

A SPIRIT-FILLED CHURCH

“Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” —ACTS 2:43 & 47

A Spirit-filled church is going to be a supernatural church. By supernatural, I mean there will be things about the people in that church that cannot be explained purely in human terms. If people don't see the transformation of others, they will have no reason to listen to what is being preached. But when the church shows itself to be a place of power, lives are transformed, and the only legitimate explanation is that God is doing something.

The cause of what is taking place in our lives is always more important than the effects. The cause is God's working in us by the Holy Spirit. The effects may be different because the fullness of the Holy Spirit is expressed in various ways. Scripture speaks of the fruit of the Spirit as being an expression of the presence and fullness of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness and other spiritual gifts that express the Holy Spirit's working in us, but the church, itself, will only have a hearing in the world when people know there is something going on that defies human explanation.

If the church of Jesus Christ is known for things other than the working of God, it is surely failing in its task. If a church can be explained in terms of its size, attendance, finances, and personalities, then it's not any different from other organizations. If the church is known for educating people, it's little more than a learning forum. If it's known for special

programs and events, it's providing a social context. That's all very nice and good, but there is no reason to be amazed by any of this.

As we look at men and women in Scripture who were significant in the history of God's dealings with our world, they can only be explained in terms of God doing something. Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, Paul – God was working in their lives. How do we explain the Day of Pentecost and the rapid, widespread founding of the early churches? God was doing amazing work.

The Church of Jesus Christ is intended to be the outward manifestation of the inward working of God. It is men, women and children who surrender themselves so completely to the Holy Spirit that He has the freedom for His power to work in them and through them. The end result is that others see the difference it has made in their lives, and are not only brought to Christ, but want to serve Him. That is a Spirit-filled church where God is at work.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, I am amazed by the work of Your Spirit, and ask that You fill me to overflowing so that I may effectively and fruitfully serve You.

TO REFLECT UPON: What are some of the experiences I've had that express the Spirit of God at work in my life?