and elevate yourself over others.

Why is it so offensive?

- It keeps you from experiencing love from God and each other because no one knows the real you.
- It causes us to live a double life which eventually closes our hearts.
- It severely limits our spiritual growth. **John 4- Spirit and Truth** (presence and authenticity)
- **Core Value-** This is why, *Authenticity is our Aim*, is a core value!

Argue: **Matthew 23**

Apply: You must decide, are you going to fake it or are you going to heal, grow, and become all God desires for you to be. This might be the most important benefit of being in a group.

Kick off Sunday, Group Leaders

Invitation