

## Mission Possible

### "Pardon the Interruption"

Acts 10:1-48 NIV

---

The Jamestown Charter of 1606 says, *"We do hereby Dedicate this Land, and ourselves, to reach the People within these shores with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to raise up Godly generations after us, and with these generations take the Kingdom of God to all the earth. May this Covenant of Dedication remain to all generations, as long as this earth remains, and may this Land, along with England, be Evangelist to the World."*

This is why they came, and this is what we need to get *back* to. This is our original document of why God allowed this nation to be birthed. The whole point of coming here was to get away from tyranny and to evangelize the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and that's why this nation is exceptional - and our original purpose and mission is still in effect. If we don't know our history, we're doomed to repeat it - but now we're watching our country making a pivot and the Church of Jesus Christ coming alive right here in front of our eyes.

America doesn't have a *political* problem, it has a *spiritual* problem, but there's good news! CBN recently reported that *"a supernatural Christian revival is stirring up once again on American college campuses through 'Unite US' - an evangelistic movement marked by salvations, water baptisms, and worship. Last night at the University of Kentucky, more than two thousand students responded to the gospel message of Jesus Christ and many took part in spontaneous baptisms."*

The Wall Street Journal reported that Bible sales are up twenty-two percent in America among young men. God is *moving* right now. We need to open our eyes and be informed, not just about culture and politics, but about the moving of God right now in our time and in our midst. *Why?* - so we can get on board and get our faith ignited as we engage our culture for the Kingdom. We can make America *godly* again as we hunger for the Word of God, the presence of God - for revival, and to see our nation turn back to God.

Psalms 33:12 NIV

*"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD."*

God doesn't check with us first when he wants to interrupt and disrupt our life, and he didn't for Paul and Peter in the Book of Acts, which is all about God showing up in amazing, unusual, and supernatural ways. God's timing is *perfect*. The right thing at the wrong time is still the wrong thing, but the right thing at the *right* time is a God thing! The greater the set-back, the greater the *come-back*. Paul was set back and knocked off his horse, but after Ananias laid his hands on him and prayed, he went on mission for God.

Acts 9:31 NIV

*"Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers."*

### **Pardon the Interruption: The Holy Spirit Empowers the Gentiles**

Acts 10:1-3 NIV - Cornelius' vision

*"At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, 'Cornelius!'"*

At that time, Caesarea was the center point of everything. Cornelius was a God-fearing Gentile who commanded a regiment of a hundred Roman soldiers. He loved God - maybe from a distance because he wasn't a Jew and didn't follow the letter of the Law - but he was prayerful and generous and that got God's attention.

Acts 10:9-15 NIV - Peter's vision

*"About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. Then a voice told him, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.' 'Surely not, Lord!' Peter replied. 'I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.' The voice spoke to him a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.'"*

What Peter saw in the vision violated everything he had been taught since before he could speak. His whole life was getting flipped upside-down. God interrupted everything about his heritage, history, and identity. We need to allow God to do the same for us. We need to understand that he wants to reach *Muslims* for Jesus - they are souls for whom Christ died. God wants to bring *everyone* into the Kingdom and make room for them all.

Acts 9:24-27,34,35 NIV - Peter at Cornelius's house

*"The following day he arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and had called together his relatives and close friends. As Peter entered the house, Cornelius met him and fell at his feet in reverence. But Peter made him get up. 'Stand up,' he said, 'I am only a man myself.' While talking with him, Peter went inside and found a large gathering of people. 34] Then Peter began to speak: 'I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right.' "*

God wants all to be saved - *even Iran and Iraq*, and we need to pray *for* them instead of *against* them - to pray for their salvation. To change a human problem, God must first change a human *heart*. That will solve a lot of what's going on right now.

### **God's Pentecost for the Gentiles**

Acts 9:36,43,44 NIV - The Holy Spirit Interrupts Peter

*" 'You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. 43] All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.' While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message."*

The Holy Spirit didn't wait for Peter to finish his sermon, and every person there received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit - and it's for us as well.

Acts 9:45,46 NIV

*"The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God..."*

In the Book of Acts, there are four instances where the Holy Spirit was poured out, and *none* of them are exactly the same. God knows us better than we know ourselves, and, in his genius, he knew that if it was all a formula, that it would then not be relational with him. God wants a *relationship* with us, and he might do things in a different order, way, or mood when he shows up at our place - *but it's still him*, and we don't have to be *afraid*.

Acts 10:47,48 NIV

*"Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days."*

We should quit thinking that it has to happen a certain way. What if, when we're driving down I-10 and hit construction, we say to the Lord, *"Lord, right now I need a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit. I'm about to go somewhere I don't want to go."* What if the baptism of the Holy Spirit is practical? - when we go to a meeting and we have decisions to make, or when we're in our vehicle - to pause and say, *"Holy Spirit, I need wisdom. Would You baptize me afresh with wisdom, understanding, and strategic thinking?"*

Can we imagine the baptism of the Holy Spirit being practical for us? We've made it so *"churchy"* - only for a tent revival or some big conference. But, what if it was for *every day*? What if the Bible is practical for real problems and real people in real life? The good news today is that it is. We all need wisdom every day. We need the Holy Spirit every day. Our prayer should then be, *"Lord, baptize us afresh today."*

It's up to God to move us in whatever direction he wants, but it's up to us to come and *yield to him*. Peter introduced the Holy Spirit - that *had* been only for the Jews - and now is for everybody today. Let's not let somebody else's weirdness keep us from what we need. Acts 1:8 tells us that the Holy Spirit will come upon us and *"you shall be My witnesses"* - not *"you shall be the weirdest dude in the room!"*

We need the Holy Spirit to help us have the wisdom to navigate a conversation about the Kingdom of God, so why wouldn't we ask for him? Why do we wait - why are we *afraid*, and what are we afraid of? Is there anything to fear in God? - *not at all!* We should not resist what we need for the answers we seek for life - for our families, jobs, or for whatever's going on in the world.

We need the Holy Spirit and the fruit that he brings - *“love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control”* (Galatians 5:22,23). That is what the Holy Spirit brings - fruit *in* our life and *through* our life. But he also has *gifts* for us that manifest as they are needed and as he wills. We should not be afraid of the Holy Spirit! That would be the devil's greatest victory - to somehow teach us, mark us, or even to traumatize us, causing us to resist the Holy Spirit in our life.

## **Prayer**

*Father, in Jesus' name, we come in close to You right now. Your Word says that we can have a fresh outpouring and be continually filled with the Holy Spirit. So, we come before You to be filled right now, and, by faith, we receive that. We activate our faith by believing it's true that You are indeed filling us up right now. Father, also, on the outside, we want to be immersed into the Holy Spirit because we want to be witnesses for You as we go out. We want to be empowered to share the Good News with others.*

*So, Lord, right now, would You baptize us anew and afresh in Your Holy Spirit, and, by faith, we receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit - filled up inside - covered over on the outside with Your presence - the presence, the person, the work, and the ministry and power of the Holy Spirit. We welcome You right now. We receive that. Thank You, Jesus, for covering us and for filling us. As we go out from here, we're asking for open doors - clear, smooth, and straight paths for each one of us as we go into our respective spheres of influence - and let us bear much fruit in the Holy Spirit. In Jesus' name. Amen*