

CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS: Empowered!

Scripture used: [Acts 1:1-8 \(NIV\)](#); [Acts 1:14–15 \(NLT\)](#); [Acts 2:1–11 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Before sending His disciples into the world, Jesus promised that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them. That promise was fulfilled at Pentecost, when the Spirit empowered the disciples to speak languages they had never learned so that people from many nations could understand the good news. God did not erase their differences; He created understanding across them. Pastor Hurmon shared how the Holy Spirit similarly redirected his life, confirming through several signs and a powerful personal encounter that God was calling him to preach. His testimony reminds us that the Holy Spirit is not a metaphor or literary device. The Spirit of God is real and continues to empower ordinary people to live the Jesus Way, cross boundaries, and communicate Christ's love in ways others can hear.

KEY POINTS

1. **The Holy Spirit fills and empowers ordinary people.** To be empowered means to be given the capability, ability, and authority to act beyond our natural capacity. Jesus did not expect His disciples to fulfill their mission through their own strength. He instructed them to gather, wait, and pray until they received the Holy Spirit. That same Spirit is available to us when we open ourselves to God and seek Him with our whole hearts. Whatever we may be facing, this should be a season of prayer. God responds when we seek Him, although His answer and the way He fills us may look different for each person.
2. **The Holy Spirit creates understanding across differences.** At Pentecost, people from many nations heard the disciples speaking in their own languages. The miracle did not eliminate their cultural distinctions; it enabled them to hear and understand one another across those differences. Jesus repeatedly crossed social and cultural boundaries, including the deep hostility between Judeans and Samaritans. The Holy Spirit empowers us to do the same by helping us see, hear, and love people beyond our assumptions.
3. **A Spirit-filled witness begins by listening.** A Spirit-filled witness asks, "How can I communicate the love of Jesus in a way this person can hear?" If we want to speak someone's language, we must first hear that person's story. Serving others is a blessing, but getting to know them is also a blessing. We can ask thoughtful questions, listen actively, learn something new, and connect through shared human experiences. A simple invitation—"Tell me more about that"—can open the door to understanding and allow the love of Jesus to be heard.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - What's something you've experienced that was completely outside your natural ability or comfort zone, but you felt empowered to do it anyway? Where have assumptions or unfamiliarity prevented you from hearing another person's story?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Jesus and the early church repeatedly crossed cultural, social, and relational boundaries. What are some ways our assumptions about people can become barriers to communicating the love of Jesus? How might the Holy Spirit challenge those assumptions?
- 3) **DO** - Begin each day this week with the prayer, "**Lord Jesus, fill me with Your Holy Spirit!**" Then initiate one conversation with someone you do not know well. Ask a genuine question, listen actively, and invite the person to "tell me more" before offering your own perspective.