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**** Be Thou My Vision****

“Be Thou my VISION, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art

Be thou my wisdom and Thou my true word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father, I, Thy true son

Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one” (REPEAT)

SLIDE: Jesus said: "The Spirit is the One who gives life.
The flesh doesn't help at all." John 6: 63

**We are progressively being led by the Holy Spirit to have
Christ as the CENTER of our lives. Be THOU MY VISION – O
LORD OF MY HEART!**

Bill's message last Sunday pointed out the dramatic difference
between living in the Eternal and living in the Temporal, living
ABOVE-THE-LINE or BELOW it. The Holy Spirit allows us to live
ABOVE-THE-LINE.

As Jesus said, the Holy Spirit ALONE produces life, and
our own effort (our flesh) does **NOT** produce anything lasting
or of **ETERNAL VALUE**. It is the SPIRIT, flowing with the life of
the HOLY SPIRIT, that has VALUE.

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- ✚ Now, there are a lot of churches today that utilize what I would classify as *BELOW-THE-LINE* efforts in evangelism.

Here's an example:

SLIDE: KNIFE-THROWING IN CHURCH. Read advertisement.

"Come see the Wild Mountain Man throw knives at Pastor Cummings as he presents an exciting gospel message."

- I'm not saying that God can't use such a show, but it seems somewhat odd. But... *Maybe some people will come to see the pastor get knifed...!*

This is good for a laugh, but it is only an extreme example of what normally happens in a church that is **TRYING TO ACHIEVE THRU NATURAL MEANS THAT WHICH ONLY THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN ACCOMPLISH.**

But, it's just human nature to try to do it on our own.

Women are much better at **admitting their needs** – men are more stubborn and prideful. Take for example – men trying to find a new restaurant -- We would rather drive in circles for hours than **ASK FOR DIRECTIONS** and admit our shortcoming at navigation.

Today, we're in *Numbers Chapter 17*. We're going to look at an event that was not a gimmick like knife-throwing...

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Moses WILL ASK FOR DIRECTIONS and the result was the miracle when Aaron's staff budded and produced fruit.

SLIDE: AARON'S STAFF BUDDED

Chapter 17 - The LORD spoke to Moses: ² "Speak to the Israelites, and receive from them a staff from each tribe, one from every tribal leader, twelve staffs; you must write each man's name on his staff. ³ You must write Aaron's name on the staff of Levi; for one staff is for the head of every tribe. ⁴ You must place them in the tent of meeting before the ark of the covenant where I meet with you. ⁵ And the staff of the man whom I choose will blossom; so I will rid myself of the complaints of the Israelites, which they murmur against you."

⁶ So Moses spoke to the Israelites, and each of their leaders gave him a staff, one for each leader, according to their tribes—twelve staffs; the staff of Aaron was among their staffs. ⁷ Then Moses placed the staffs before the LORD in the tent of the testimony.

⁸ On the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony—and the staff of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted, and brought forth buds, and produced blossoms, and yielded almonds! ⁹ So Moses brought out all the staffs from before the LORD to all the Israelites. They looked at them, and each man took his staff.

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¹⁰ The LORD said to Moses, "Bring Aaron's staff back before the testimony to be preserved for a sign to the rebels, so that you may bring their murmurings to an end before me, that they will not die." ¹¹ So Moses did as the LORD commanded him—this is what he did.

The Israelites said to Moses, "We are bound to die! We perish, we all perish! Anyone who even comes close to the tabernacle of the LORD will die! Are we all to die?"

"We're all going to die!" – Somewhat of an *odd* reaction to a miracle! – But, unexpected reactions are *not uncommon* with these people... Remember the incident in Chapter 16 when Korah & 250 men wanted to offer incense?

- The question was: who can be a priest? Did God really restrict it to Aaron and his family, or was this just blatant nepotism on Moses' part? Korah argued '*All the congregation is holy*' (which was true); then – using BELOW-THE-LINE logic – Korah reasoned with that anyone in good standing had the necessary credentials to offer incense.
- Moses said: 'Ok, let's test that proposition: offer incense tomorrow morning at the Tabernacle and let God decide who is holy *enough*.' Well, as we know, God voted "No" on their proposition. These men, important and highly respected in the community as

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they were, didn't have the **required LEVEL of Holiness** to be THAT close to God, and so they died.

Well, after the death of these 250 men, you might expect some repentance, but not with this crowd...

SLIDE: Numbers 16 verse 41 : "But on the next day, all the congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying, "You are the ones who have caused the death of the LORD's people."

So – The people got over their fear very quickly, and the very next morning – **they blaming Moses & Aaron of being responsible** for the fact that God killed the 250. "*Moses & Aaron – it's your fault!*"

How did they jump to that conclusion? Well, it depends on whether your mind is set on the Spirit or on the Flesh – ABOVE-THE-LINE vs BELOW-THE-LINE. We need to remember that these people still had traces of the then-common worldview of how gods act. Having God on your side meant that He was an ally and would come to your defense. God was thought to act **sort of like the allies in WWII** –

- Example: Britain itself wasn't initially attacked by Germany but declared war on Germany when Germany invaded Poland in 1939. Why? Because Poland was an ally of Britain.

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Allies come to the defense of allies, *even if they might disagree on some of issues*. So, the people saw God as coming to the aid of Moses and Aaron because they asked Him as an ally to help, not necessarily because He agreed with their viewpoints.

So, the people STILL had questions about Aaron's exclusive role to the priesthood as well as *some lingering doubt about Moses' leadership*.

SLIDE: WHO HAS AUTHORITY?

God says – Let's solve this issue once and for all – who has the authority to be priests? We can't keep having judgment after judgment every time someone gets mad at authority. So, each of the 12 tribal princes is to present his staff to Moses, with the tribe's name engraved upon it; then Aaron presents his staff representing the tribe of Levi. A total of 13 staffs – 13 tribes – are represented. The Lord says He will use these staffs to demonstrate *once and for all* just who His anointed servants are. God says that the staff that blooms reveals the chosen line for the priesthood.

- ✚ The staffs are placed inside the Holy of Holies, **before the Ark of the Covenant** that holds those stone tablets of the 10 Commandments -- **Before the radiant presence of**

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God. So, the 13 tribes are presenting themselves to God and asking Him to make the decision.

Now – all these staffs were pieces of dead wood! No question about that. Those staffs were probably cut back in Egypt, and were 40, 50 or maybe even a hundred years old. Now, God said – I'll show you the man who ministers his authority *with life*.

The staffs were left overnight before the ark, and the following morning Moses entered the Sanctuary and found that Aaron's staff had budded. It had not only budded, but it produced blossoms and even fully-formed almonds.

SLIDE: A SIGN

"... the Lord said to Moses, 'Put back the rod of Aaron before the testimony to be kept as *a sign against the rebels*, that you may put an end to their grumbings against Me, so that they will not die.'" Numbers 17:10

God says that the grumbings against His chosen priesthood are – in reality – grumbings against Him.

- This staff will become important the next time because Moses uses this very staff to strike a rock to get water.

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Notice the people's reaction to the miracle of Aaron's staff: verse 12: "The Israelites said to Moses, "We are perishing; we are lost, all of us are lost! Everyone who approaches the tabernacle of the LORD will die. Are we all to perish?"

✚ The miracle struck fear in their hearts. **WHY?**

SLIDE: Numbers 18

I believe that the key to that question is Chapter 18; I'm not going to read Chapter 18 right now, just mention its contents. Chapter 18 contains a description of the duties of the priests & Levites in the Tabernacle.

Now, much of the info was already presented to the people earlier in Numbers and Leviticus...

- AND, because of this, some scholars say that the Chapter 18 is out of place here and must have been inserted incorrectly by some scribe. However, I disagree – it makes perfect sense to be here.

The people's terrified reaction was because the message finally sunk in – ONLY authorized people chosen by God can approach Him. And, that awareness struck fear in their hearts.

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They reasoned: "How then can we ever survive when something that **seems so natural to us** – the belief that everyone should be able to approach God on his/her own merit? How can we possibly survive when our natural inclination is so hated by God? We all **inevitably** will **offend God** somehow and **be killed!**"

I believe that God has Moses include Chapter 18 right here to assure the people that they won't die **IF they follow His instructions**. The priests & Levites are a **PROTECTION**, and this Chapter was therefore an encouragement! Follow God's instructions and you have life!

CONCEPT OF PATTERNS (Western vs Eastern questions)

"WHY?" (the western mindset that needs an acceptable explanation) VS. **"WHAT'S THE PATTERN?"** (eastern mindset seeks to first identify patterns that may be reoccurring) Jesus: you can interpret weather and nature signs.

The presumption of the Israelites was that their own merits were sufficient to approach God. This is a very human belief based on pride, the very first sin.

- How many people **TODAY** believe they're basically "good" and *therefore do not need Christ's sacrifice?*

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'God is a good God', they reason, 'and therefore if my good deeds will outweigh the bad ones, God will judge me "*acceptable*". This is a salvation based on our own merits.

-- Utter Madness! --

God – Who does *NOT* change His mind¹– will always protect His Holiness. **He has always voted 'No' on such presumption.**

- Whether or not you agree with God's logic is **irrelevant!**
- You're *foolish* if you expect that the Divine PATTERN will change *just for you*.
- And I don't point fingers at anyone for this type of thinking – I had this opinion! And, except for the invasion of the Holy Spirit on my heart, I would be in the *very same self-delusion* like them! And so would all of you.
 - **Christ ALONE is our GUARANTEE, our PROTECTION.**
 - **Salvation is by GRACE ALONE thru Christ.**

OK – Moses takes all the staffs outside the Tent, asked each tribal leader to identify his own staff, and in the process

¹ Numbers 23:19

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verifies that it was Aaron's staff that had BUDDED & PRODUCED FRUIT.

✚ **GAME OVER.** God said, 'I put My authority on THAT man.'

SLIDE: AUTHORITY VS AUTHORITY-WITH-LIFE

✚ **You see – there is authority, and then there is authority with life!**

Many people today are trying to exercise authority beyond what God has said he should do. At some level, they may have authority like those tribal leaders had – but when you try to go beyond God's instruction, you will see your authority just hit the floor as soon as you opens his mouth. Have you met people like that?

- (Bishop giving message @ Henry Tansey's funeral – gift of knowledge???)

Standing in front of the congregation, waving his staff, saying *'I have authority' – 'you got to listen to me and do what I tell you, I've got authority.'*

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- I'm sorry, Bishop or Pastor or elder, but your authority is not budding almonds. There's no life there. Your staff is dead. Stay away until you have that life given from God.
- Korah – As a Levite, you were designated to carry a part of the tabernacle; don't try to walk uninvited into the Holy Place. You got to have that LIFE bestowed upon you by God.

There's **many a man** --in many a pulpit -- that has **no right** to be there because **he doesn't have the Holy Spirit's LIFE**. It's one thing to have a ruler's staff, **it's quite another** to have life pouring from it.

- God's said '*That's the person – Aaron – there will be LIFE in his ministry*'

When you're searching for a church, don't go for the church led by someone who ONLY has a staff of authority, his PhDs, -- Go for the church where you're **pointed exclusively to Christ** and you see supernatural LIFE flowing and producing fruit in individual lives. GO FOR THE CHURCH WHERE JESUS IS PLAINLY THE CENTER !

And sometimes, it is easy to mistake ENTHUSIASM or SINCERITY for LIFE. There are Churches whose services have a

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lot of enthusiasm and lively music and a sincere pastor and a fancy building –

- The Spirit *may* be there, but in a lot of cases, the people shouting halleluiah and dancing in the aisles don't know *why* they're doing it, but they just got caught up in the thrill and excitement of the moment – either that or they think that's what they're supposed to do to meet the pastor's watchful eye for approval.

No – keep your spiritual eyes and ears open to whether Jesus is **boldly preached as the CENTER of your life**, or is Jesus just an *afterthought* in the pastor's EAR-TICKLING sermons – *sincere as he may be* – he's *trying the best he can on his own abilities* to generate the Life that can ONLY COME FROM 'ABOVE'.

✚ True LIFE comes ONLY through Jesus by the Holy Spirit.
AMEN!

Christian Community Church

Donna, Janell and I belong to CCC – we signed the membership pledge **after paying Bob Wasson the \$15 he said was necessary** (there is no such pledge). For me personally, as long as Christ and the Cross are TRUTHFULLY PRESENTED, I can *attend* just about any Christian church – good music or bad, sermons lively or dull. But, becoming *part of* a church is something else.

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Why I'm attracted to THIS church/fellowship is what I see Christ ACTIVE through the Holy Spirit in our midst. **I believe what Ezekiel prophesized:**

SLIDE: EZEKIEL 36:25-27: HEART OF STONE VERSUS HEART OF FLESH;

I will sprinkle you with pure water and you will be clean from all your impurities. I will purify you from all your idols. ²⁶ I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put my Spirit within you; **I will take the initiative...**

God said, I will take the initiative!!! I love that! He initiates the action. That's what I see here at Christian Community Church! God is transforming hearts here **in spite of me** – He is taking the Initiative because He is sovereign! Changing hearts of stone into hearts of flesh...

- **You can't live with a stone heart. A heart of stone = you're not alive!...**

I personally have had a 4-way heart bypass (good for audience sympathy) – this is not as drastic as complete heart transplant but still significant. During recovery, I had drain tubes in body to let impurities out of my body.

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- **By God's grace, I've had a SPIRITUAL heart exchange, but drain tubes still sticking out of me because they're still needed. But, I'm getting better!**

Look at the apostles – they were a group of dummies, but they took chances. But all the intelligent people in the world at that time wouldn't take chances. That is the same problem we have today . The world is looking for intellectuals and God is looking for dummies. **That's why I'm here.**

SLIDE: HOLY SPIRIT WILL GLORIFY CHRIST

The chief office of the Holy Spirit IS to Glorify Jesus!

John 16:13–15 "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. HE WILL GLORIFY ME, because he will take what is mine and tell it to you. All that the Father has is mine. For this reason I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you."

- **Aaron's staff budding revealed the family line of the legitimate High Priest at that time .**
- **Today, The ONLY High Priest is Christ;**

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- **A Pastor, even if he is full of the Holy Spirit, isn't Christ.** In OT, the High Priest represented you before God; **in NT, the only High Priest is Christ, and the pastor merely points you toward Him.**

Please keep this truth in your mind! Never forget it; **That which DOES NOT GLORIFY Christ is NOT of the Holy Spirit**, and that which IS of the Holy Spirit ALWAYS glorifies Christ.

SLIDE: WHEAT AND TARES

Sometimes churches use gimmicks and popular methodologies to attract people. (ex. knife throwing slide at the beginning)

I once ran into an occultic gimmick here in Albany when I was a still Catholic... it is called **SILVA MIND CONTROL**

- Catholic women at work
- Technique relies on Spiritual Councilors – to New Agers, they are sometimes referred to as "spirit guides"; to Catholics, promoted as "Guardian Angels"; to Freudians, as "alter-egos".

Silva Mind Control is self-deception at best, talking with demons at worse. It was **being run by a Nun** connected with Social services, supposedly to help people to *cope with stress of daily life*.

- probably started with good intentions

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I Met with the Nun (I was in the deacon formational program at the time) – asked 'Why no mention of Jesus (or God for that matter) & why no cross in meeting room (standard for Catholic offices'? Her answer:

- didn't want to offend non-Christians
- "they get that on Sunday"

A couple of months later, I attended a funeral at the Cathedral – standing outside after the service, **the hair on my neck stood up** – I looked around – That nun was there and was staring at me. It was demonic – **Ancient enemy looking out at me.**

CS Lewis: "the passage between this world and the other dimension of reality that we call the spirit world is through an unopened door, *whose handle is on our side*. We can turn the handle through occultic practices, but ***once it is opened, we ourselves are powerless to prevent what is on the other side from coming through.*** She had done that, and now...

- The Nun probably started with good intentions
- Christ says there'll be wheat and tares that He'll separate at the last day; however, It should be the Enemy that sows the weeds and tares, not the leaders!

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- Rather... The leaders are suppose to invite the weeds and tares to repent!

INCIDENT WITH ELEANOR** – women mad at me – Eleanor & elevator – put me to shame with her evangelistic spirit!

** Jesus promised to come in and sup with us, to bind that strong man, and He CAN close the door that should not have been opened.

Don't listen to the world when it tells you a church is good. It may be, it may not be.

- We've got to be careful when the world is telling us who are the good-guys & who are the bad-guys!
- Judge every movement and church, not by a certain preacher, not by those who commend it, but by the standard set by the Lord about the Holy Spirit, "He shall glorify Me."
- *Christ needs no new inventions or gimmicks to glorify Himself. Spurgeon said: "A plain Christ is ever the loveliest Christ... Dress Him up, and you have deformed Him and defamed Him. Bring Him out just as He is, the*

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*Christ of God, nothing else but Christ, and Christ crucified."*²

This is **OUR INFALLIBLE TEST** as to whether something is of the Holy Spirit or not, for Jesus says, "**He (the Holy Spirit) shall glorify Me.**"

- Aaron's dead staff budded when God breathed Life into it. I want to take this final segment talking just a bit about the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.

SLIDE: HOLY SPIRIT CAME UPON THEM...

Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. Acts 8

² <http://www.spurgeon.org/sermons/2382.htm>

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Philip went to Samaria, and news reached Jerusalem that there was a great work being done in Samaria, and many converts; and John and Peter went down, and they noticed something was missing in these believers: they then laid their hand on them and the believers received the Holy Spirit's POWER for service and witnessing.

I think that is what we Christians ought to be looking for—the Spirit of God for service and witness

- "Normal" Christians = LOOK LIKE CHRIST
- But like the apostles asked the converts, Into WHAT were you baptized? --> where's the Spirit's POWER in your lives?

Dwight Lyman Moody – evangelist, Moody Bible Institute

I read his book – *Secret Power*

He was a respected minister, but something was missing. The Holy Spirit came upon him while he was in NYC on a fund-raising mission after the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. Baptism in the Spirit some would call it. A few months later, he went on a preaching trip to the Britain. Moody began to preach; and something had changed. “The sermons were not different,” he

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noted. "I did not present any new truths, and yet hundreds were converted."

➤ Same message, different result !

- LIFE! (like at Beginning, God spoke and out of Nothing came life).

✚ Like with Aaron's staff, out of deadness came Life.

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- MOODY'S PREACHING = NORMAL CHRISTIANITY
 - JENNY SCACE'S FAITH THRU SUFFERING = NORMAL CHRISTIANITY
-

It is clearly taught in the Scripture that every believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling **IN** him. He may be quenching the Spirit, and he may not glorify God as he should, but if he is a believer on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit dwells **IN** him.

However, the Holy Spirit is often not dwelling within us **IN POWER**; in other words, God has a great many sons and daughters without power.

- We evidently **NEED** this power, otherwise, Jesus would not have instructed his disciples to **WAIT** for it!

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SLIDE: ACTS 1 – WAIT FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT

Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to **wait** for what the Father had promised, "Which," *He said*, "you heard of from Me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ... So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs (EPICKS) which the Father has fixed by His own authority; **but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."** Acts 1

Christ said to the apostles – **WAIT** until the Holy Spirit **comes UPON** you and **then you will receive POWER** to be witnesses. .

They already had the Holy Spirit – Jesus at the last supper breathed on them and said "Receive the Holy Spirit."³ They had the Spirit IN them, but they were to wait until the Spirit came UPON them.

- We do not need new measures, new equipment, expanded music ministries – there's nothing wrong about the other things – but that's not what we need.

³ John 20:23

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We need the **OLD POWER** that the Apostles had; that is what we want, and if we have that in our churches, there will be new life. Then we will have renewed ministers – the same old ministers renewed with power; filled with the Spirit.

By the way, I was part of the Catholic charismatic renewal in the 70's, and I must say that– at first – this all this sounded a bit heretical: *There's a difference between the Holy Spirit being coming INTO a believer at his/her conversion and the Holy Spirit falling UPON a believer in power at a later time?*

I want to assure you that this is historic Christian doctrine and born-again Catholic priests talk me this!

In Catholicism, we see this two phased activity of the Holy Spirit when the Holy Spirit coming "into" us at **Baptism**, and then later the sacrament of **Confirmation** has the Holy Spirit come UPON us to give us the power for service and witnessing.

- It is not necessarily two-phased – it may happen all at one as the Lord wills, but it is often two-phased.

This feature of the Holy Spirit coming *Upon* the believer in **POWER** is what Luther, Wesley & Calvin & Augustine & Aquinas & Peter believed, what John the Baptist prophesized and Jesus promised.

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It seems to me that our debates over terminology have often prevented us from seeking the Spirit's continual fullness. All Christians can come together under the banner of eagerly desiring the Spirit's fullness, even though not all believers label that experience in the same way.

There's an old story about two bishops strolling together and discussing the Sunday's message about Peter

- Acts 3 "**SILVER AND GOLD HAVE I NONE**. But what I have, I give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, rise up and walk."
- One bishop said to the other, "we don't have that problem anymore – we have plenty of silver and gold." And the other one replied, "Yes, that is true, but do we have any longer the power to say 'rise up and walk?'"
- 'Rise up and walk' – Peter could only say that after Pentecost when the Power of the Spirit came upon him.

I tend to cite examples from my own Catholic experience where I did not see Christ glorified. However, there are many born-again Christians in the Catholic Church. But the Catholic Church is like so many denominations -- somehow, this knowledge of the Spirit's Power was laid aside; they mislaid it somewhere – either intentionally or unintentionally – and so Christians are without power.

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- ✚ Perhaps the Power of the Holy Spirit EMBARRASSED some of the elders in denominations – people with new courage may sometimes act rashly rather than sedately and with dignity.
 - The Methodists use to be known as 'The Shouting Methodists' – now very sedate in service and music. I once attended a service and stood up at the wrong time during a hymn – and you should have seen the icy glares from the choir! And how embarrassing when we bring a new believer to a church pot-luck supper and they are not dressed 'appropriately'.
- ✚ For whatever reason, Christ's PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN POWER has been neglected.

WE ALL NEED REFILLING

Psalm 127: Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it; Unless the Lord guards the city, The watchman keeps awake in vain.

Without the Holy Spirit's power, we labor in vain. AND THIS GOES especially FOR US WHO HAVE HAD THIS BAPTISM IN THE SPIRIT!

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- We Christians often neglect our spiritual maintenance, and although we have been filled with the Holy Spirit, **WE NEED TO BE REFILLED.**

When D.L. Moody, was asked why he said he needed to be filled continually with the Holy Spirit, he replied, **“BECAUSE I LEAK!”** A great many of us (including me) – are **trying to do God’s work with the grace God gave us ten years ago.** Like Moody, we all run out of gas and need the power of the Holy Spirit to recharge our lives.

- There is no use in attempting to do God’s work without God’s power.

What we NEED is a fresh supply, a fresh anointing and fresh power, and if we seek it, and seek it with all our hearts, He will give it.

If this is new to you, DON'T BE AFRAID: Jesus said:

" Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or *if* he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?**" Luke 11

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Just like the Holy Spirit brought LIFE in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, He can renew us and EMPOWER Us in this age –

whether it's for the 1st time or the 101st time.

SLIDE: JESUS DIDN'T COME TO MAKE BAD PEOPLE GOOD

- He came to make dead people ALIVE!
 - To replace the heart of stone with a heart of flesh!
- If we truly want to glorify Christ, we NEED the POWER of the Holy Spirit.

*Acts 2:17: Peter on day of Pentecost preached to the crowd:
'In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see **visions**, your old men will dream dreams.'*

"Be Thou My Vision"

Be Thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art

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Thou my best thought by day or by night
Waking or sleeping Thy presence my light

Be thou my wisdom and Thou my true word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord
Thou my great Father, I, Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one

Riches I heed not nor man's empty praise
Thou mine inheritance now and always
Thou and thou only first in my heart
High King of heaven my treasure Thou are

High King of heaven my victory won
May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's Sun
Heart of my own heart whatever befall
Still be my vision O Ruler of all

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VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS, MENTES TUORUM VISITA

Latin – 800 AD – Rhabanus Maurus

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest,
and in our souls take up Thy rest;
come with Thy grace and heavenly aid
to fill the hearts which Thou hast made.

O comforter, to Thee we cry,
O heavenly gift of God Most High,
O fount of life and fire of love,
and sweet anointing from above.

A Mighty Fortress is Our God – Martin Luther

1. A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing:
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and pow'r are great, and, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal.
2. Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
Were not the right Man on our side, the Man of
God's own choosing: Dost ask who that may be? Christ
Jesus, it is He; Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age
the same, And He must win the battle.

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3. And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us, We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to triumph through us; The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him; His rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure, One little word shall fell him.
- 4.
5. That word above all earthly pow'rs, no thanks to them, abideth; **THE SPIRIT AND THE GIFTS ARE OURS THROUGH HIM WHO WITH US SIDETH**; Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also; The body they may kill: God's truth abideth still, His kingdom is forever.

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John the Baptist: "He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." John 3:10-12

- Jesus is the baptizer in the Holy Spirit, and He will sift out the tares (weeds) in our lives.

Doesn't mean you're NOT Christian – Those in Book of Acts who had hands on the elders laid on them were ALREADY Christians, then they received a special gift of the Holy Spirit's power.

- Baptism in Holy Spirit is a gift from God.

... Don't seek after miracles, or healing, or tongues – these MAY come but not the reason for Holy Spirit – having the power of the Holy Spirit so that you may know Christ more and have Him more in your life... That you may bud and produce fruit. THAT HE MAY BE GLORIFIED!

SLIDE: Jesus Is Life

Now there are two ways of digging a well. I remember, when a boy, upon a farm, in New England, they had a well, and they put in an old wooden pump, and I used to have to pump the water from that well upon wash-day, and to water the cattle; and I had to pump and pump and pump until my arm got tired, many a time. But they have a better way now; they

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don't dig down a few feet and brick up the hole and put the pump in, but they go down through the clay and the sand and the rock, and on down until they strike what they call a lower stream, and then it becomes an artesian well, which needs no labor, as the water rises spontaneously from the depths beneath.

Now I think God wants all His children to be a sort of artesian well; not to keep pumping, but to flow right out. Why, haven't you seen ministers in the pulpit just pumping, and pumping and pumping? I have, many a time, and I have had to do it, too. I know how it is. They stand in the pulpit and talk and talk and talk, and the people go to sleep, they can't arouse them. What is the trouble? Why, the living water is not there; they are just pumping when there is no water in the well. You can't get water out of a dry well; you have to get something in the well, or you can't get anything out.

I have seen these wooden pumps where you have to pour water into them before you could pump any water out, and so it is with a good many people; you have to get something in them before you can get anything out. People wonder why it is that they have no Spiritual power. They stand up and talk in a meeting, and don't say anything; they say they haven't anything to say, and you find it out soon enough; they need not state it; but they just talk, because they feel it is a duty,

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and say nothing. Now I tell you when the Spirit of God is on us for service, resting upon us, we are anointed, and then we can do great things. "I will pour water on him that is thirsty," say God. O blessed thought – *"He that hungers and thirsts will be satisfied."*

- Warm up your voice. Your vocal cords are like any other muscle in your body--if you use them strenuously without stretching them a little first, they won't be as responsive. Worse yet, you can easily tire or injure them. Warming up can be as simple as humming quietly to yourself as you slowly inhale and exhale. Pick a note low in your "register" (your normal range of comfortable speaking) and hum it for a few seconds, then slowly slide your hum up through your range to a comfortable high note and back down again. Do this a few times to get air moving over the length of your vocal cords. Warm up your mouth, lips and tongue, too. As you hum, gently stretch your jaw forward and down like a yawn. Move your lips in and out of different vowel shapes (e.g. "ah," "ee," etc.). Stick out your tongue all the way, then all around inside your mouth. Finally, "buzz" your lips (let them flap as you pass air between them) and roll your tongue on an "r" sound.

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Tired of attention getters that are not powered by the Holy Spirit?

- Great music during a mega-church service, but you may get the uncomfortable impression that the emphasis is on the music group itself rather than the worship of God.
- dinner theaters, yoga classes, bingo
- slogans: ex. Oral Roberts – breakthrough to heaven in 1977 – so send in \$77.

Even in the book of Acts, those who experienced the Pentecostal outpouring with tongues of fire in chapter 2 still needed a fresh wind of the Holy Spirit in chapter 4. Only two chapters later, those same apostles prayed to the Lord and the place was shaken: “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly” (Acts 4:31).

It seems to me that our debates over terminology have often prevented us from seeking the Spirit’s continual fullness. All Christians can come together under the banner of eagerly desiring the Spirit’s fullness, even though not all believers label that experience in the same way.