

## A Sermon for DaySpring Baptist Church

### “The Spirit Within”

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John 20:19-23; Acts 2:14-21

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Wow, what a year! Earlier in the year Jesus was teaching, healing, feeding thousands with just a couple loaves of bread and some of fish. When we pray, he taught us to refer to God as Father. He talked to women at wells and saved those who were going to be stoned to death. He made mud and put it on a man’s eyes so he could see. Everywhere he went a crowd followed. If someone asks you to go one mile, go with them two. If someone hits one cheek, turn and let them hit the other. If someone asks for your cloak, give them your shirt too. He taught us about lost sheep, coins, and sons. Worship will take place everywhere, not just at the temple. We must worship in spirit and truth. Spirit? We all thought he was going to establish his kingdom. We even tried to help him. Some more than others. I didn’t mean to cut off his ear. One thing that I learned about Jesus is that he is unpredictable. We never knew what he was going to do. He was always surprising us. Like that time when he jumped on a camel and challenged us to race him. He knows how to pick ‘em. Or that time he entered a fishing tournament on Lake Jerusalem. Not even close. He won in total number and biggest catch. I loved going fishing with him because he always knew where the fish were.

He was trying to tell us what was going to happen but it just didn’t make sense. The son of Man is going to be killed and the helper is going to come. But everyone loved him. He was so compassionate. Who would kill him? Even though we knew to expect the unexpected, but with Jesus you just never knew. Sometimes people were healed when they touched him and others he touched and still others healed from a distance and a couple of times he brought them back from the dead. That father was so happy when his child was only asleep. We learned to do what he told us to do, even when we thought he was wrong. **“Throw the nets out.”** “But Jesus we...” **“Just do it. I see where you can’t. I know what you don’t.”**

Jesus mentioned that he would never leave us, but he also said that he going to prepare a place for us. See what I mean. He is confusing. How can he stay and go? He said that he was going to leave us a helper and leave us peace. Right now I don’t have either. When I was with him I knew I could do anything, even walk on water. I want him to come back. It is when I am not with him that things... I have fear issues, okay?

This week has been even been more confusing than expected. On the first day of the week he came into town on a donkey and it was fantastic. Crowds cheering like it should be for a king. Hosanna to the son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. He healed several that day. I wanted that day to go on forever. I was with the king. Then they turned on him. Four days later they wanted to kill him. Crucify Him. Crucify Him rang out.

The next day, he was killed with two thieves. They deserved it. He didn't. Why did he let them do that? He could have stopped them. He didn't have to die. We had it all figured out. But he was insistent. I ran and hid. I was scared. I have fear issues. Some of the others took his body and put it in a grave. I didn't want anything to do with the body. I went to the grave this morning but only saw the grave clothes, thinking someone stole the body. I went home, not knowing what to do. I was scared. And now Mary says that he has risen and that she has talked to him. I don't doubt it, but I don't know what to believe. This is so...

Here we are in this room. Fearful...scared...confused. They think we stole the body. The rumors are flying. What do we do now? Is he really alive? Is the kingdom not coming? Do I go back to fishing? I can't fish without Jesus. How will I support my family? I won't have much business since I was seen with him. I can deny that I was with him. I am good at that. When it was good, it was real good. Now, the townspeople are boycotting us. Was it worth it? If I could just see him. If he would just tell me what to do. I would do it. I wasn't scared when he was with me. I don't know where to go.

Jesus: **"Peace be with you."** "You are alive. Where did you come from? How did you get in? The doors are locked. I can see your hands and side. It is you, Jesus. You are alive. I believe. I knew you were alive." **"As the father has sent me, I also send you."** "Wait, wait, wait, Jesus. No, No, No, I have fear issues. Let us take a break. It's been a busy week. Here, sit down. You need to eat. That's not what I wanted to hear. Let's hang here for a while." **"Go."** "You want us to go out there? You're sending us out there? Remember Jesus, you did not have a bed some nights and you want us to do what? You go show them." **"That's not what it is about. I came to seek and save. Go."** "I like it right here. It's comfortable. We're all together. Let's sing, 'It only takes a spark...' They are after us." **"I go before you."** "We are scared." **"I give you peace."** "I am afraid to go. If what happens to you, happens to us, then this is over." **"It is over, if you don't go."**

Something must have happened to this group of ragtag, fearful men who were in that room that night or we would not be here today. They must have gone. Something radically changed them. Jesus introduced them to the Holy Spirit. Notice that the command to go and the introduction of the spirit occurred close together. The spirit is needed to do the mission. The same power that Jesus used to heal, teach, and do miracles was given to these men and their fear was taken away. Their fear was replaced with boldness and confidence.

In Acts 1, when Jesus ascended, the disciples were of again in an upper room, not because of fear, but to pray and wait. They were ready to go.

In Acts 2, at Pentecost, the spirit came in a mighty wind and caused various celebrations and unprecedented understanding and conversations so much so that they were accused of being drunk. But Peter, the one who just a few weeks before denied Jesus three times, took his stand alongside the eleven raised his voice and said...

“Men of Judea, and all you, who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give heed to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall be in the last days, God says, that I will pour forth of my spirit upon all mankind and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even upon my bondslaves, both men and women, I will in those days pour forth of my spirit and they shall prophesy. And I will grant wonders in the sky above, and signs on the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood. Before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come. And it shall be, that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’”

Peter was different. He was no longer afraid. The fear of rejection and ridicule was gone. He never thought about denying Jesus again. He goes on to heal, teach, and proclaim for many years in a manner that is obvious to those around him that he has been with Jesus. He couldn't stop talking about what happened. He was bold. He was told to go and he did.

I believe that there are events in the Bible that changed everything that came after them such as creation, the flood, the Exodus, Jesus' life, death and Resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit changed the world. Without the spirit, that group of men would have stayed in that room for a while, returned to their careers, and never proclaimed the truth.

We all have been given the same instructions. As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. Jesus says, “Peace I leave with you. I will never leave or forsake you. The spirit is with you. The spirit has come with gifts to help us in the journey. Some have gifts of preaching, healing, service, prophesying.”

How do we go? We ask the spirit to show us what our gifts are. We ask the Holy Spirit, the helper, to show us how to use the gifts that we have been given. We ask for opportunities to use our gifts.

Jesus says, “Go. Make disciples of all men, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

The spirit was promised. The spirit has come. The spirit is within you.

Go. Amen.