

LifeSharing Lesson 1 The Holy Spirit's Power Acts 1:1-11

1. What does it feel like to you to have power in your hands?

Acts 1 Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven

¹ In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach ² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. ³ After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. ⁴ On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with ^[a] water, but in a few days you will be baptized with ^[b] the Holy Spirit."

⁶ So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. ¹⁰ They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

2. Do you think it was hard for Jesus to convince people he had been dead during the 40 days after his resurrection that he was giving convincing proof that he was alive?

3. Why do you think Jesus told the disciples to wait on the Holy Spirit in verse 4?

4. When you hear the phrase baptized with the Holy Spirit, what comes to your mind?

5. What insight do we gain from verse 7 as to knowing when the world will end, or when Jesus will come back?

6. What kind of power do you think Jesus is referring to in verse 8 when he says you will receive power when the Holy Spirit come on you?

7. Where are Christians lacking the most power today from your view point?

8. If you were granted power in one area of your life, what would you like for it to be?

9. What do you think is the connection between receiving power, and being Jesus' witness throughout the earth?

Acts 2 The Holy Spirit Comes at Pentecost

¹ When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ² Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴ All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues^[a] as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 2:44-47 Today's New International Version (TNIV)

⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

10. Which power was more significant the weeks following Pentecost. The power to speak in tongues in Acts 2: 1-4 or the power to sell your possessions in acts of love in Acts 2:44-47? Why do you think so.

Which of the two powers led to the growth of the church?

11. Does a person have to speak in tongues as a proof of the sign of the Holy Spirit working in his or her life?

12. What then is the purpose of speaking in tongues in a believer 's life?

13. What do you think God wants most out of you by equipping you with power from the Holy Spirit?

Lifesharing Lesson 2 What Makes A Great Father Luke 15:11-32

1. What three things do you think are important in being a great father?
2. How has fatherhood been devalued in our society?
3. Why do you think Jesus referred to God as My Father, more than any other term.

Luke 15:11-32

Today's New International Version (TNIV) The Parable of the Lost Son

¹¹ Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

¹³ "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. ¹⁴ After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ "When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. ²⁴ For this son of

mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

²⁵ “Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. ²⁷ ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’

²⁸ “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’ ³¹ “‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. ³² But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

4. Why do you think the father in the parable gave his younger son the money and let him go away with it?

5. Why does God allow us to go off and do foolish things?

6. What did the younger son remember about the father he had left behind when things got rough for him?

7. Why do you think the father didn't go check up on his son?

8. What does this father do when his son returns home that we all seek after for ourselves?

9. What does God do for us when we choose to turn away from our sin?

10. What did the older brother not understand about his father?

11. What are some example of times we become jealous of what God has done for others, but God has not done for us?

12. How do we know the father loved his older son?

13. How much of a role does overlooking an insult play in the role of being a good father?

14. What do we learn about God from the life of the father in this passage?

Life-Sharing Pioneers Lesson 3 It's Graduation & Promotion Time **Acts 13:1-3**

1. Which graduation or promotion that you experienced was the most difficult or most enjoyable for you?

2. What do we lose at each graduation or promotion that we experience either in school or on the job?

3. How can we tell when we are being promoted or are experiencing a graduation in our spiritual lives?

Acts 13

¹ Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

4. How do you think the Holy Spirit spoke in verse 2?

5. If God had said to set Paul and Barnabus apart, why do you think they fasted and prayed before sending them off?

6. If the Holy Spirit spoke in our church and said that you and another person was to be set aside to do a special work for God, what vision would you have of what God was going to do through the two of you?

7. What can go right for you when you are promoted or graduate?

8. What can go wrong for you when you are promoted or graduate?

9. Paul and Barnabas will face opposition to their preaching, they will be kicked out a city, they will become the target of assassins, they will be abused, Paul will be stoned, and one of their co-workers will abandon them. What can we learn from this when God lifts us up to another level through promotion or graduation.

Acts 15:36-41 Today's New International Version (TNIV) Disagreement Between Paul and Barnabas

³⁶ Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." ³⁷ Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, ³⁸ but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. ³⁹ They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, ⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. ⁴¹ He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

10. Paul and Barnabas become very close friends and are true brothers in Christ who want to do the will of God. Yet their promotion of working together is going to bring

them into conflict with each other. John Mark had abandoned them when things got really tough. Paul didn't think it wise to take him on the next missionary journey. Barnabus wanted to give John Mark another chance. They had a very sharp disagreement over this and split up with Barnabus taking Mark with him and Paul taking Silas with him. Do you think God calls ministries to separate and break up, and if so why would God do it?

11. When a person or family leaves a church, how can we tell if it was a promotion or not?

12. When is it time for a person to leave a church? How should they leave?

2 Timothy 4:11 Today's New International Version (TNIV)

¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.

13. Paul and John Mark were eventually reconciled to each other. Why do you think that was possible?

14. How should a church respond to members who left and then later decide to return?