

Filled to Overflow

ACTS 1:8

MAY 7, 2023

Intro (Things people get stuck in)

Have you ever “had a friend”, who just got stuck in something? Like it seems like whatever it is, its always on their mind? Something that worries them, or something they want so badly, but just can’t have, and it becomes all they can think about?

I heard a story of two sisters who went through some Covid wars as I like to call it. Sister one thought Covid was all a hoax, a worldwide, government conspiracy meant to take over the world. She refused to go to social gatherings where you were required to wear a mask. She even quit playing in the city orchestra, because of masks. And whenever you talked to her, no matter the topic, it always came back to the government this, the government that, this blog post says this, this “News” article says that. She got stuck with the political fear, Covid brought.

Sister two on the other hand... thought Covid was the Bubonic Plague 2.0. She lived alone in an apartment complex, and good thing, because she was even afraid of her own breath and wore a mask inside her apartment, even when no one else was there. She stopped coming out of her apartment, she wouldn’t even empty her trash, and the neighbors started to complain to management about a weird smell coming from her apartment, caused by the trash buildup. She got “stuck” in the medical fear that Covid brought.

One word, Covid, two completely different actions, but the same response: they each got stuck in it, and their obsession overflowed into every part of their lives.

But its not just Covid...

Its the dog-lover who lives in a “no dogs” condo building, and all she can think about and her social media feed is full of pictures and stories of dogs.

Its the heart broken teenager, who just got a “it’s not you, it’s me” text from their crush.

Its the Marine who didn’t get into that advanced training they’ve always dreamed of.

Its the unmarried single who can only think about how they are still an unmarried, single.

Its the barren couple who desperately wants a child, but can’t get pregnant, even though all their friends are having babies.

Its the Mom having a mid-life crisis and fixates on all the ways she’s “missed out” on her “true” dreams.

Its the grieving widower who won’t accept compassion from his friends, because it would mean accepting the loss of his wife.

Or maybe for you, its not about some denied desire, but did you get stuck thinking about... that election? The Russo-Ukrainian war? The Iranian troop withdrawal? BLM? Woke culture? Tik Tok? Tucker Carlson?

After last week’s sermon, I realized that I have a “friend” who might be stuck in 2010 when homes in Kailua only cost \$500,000... gotta pray for that friend to get over it already.

Maybe you obsess over sports, your diet, a coming promotion, or a passed over promotion, or the latest parenting or homeschool tools.

What fills up your heart? What consumes your thoughts? What do you passionately pursue? What do you get stuck, thinking about?

Because whatever it is that you get stuck on, tends to fill you up. And what fills you up, will overflow to those around you.

< What is overflowing out of you? Or perhaps more telling and more important, what is getting “stuck” inside of you? >

Review

Last week we finished our meals with Jesus series. And as we looked at those 10 meals Jesus shared in the Gospel of Luke, we saw that Jesus wants to get rid of everything that gets STUCK in you, that distracts you from following Him, and the last three weeks, we discovered that Jesus has given you all the right things that should get stuck in you, so that you can make disciples. He gave you His body, all of Jesus in all of you. He gave you His character of service, that you too would serve those around you. And He gave you His Word, do you listen to it CONSISTENTLY?

But sometimes, there's something so deeply rooted, so stuck in you, some distraction that's so big, that it takes a miracle of God to get out. Let's pick up our story in Acts 1. The book of Acts, by the way, is part 2 of the Gospel of Luke. Both books were written by the physician, Luke to a man named Theophilus.

Luke is the account of what Jesus did in His incarnation, the years He spent physically on earth. And Acts continues Jesus' story about what He did after His ascension, through the apostles, as Jesus' Spirit remains on earth, even to this day.

—> Acts 1:1-6a The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus BEGAN to do and teach, until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. 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; 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...”

Let's pause there... How would you respond to Resurrected Jesus? I'd hope you'd say... Yippee! We finally get the Holy Spirit! How many more days do we have to wait!? What's it going to be like to experience a Spirit Filled life? What's the baptism process for the Holy Spirit? Is there a class we gotta take? **May the Fourth be with you?** ... Let's see how the apostles responded...

—> Acts 1:6b ... ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’

HUH!? ... Jesus is telling them about the kingdom of God. The apostles are asking about the Kingdom of Israel. Jesus wants to restore their souls. The apostles are asking about restoring a nation. Everything the disciples see and hear is filtered through the lens of a restored nation of Israel.

Its the same topic that made the two disciples on the road to Emmaus sad. Remember from last week the disciples said they were sad, and were even walking away from the other apostles because they

—> Luke 24:21 ...were hoping that it was He (Jesus) who was going to redeem Israel”

Jesus is talking about sending the Father's promise of the Holy Spirit to them, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecy, and all the disciples want to talk about is politics! The disciples are stuck in thinking about... politics! **(Anyone relate?)**

Lame sauce! 😊 So Jesus says to them

→ **Acts 1:7 He said to them, It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;**

Its as if Jesus is saying “don’t worry guys, I know you’re stuck in this, but I’ve got this. Its not on you.” Which brings us to our first truth from our passage today.

→ **Live for God’s kingdom, not your own.**

There’s a lotta things that you can live for, get stuck in, **your position in life, a relationship, a desire...** but instead, God calls you to His Kingdom!!

And its not a new teaching. In His famous sermon on the mount, Jesus tells His followers to

→ **Matthew 6:33 seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.**

Jesus teaches those who follow Him to not “get stuck” ... thinking about their own lives. God will take care of those things. Instead, a disciple ought to seek, to be focused on, to strive for, to “get stuck” living out God’s kingdom!

But for those of you who are “stuck” thinking about your own reality, that’s a really hard place to be, and I know from experience that its really hard to get out of. Maybe you don’t want to be stuck with the self-pity, with the anger, with the frustration, you don’t want to be stuck with the boredom and hopelessness of waiting... and you don’t know how to get unstuck.

Or maybe, you don't even realize your stuck thinking about your own kingdom. Maybe your just living your life... for yourself, you're not doing evil things, but the purpose of your day is yourself, and this whole sermon seems like it doesn't apply to you.

Whether you’re sick of being stuck in yourself, or you don’t even know that you’re stuck within yourself, you need a work of God to get you out of that place.

< **While you may be convinced that you should live for God’s kingdom and not your own, how do you do it? What does it take to get unstuck from your own kingdom? >**

We discover three things from our passage today. First truth we see from our passage,

→ **To live in God’s Kingdom, be with God’s people.**

You need to be together with God’s people to live out God’s Kingdom.

The people who say things, say that you become like the people you’re around. **I had a buddy who after high school started working at Down to Earth, the organic food store, full of super vibey, hippy people.** When my buddy got the job, he had short hair, very Type A personality... but guess what... he didn’t cut his hair for over a year, working at that store. He started getting super vibey. Super mellow. And then he joined the Marines, and he got his hair cut, and he got super, unvibey real quick. You become like the people you hang out with.

If you move to the south, you’ll call a can of Mountain Dew, “Coke”, and then you move to the Midwest, you’ll call it a pop. But then you take a job in the Northeast, and you’ll call it Soda.

When you’re around God’s people, you start looking like God’s people, and you live out His Kingdom. In our short passage, look at how many times the apostles were **WITH** each other...

—> **Acts 1:4a** “(Jesus) **Gathering them together**, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait...”

—> **Acts 1:6a** “**So when they had come together they were asking Him**, saying...”

—> **Acts 2:1** “**When the Day of Pentecost had come, they were all together** in one place”

Together, together together... Something happens when we come together as a church, as God's people. It gives space for God to speak to us through His Word, through His Witnesses, and through His whispers. It gives space for us to encourage one another to wait for the promises of God to be fulfilled.

I'm sorry but this whole “I'm a Christian but I don't go to church” thing ... that's not a thing! That's the opposite of Christianity. Jesus is always drawing us IN to community, into His Church. Not into isolation. Because He wants to fill us up, so that we can go out and bring more into His family.

And that's the story of the New Testament. Creating more and more Christian community, planting and building up churches of God's People to live in and share God's Kingdom with others, on earth, as it is in heaven.

To live in God's kingdom, come together with God's People! ...

And as you do, you'll see that God has a bigger purpose for you than the kingdom of your own life.

—> **Acts 1:8 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.**

Now going to the ends of the earth, that's a big and exciting purpose. And people preach this passage about purpose, and it is. But notice that before Jesus tells you your purpose. He tells you who you are as a person.

< Pause>

You shall be my witnesses, Jesus says. Your purpose is built from your personhood. Your purpose is an overflow of who you are as a person - your identity.

You are a Witness of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. Your personhood precedes your purpose. You are a witness.

Throughout Scripture, God calls Himself “I Am” “Ego Eimi” in Greek... The verb “To Be”... and this same verb, different form, but same verb, is used of your identity... you SHALL BE Witnesses of God.

...You know we claim our identity in a lot of things. If your my age and you meet someone, the first question people usually ask is “what do you do?” To which we reply with an identity statement. We don't say what we do, we say who we are based on the job we do. “I am” a pilot. I am a doctor, I am a student. Or perhaps you identify with a community... I am a Marine, I am a sailor, I am a hippie.

But what if instead of claiming identity in our earthly job, you tell those people you meet, that you are a witness of Jesus Christ.

I'll be sitting on an airplane a week from right now, headed to Israel, and the poor person sitting next to me... will probably ask me what I do. What if I say “I am a witness of the things I've seen and heard about Jesus Christ”? ... it'll either kill the conversation or open up a really fun one.

And you can say that regardless the earthly job you have. Because your God-given purpose, is based on your God-given personhood. Your identity. And if you believe in Jesus, then your identity is a witness of Jesus Christ.

And I remind you, that a witness doesn't argue the case, a witness doesn't have to prove that what they say is true, a witness just has to share about what they've seen and heard. It's super simple.

—> **To live in God's kingdom, claim your God-given personhood** (identity)

I have to admit that I wanted to use the word identity there, but then we wouldn't have the alliteration with the letter "P" for the blanks, and I'm partial to the letter P for Pastor Pete's Sake...

And last but not least, truth #3 from our passage today...

—>**To live in God's kingdom, be filled with God's power.**

Right after the apostles bumble it up and ask God about the kingdom of Israel, Jesus says

—> **Acts 1:7-8a It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; BUT ... the real thing that you should know and should be focusing on, the real thing I want to tell you before I ascend... is that you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you..."**

Jesus promises His followers will receive POWER. And there's many words that can be translated as power, but this one in the greek is

—> **δύναμις dynamis inherent power**

A power that's just there, ready to access whenever you turn it on, whenever you need it. This is the power that wi-fi and cellular data gives your phone... your phone has a lotta really cool apps, but without connectivity, without inherent power, without dynamis, your phone just sits there. And you can't check the surf report. You can't FaceTime back home, you can't do The Facebook

I have friends who built a house, beautiful, lovely house, on an amazing property at the foot of the Koolaus... the house has all the things you'd want... a fridge, a water heater, a stove, fans, I think it has AC... but my friends, even after the house was built and ready to go, they couldn't move in and live there until HECO, the electric company, came and *pop* turned on their power. What's the good of having all these awesome things in a home, if there's no power. The power is what gives the home the power for you to thrive.

And its the same way with the Holy Spirit. Jesus has given you everything you need, He gave you His Body, all of Himself, He's given you His character of serving others as an example to follow, He gave you His Word to strengthen you... but to use all the cool things God's given you, you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Pastor Perry often reminds us that there's two things the devil doesn't want you to know. The first is how to be saved. But once you are saved, the devil doesn't want you to know how to be filled with the Holy Spirit, because when you are, you start to live out your personhood and fulfill your purpose with power.

Let's look a little further in our passage, Acts 2, the power's being plugged in, the apostles are getting the password to the wi-fi.

—Acts 2:1-4 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

And because the apostles were together, and because they had waited in Jerusalem for God's promise to come true, and because of the goodness of God, the Holy Spirit filled them up, and they began to speak in other Tongues.

This word "tongues" is just the greek word for "Languages" meaning they started talking languages they don't know, like if I started speaking French, even though I've never learned French... And check out what the apostles were speaking in these other languages... they were

—> Acts 2:11b “speaking of the mighty deeds of God”

When you live in the Kingdom of God, you will get filled up with the Holy Spirit, and when you're filled up with the Holy Spirit, guess what happens, you just start overflowing and you share what God has done.

You may recall a verse we looked at last week,

—> Luke 6:45b “...For out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks.” (Berean Standard Bible Version)

God just overflows out of you when you're full of Him. And your life and those around you get changed. And your community is transformed. This is the purpose of the church. This is the work of the Gospel.

< pause >

But God is a gentleman, and He doesn't force Himself on you. Instead, He's given you an invitation, to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And at KCC we remember how to be filled with the Holy Spirit through an Acronym spelled D..A..Y... DAY. And it's the will of God that you be filled with the Holy Spirit multiple times a DAY.

D. Desire. You have to DESIRE to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And this desire grows in you as you're in God's Word and with God's People consistently.

A. Ask. You have to Ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit ([Luke 11:13](#))

Y. Yield. When the Holy Spirit fills you and gives you the power to ask your neighbor if you can pray with them, or the power to share how Jesus has changed your life with your co-worker... you have to yield to His Will, and not your own. And if you don't yield, then you gotta go back to D, and desire Him to fill you all over again.

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And there's so much to say about the Holy Spirit, and unfortunately there is a lot of confusion about Him, but there isn't time in this sermon. But I encourage you to listen to Pastor Perry's 3 part, Theology Lectures on the Holy Spirit, its called "Pneumatology" we'll send out a link in our newsletter this next week, or you can find them on our website under the Theology Lectures page of our sermon archives.

Live for God's Kingdom, and not your own. Be with God's people, claim your God-given personhood as His Witness, and be filled with God's power.

And if you're doing all that, and you still find yourself "stuck" living in your own kingdom, in your own head... there's a reason why God tells His apostles to WAIT for the promise of the Father in this passage. Things don't always happen in your time, [It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority... Leave the timing to God](#). For you, you wait in His Kingdom, and the Lord shall renew your strength (Isaiah 40:31).