

The Kingdom Comes Through the Holy Spirit

- The present kingdom is the reign of the enthroned Christ breaking into this age through the Holy Spirit.
- Pentecost empowered the church to continue Jesus's mission: proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and demonstrating it with power.
- The aim of this session is to show that Pentecost is not an optional experience for a few spiritual believers, but God's blueprint for a Spirit-empowered church that carries the mission of Jesus to the nations.

The Great Commission Requires Both "Go" and "Wait"

a) Jesus Gave the Mission

- After His resurrection, Jesus commanded His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19–20).
- The mission was clear: preach, disciple, baptize, and teach obedience to everything Jesus commanded.

b) Wait for Power

- Before they went, Jesus told them to stay in the city until they were clothed with power from on high (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4–5).
- In other words, Jesus said: "Go—but not yet. Wait for power first."

c) "Go" and "Wait" Belong Together

- Evangelicals often emphasize the "go" of the mission while neglecting the "wait" for empowerment.
- Pentecostals and charismatics often emphasize the "wait" for power, but can sometimes lose sight of the mission itself.
- Jesus never separated the two. The mission requires power, and the power is given for the mission.
- Pentecost is a vital part of the Great Commission.
- We are called to go and make disciples in the nations, but we are commanded to go clothed with power from on high.

The Kingdom Comes Through the Holy Spirit

a) The Spirit Brings the Kingdom

- The Spirit was poured out to testify of the King and advance His kingdom
- Jesus said, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses" (Acts 1:8).
- The Spirit was not poured out merely for private blessing, personal comfort, emotional experience, or better church services.

- He was poured out to empower the church to bear witness to the risen King and advance His kingdom in the earth.

b) Pentecost, the Kingdom, and Power

- Pentecost was the kingdom of God coming with power.
- The kingdom of God is the reign of God through Jesus Christ the King.
- The Holy Spirit is the power that actualizes His reign in the present age.
- Through the Spirit, the powers of the age to come break into the present age (Heb. 6:5).
 - Healing previews resurrection.
 - Deliverance previews Satan's final defeat.
 - Miracles preview the restoration of creation.
 - Inner transformation previews glorification.

c) The Kingdom Coming Means the Spirit Increasing

- Jesus connected praying for the kingdom with asking for more of the Spirit.
- When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Your kingdom come" (Luke 11:2), He ended the same teaching by urging them to ask the Father for an increased measure of the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13).
- The Spirit is the primary means by which the Father reveals His reign in us, works through us, and impacts the world around us.
- The kingdom breaks into the present age when the Holy Spirit's presence and power increase.

d) The Kingdom and the Spirit in Scripture

- Isaiah 11 describes the Messianic King, but it begins with the Spirit resting upon Him (Isa. 11:2).
- Isaiah 61 shows the Messiah anointed by the Spirit to preach good news, heal the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty, and set captives free (Isa. 61:1).
- After Jesus was baptized, the Spirit descended upon Him, He was full of the Holy Spirit, and He returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit (Luke 3:22; 4:1, 14).
- Only after the Spirit came upon Jesus—filling, anointing, and empowering Him—did He begin proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17).
- Jesus made the connection between the kingdom and the Spirit unmistakable: "If I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you" (Matt. 12:28).
- Paul also connected the kingdom and the Spirit: "The kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power" (1 Cor. 4:20), and "the kingdom of God is . . . righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17).
- Without the Spirit, the kingdom becomes a doctrine we discuss. By the Spirit, the kingdom becomes a reality we embody, proclaim, and demonstrate.

Four Major Views of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

a) The Right View Matters

- Jesus said, “For John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (Acts 1:5).
- How we understand Pentecost shapes how we live, minister, preach the gospel, and expect the church to function.
- If we get Pentecost wrong, we risk settling for a powerless version of Christianity.
- If we see it clearly, we align with God’s blueprint for the Spirit-empowered church to proclaim the King and advance His kingdom.

b) The Evangelical View

- Many evangelicals interpret Spirit baptism through the lens of 1 Corinthians 12:13: “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.”
- In this view, Spirit baptism happens at conversion.
- It is not a separate experience after salvation, but the moment a person is regenerated, united with Christ, placed into His body, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit.
- Many who hold this view believe the disciples were not fully regenerated until Pentecost; therefore, Acts 2 was both the birth of the church and the disciples’ entrance into full New Covenant salvation.

c) The Pentecostal View

- Traditional Pentecostals view the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a distinct experience after salvation.
- A person can be saved, born again, and indwelt by the Spirit, yet still need to be baptized in the Spirit for power in ministry.
- In this view, Pentecost was not the disciples’ conversion; it was their empowerment.
- The distinctive Pentecostal emphasis is that speaking in tongues is the initial physical evidence of Spirit baptism.

d) The Charismatic View

- The charismatic view is close to the Pentecostal view, but does not require tongues as the initial evidence.
- Tongues are one evidence of Spirit baptism, but not the only evidence.
- Other evidences may include boldness, spiritual gifts, prophetic ministry, deeper intimacy with God, dreams and visions, greater sensitivity to the Spirit, and increased power in ministry.

e) The Third-Wave View

- The first wave was classical Pentecostalism, which emerged in the early 1900s, especially through the Azusa Street Revival.

- The second wave was the Charismatic Renewal of the 1960s and 1970s.
- The third wave, popularized in the 1980s and strongly influenced by John Wimber and the Vineyard Movement, emphasized Spirit-empowered ministry without requiring traditional Pentecostal language or a rigid “second blessing” framework.
- The Third Wave emphasizes repeated fillings, fresh empowerments, impartation, activation, renewed anointing, and ongoing ministry in the power of the Spirit.
- Its strength is that it reads Acts through the lens of the kingdom: the Spirit empowers the church to continue what Jesus began.

f) My View

- My view is somewhere between the charismatic and Third-Wave positions.
- Like the charismatic view, Scripture teaches a post-conversion baptism of the Holy Spirit.
- Like the Third Wave, Scripture also reveals repeated fillings and fresh empowerments that enable believers to continue the ministry of Jesus.
- Here’s a summary of how I view it:

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a post-conversion empowerment—a kingdom event—where the risen Christ places His “mantle” upon the church, equipping His people as a holy army in the day of God’s power to carry on His mission of preaching and demonstrating the gospel of the kingdom.

1. Pentecost Was a Post-Conversion Empowerment.

a) John 20 Reveals New Creation Life

- Fifty days before Pentecost, Jesus appeared to His disciples, breathed on them, and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22).
- This echoes Genesis 2, when God breathed into Adam and he became a living being.
- Genesis 2 reveals the first creation; John 20 reveals the beginning of the new creation.
- The risen Christ breathed spiritual life into His disciples, and they were regenerated, born again, and made new in Him.

b) Acts 2 Reveals Empowerment for Kingdom Mission

- Fifty days after the disciples had been made new in Christ, they were baptized in the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.
- The Spirit came upon them with power, tongues of fire rested on them, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4).
- This was not their regeneration. This was their empowerment.
- They had already received the Spirit for new life. Now they received the Spirit for kingdom mission.

c) Acts 4 Reveals Repeated Fillings

- The same believers who were filled in Acts 2 were filled again in Acts 4 after facing threats from religious leaders (Acts 4:29–31).
- Fresh opposition required fresh boldness.
- Fresh battles required fresh empowerment.
- Fresh assignments required fresh anointing.
- Pentecost was glorious, but it was not the end of Spirit-empowered ministry. It was the beginning of a life of continual dependence on the Holy Spirit.
- We cannot carry today's assignment with yesterday's oil. If the apostles needed repeated empowerments to continue the kingdom ministry of Jesus, then so do we.
- Acts 4 reveals the need for repeated fillings of the Holy Spirit.

2. Pentecost Was a Kingdom Event.

a) Jesus Taught the Kingdom for Forty Days

- After His resurrection, Jesus spoke to His disciples about “the kingdom of God” for forty days (Acts 1:3).
- He likely explained plainly what He had taught about the kingdom throughout the Gospels and clarified what the prophets conveyed about the kingdom.
- The disciples understood the prophetic hope of Israel, which is why they asked, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6).
- Jesus did not correct their expectation of the kingdom; He corrected their timing.

b) The Kingdom Advances Through the Spirit

- The kingdom will one day be restored to Israel in fullness.
- But before that final restoration, the kingdom advances through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

c) Pentecost Connected to the Enthronement of Jesus

- Peter declared, “Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.”
- Peter said the Spirit was poured out because Jesus had been exalted to the right hand of God.
- Then he quoted Psalm 110:1: the Messiah seated at God’s right hand until His enemies are made a footstool (Acts 2:34–35).
- The Spirit was poured out because the King had taken His seat.

d) The Earthly Expression of Jesus's Heavenly Reign

- Psalm 110:2 says, "Rule in the midst of Your enemies."
- Jesus now rules from heaven through His Spirit-empowered body on earth.
- The church, joined to Christ the Head and empowered by the Holy Spirit, becomes the earthly expression of His heavenly reign.
- Pentecost was not merely about tongues, wind, and fire. It was about the enthroned King pouring out His Spirit so His people could carry His kingdom mission into the nations.

3. Pentecost Was the Mantle of Jesus Passed to His Disciples

a) Jesus Multiplies His Ministry

- When Jesus ascended, His ministry did not end. It multiplied.
- Just as Elijah ascended and left his mantle for Elisha, Jesus ascended and poured out His Spirit upon the church.
- Pentecost was the exalted King clothing His people with power from heaven so they could carry on His mission.
- The church was empowered to proclaim the kingdom, heal the sick, cast out demons, make disciples, and bear witness to His reign.

b) Elisha Carries on Elijah's Ministry

- Elijah's departure and Elisha's receiving of the mantle in 2 Kings 2 is one of the clearest pictures of spiritual succession, impartation, and inherited prophetic authority.
- Elijah traveled from Gilgal to Bethel, from Bethel to Jericho, and from Jericho to the Jordan—roughly 25–30 miles. This is like walking from our church in Kennesaw to Atlanta.
- At every stop, Elijah told Elisha to stay behind, but Elisha refused: "As the LORD lives, and as you yourself live, I will not leave you" (2 Kings 2:2, 4, 6).
- Elisha was not casually following Elijah. He was contending for the inheritance. He wanted the mantle.

c) The Double Portion

- When Elisha asked for a double portion of Elijah's spirit, he was not merely asking to be twice as powerful.
- The phrase comes from inheritance language: the firstborn son received a double portion of the father's inheritance.
- Elisha was asking to be recognized as Elijah's true prophetic heir—the one who would carry on his ministry with the fullness of his prophetic authority.
- Many have noted that Elijah has eight documented miracles, while Elisha has sixteen. The double portion was visible in the fruit of his ministry.

d) The Parallels At Pentecost

- Elijah was taken up into heaven, and Elisha received his spirit to continue his ministry.
- Jesus was taken up into heaven, and the disciples received the Holy Spirit to continue His ministry.
- Elijah left a mantle. Jesus sent His Spirit.
- Jesus told the disciples to wait until they were “clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). This is mantle language.
- Elisha was clothed, in a sense, with Elijah’s mantle.
- The disciples were clothed with something far greater: power from heaven.

e) Jesus’s Ministry Continues in Acts

- Luke says his first account—the book of Luke—was about “all that Jesus began to do and teach” (Acts 1:1).
- Luke’s gospel records what Jesus began to do and teach.
- Acts records what Jesus continued to do and teach through His Spirit-empowered people.
- At Pentecost, the ascended King “dropped the mantle” of His kingdom mission upon His people by pouring out the Holy Spirit.
- From that moment on, the ministry of Jesus continued through His Spirit-filled body in every nation.

4. Pentecost Was Equipping God’s Army in the Day of His Power.

a) The Day of Power

- Peter connected Pentecost to Psalm 110:1: the Messiah seated at God’s right hand.
- That means the next verses also help explain the Spirit’s outpouring at Pentecost.
- Psalm 110:3 says, “Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power.”
- This day of power began at Pentecost.

b) God’s Empowered Army

- The word “power” can also carry the idea of “army.”
- In context, Psalm 110:3 portrays the Messiah’s willing people as a holy army in the day of His kingly power.
- The exalted King now has a willing, holy, Spirit-filled army: the church.
- This army carries His authority, proclaims His gospel, demonstrates His power, and advances His kingdom among the nations.

c) God's Empowered Army in Acts

- When the day of God's power arrived, the church freely offered itself to the mission of Jesus.
- The church in Acts was a freewill offering in the day of God's power.
- The apostles preached Christ with boldness, even under threat.
- Thousands were saved, the sick were healed, demons were cast out, and signs and wonders confirmed the gospel.
- The church devoted itself to teaching, fellowship, communion, prayer, generosity, and sacrificial love.
- Stephen laid down his life as the first martyr.
- Philip carried the gospel to Samaria with miracles and deliverance.
- Peter opened the door of salvation to the Gentiles in Cornelius's house.
- Paul and Barnabas were sent by the Spirit to the nations, planting churches, confronting darkness, enduring persecution, and proclaiming Jesus as King.
- This was not a passive church waiting for heaven. This was the Messiah's willing people in the day of His power—a Spirit-filled army offering themselves freely for the testimony of Jesus.

The Spirit *Within* and the Spirit *Upon*

a) The Difference Between Within and Upon

- The Spirit *within* empowers you to *live* like Jesus.
- The Spirit *upon* empowers you to *minister* like Jesus.
- Both are necessary. Both are vital. But they are not the same.

b) The Spirit Within

- When Jesus breathed on the disciples and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit," He was giving them new creation life (John 20:22).
- This is regeneration. This is new birth. This is the Spirit within.
- You don't need more of the Holy Spirit to live like Jesus.
- The Spirit within gives you everything you need for life and godliness.
- Christ lives in you. Your spirit has been joined to the Holy Spirit. You have become a partaker of the divine nature.
- By the Spirit within, you can commune with God, abide in Christ, walk in holiness, bear the fruit of the Spirit, and overcome sin by the life of Christ in you.

c) The Spirit Upon

- The Spirit upon gives empowerment for mission.
- Throughout Scripture, the Spirit came upon people for divine assignments.
 - The Spirit rested *upon* Moses and the seventy elders (Num. 11:25).
 - The Spirit of the Lord came *upon* Gideon (Judg. 6:34).
 - The Spirit came mightily *upon* David (1 Sam. 16:13).
 - The Spirit rested *upon* the Messianic King (Isa. 11:2; 61:1).
 - The Spirit descended *upon* Jesus at His baptism (Luke 3:22; John 1:32).
 - The Spirit came *upon* the disciples at Pentecost, *clothing* them with power from on high (Acts 1:8; Luke 24:49).
- In each case, the Spirit resting upon someone was connected to divine empowerment for mission.

d) Jesus Is the Pattern

- Jesus is the incarnate Son of God—eternal, uncreated, and fully divine (John 1:1–3; Col. 1:16–17).
- When Paul says Jesus “emptied Himself” (Phil. 2:7), he does not mean Jesus stopped being God. Jesus never laid aside His deity.
- Jesus emptied Himself not by subtracting deity, but by adding humanity.
- He laid aside the independent exercise of His divine privileges and chose to live in complete dependence upon the Father and the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus did not receive the Spirit because He lacked divinity. As the eternal Son of God, He has always been—and will always be—fully God.
- He received the Spirit because, as the true Man and Messiah, He modeled Spirit-dependent ministry for His followers, including you and me.
- If Jesus, in His humanity, chose to minister in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, how much more must we?
- We need the Spirit within to live like Jesus. We need the Spirit upon to minister like Jesus.

Joel’s Prophecy and the Age of the Spirit

a) Pentecost Fulfilled Joel’s Prophecy

- After the Spirit was poured out, Peter said, “This is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel” (Acts 2:16).
- The KJV states it powerfully: “This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.”
- Peter was not saying Pentecost merely resembled Joel’s prophecy. He was declaring that what Joel saw had now broken into history.

b) The Age of the Spirit

- Pentecost inaugurated the age of the Spirit.
- Joel foresaw the Spirit poured out upon God's people: sons and daughters prophesying, young men seeing visions, and old men dreaming dreams (Joel 2:28–31).
- This arrived through the exalted Christ pouring out the promised Spirit (Acts 2:33).
- Pentecost was the inauguration of the New Covenant age and the beginning of the age of the Spirit.

c) Joel's Fulfillment Continues

- Joel's prophecy was fulfilled at Pentecost, but its impact continues until the return of Christ.
- From Pentecost until Christ returns, the Spirit empowers the church to bear witness to Jesus and advance His kingdom.
- There are seasons of unusual outpouring, awakening, revival, prophetic activity, bold witness, signs and wonders, and renewed passion for Jesus.
- There are also seasons where the Spirit works inwardly to conform the church more fully into Christ's image, even when the church seems dry or weak.

d) The Prophetic Church

- The whole church is called to be Spirit-empowered and prophetic.
- Joel's language includes sons and daughters, young and old, male and female servants.
- This means the Spirit is not reserved for a spiritual elite—every believer is meant to function prophetically.
- The church is meant to be a Spirit-filled people who hear God, bear witness to Jesus, and minister under the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- Pentecost was the beginning, not the end.

The Circuit Breaker Has Been Turned On

a) Pentecost Turned the Breaker On

- The day of God's power was inaugurated at Pentecost.
- From Pentecost until Christ returns, the church experiences different measures of the Spirit's manifest power.
- Before Acts 2, the promised power had not yet been released to the church.
- At Pentecost, God turned the breaker on. The age of the Spirit began. The power of God became available to the church for witness, ministry, and kingdom advance.

b) Varying Degrees of Intensity

- The flow of power has not always remained at the same intensity.
- Throughout history, there have been seasons of extraordinary outpouring: revival, awakening, healing, boldness, miracles, and rapid kingdom advance.
- There have also been seasons when the church has seemed dry, weak, distracted, and powerless.
- God sovereignly governs the flow. We cannot manufacture His power, force His hand, control the breaker, or determine the voltage.

c) Our Responsibility

- Our responsibility is to believe the breaker has already been turned on.
- We plug into the outlet of God's power and position ourselves to receive.
- We ask, seek, and knock until we experience the Holy Spirit in greater measure (Luke 11:9–13).
- We pray for fresh filling, wait on the Lord, cultivate sensitivity to the Spirit, step out in faith, and stay available for His power to flow through us.

d) Hunger Is Key

- When the power seems low, our response should be hunger.
- Pride assumes we can minister in our own strength.
- Independence disconnects us from the source.
- Indifference demonstrates that we don't really care if we have power or not.
- Unbelief leaves the plug lying on the floor.
- Hunger keeps reaching for the outlet, crying: "Lord, fill us again. Increase Your power in us. Grant us boldness. Stretch out Your hand to heal. Let Your kingdom come."

e) Fresh Empowerments

- Acts 4 gives us the pattern of fresh empowerments based on the need at the moment.
- The disciples did not assume Pentecost was enough for every future challenge.
- When fresh opposition came, they sought fresh empowerment.
- They prayed, and God filled them again.
- Believe the power has been turned on. Stay plugged in. Keep asking for greater flow. Minister in humble dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion and Application

a) It's Not Theoretical

- The present kingdom is not theory; it is Spirit-empowered reality.
- Fresh empowerments of the Holy Spirit are still available today.
- The kingdom has come in Christ, is present through the Spirit, and will come in fullness when Jesus returns.
- Until then, the church is called to embody, proclaim, and demonstrate the reign of God in the power of the Holy Spirit.

b) An Army of Power

- The King has taken His seat.
- The Spirit has been poured out.
- The day of power has arrived.
- The breaker has been turned on.
- Now the church must offer itself freely in the day of His power.
- We cannot fulfill the mission of Jesus in human strength.
- We must go—but we must go clothed with power.
- We must preach—but we must preach as witnesses of the risen King.
- We must minister—but we must minister in humble dependence on the Holy Spirit.
- Pentecost is not optional. It is God's blueprint for the present kingdom.