

The Holy Spirit Transforms Us into Evangelists and Missionaries

Message 04 of the series: "Marvels of Acts"

1. Jesus told His disciples to go tell people the Good News and make disciples of people everywhere.

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations..." Matthew 28:19 (NLT)

"...Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone." Mark 16:15 (NLT)

"...it was written long ago that the Messiah would suffer and die and rise from the dead on the third day. It was also written that this message would be proclaimed in the authority of his name to all the nations, beginning in Jerusalem: 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.'" Luke 24:46-47 (NLT)

"...As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." John 20:21 (NLT)

Life Application: The Holy Spirit gives us the desire and the power to tell people about Jesus and make disciples wherever we go.

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8 (NLT)

"For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him."

Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

2. The Holy Spirit gave Philip the desire and the power to tell people about Jesus and make disciples as he was running from persecution.

"A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem; and all the believers except the apostles were scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria... Saul was going everywhere to destroy the church. He went from house to house, dragging out both men and women to throw them into prison. But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went. Philip, for example, went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah. Crowds listened intently to Philip because they were eager to hear his message and see the miraculous signs he did. Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims. And many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was great joy in that city." Acts 8:1b-8 (NLT)

Note: "Go and make disciples" could also be translated, "As you're going, make disciples."

"But thank God! ...Now he uses us to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere, like a sweet perfume. Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God." 2 Corinthians 2:14-15a (NLT)

Note: God did extraordinary things through an ordinary man like Philip because he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

"We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program. And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility." Acts 6:2b-3 (NLT)

Life Application: We need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

"Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit..." Ephesians 5:15b-18 (NLT)

"Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives."

Galatians 5:25 (NLT)

3. Philip was willing and available for the Holy Spirit to send him anywhere.

"As for Philip, an angel of the Lord said to him, 'Go south down the desert road that runs from Jerusalem to Gaza.' So he started out, and he met the treasurer of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under... the queen of Ethiopia. The eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship, and he was now returning. Seated in his carriage, he was reading aloud from the book of the prophet Isaiah. The Holy Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over and walk along beside the carriage.' Philip ran over and heard the man reading from the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' The man replied, 'How can I, unless someone instructs me?' And he urged Philip to come up into the carriage and sit with him. The passage of Scripture he had been reading was this: 'He was led like a sheep to the slaughter. And as a lamb is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth. He was humiliated and received no justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.' The eunuch asked Philip, 'Tell me, was the prophet talking about himself or someone else?' So,

beginning with this same Scripture, Philip told him the Good News about Jesus. As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, 'Look! There's some water! Why can't I be baptized?' He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away. The eunuch never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing. Meanwhile, Philip found himself farther north at the town of Azotus. He preached the Good News there and in every town along the way until he came to Caesarea." Acts 8:26-39 (NLT) (see Isaiah 53:7-8)

Note: God wants us all to live useful, abundant, fruitful lives like Philip.

"Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing... You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name." John 15:5,16 (NLT)

Life Application: If we are willing and available, the Holy Spirit will guide us and work through us.

"Your own ears will hear him. Right behind you a voice will say, 'This is the way you should go,' whether to the right or to the left." Isaiah 30:21 (NLT)

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth." John 16:13a (NLT)

"The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced. And the seed that fell on good soil represents those who hear and accept God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!" Mark 4:18-20 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions

1. Read Isaiah 30:21 & Philippians 2:13. Describe a time in your life when you became aware that the Holy Spirit was leading you to do something. How did this make you feel?
2. Discuss the following words of Jesus from the first 5 books of the New Testament:
 - Matthew 28:19-20
 - Mark 16:15
 - Luke 24:46-47
 - John 20:21
 - Acts 1:8

If global evangelism and discipleship are this important to Jesus, why aren't they more important to us?

3. Read Acts 6:1-6 & Acts 8:1-8, 26-39. Why do you think God worked through Philip in such powerful ways? Would you be willing for God to use you like He used Philip? What might be holding Christians back from being used by the Holy Spirit? (see John 15:16)
4. In 2 Corinthians 2:14-16 Paul said our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. If others had to name the scent your life gives off, would it be closer to "Eau de Anxiety" or "Viva la Jesus"?
5. Discuss the following quotations:

"Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me." Jesus in John 15:4 (NLT)

"God will never direct us to be prideful, arrogant and unforgiving, immoral or slothful or full of fear. We step into these things because we are insensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit within us." Charles Stanley

"The early Celtic Christians called the Holy Spirit 'the wild goose.' And the reason why is they knew that you cannot tame him." John Eldredge

"I am a little pencil in God's hands. He does the thinking. He does the writing. He does everything and sometimes it is really hard because it is a broken pencil, and He has to sharpen it a little more." Mother Teresa
6. Spend some time as a group praying for God to give us the desire, courage, boldness, confidence, etc. we need to share the Good News with people all around us. Pray this for your Connect Group, our church, and Christians around the world. Pray also that the Holy Spirit will lead us to people who need Christ and open opportunities for us to make disciples.