



Stir Up An Encounter

STIR IT UP Series

Primary Text: Acts 2:1–4, 7–18, 37–39 (NKJV)

Supporting Scriptures: Acts 1:4–8; John 7:37–39; John 14:16–17; Psalm 34:3; Isaiah 55:6; Joel 2:28–29

Central Theme: An encounter with God requires intentional engagement, prayer, agreement, and a willingness to be empowered by the Holy Spirit for His purpose.

Introduction

WHAT DID YOU COME EXPECTING?

Opening Question: When you prepared for church this morning, what was your expectation?

We often fall into the familiar patterns and routines of church.
Our bodies can operate from muscle memory while our hearts are disengaged.
Attending church is not the same as intentionally seeking God.
The purpose of gathering is to encounter God and encourage one another.

Key Statement: "We are here for Him!"

Application: Worship is an action. We must move beyond religious routine and become intentional about engaging the Holy Spirit.

POWER IS COMING — BUT YOU MUST PRAY

Acts 1:4–8; Acts 2:1

A. The instruction before Pentecost

Pentecost was an established Jewish feast that drew people from many regions to Jerusalem. While the city participated in religious activities, the disciples were gathered in obedience to Jesus' instruction. Jesus told them to remain in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father. They did not know exactly how the promise would be fulfilled, but they knew they had to wait.

B. Religious activity versus spiritual power

Tradition can happen without power.
Religion can operate on autoplay without power.
Systems and programs can function without the presence and power of God.
Ministry preparation must never replace spiritual preparation.

Key Statement: "Tradition can happen without power. Religion can be on autoplay without power. Systems can run without power."

C. Prayer is essential

The disciples were devoted to prayer as they awaited the promise.
The Church must not become so busy working for God that it neglects spending time with God.
Prayer prepares us to receive direction and participate in God's work.

Reflection: Are we preparing for another church service or preparing to encounter God?

ONE ACCORD — THE POWER OF AGREEMENT

Acts 2:1; Psalm 34:3

A. United in purpose

The disciples were in one place and of one accord.
Their agreement centered on obedience to Christ and expectation of His promise.
Physical proximity does not automatically produce spiritual unity.
Competing agendas and scattered intentions can undermine corporate engagement.

B. Corporate responsibility

The entire congregation shares responsibility for prayer, worship, and spiritual participation.
Our posture toward God should be reflected in our gatherings, homes, and families.
Corporate worship requires more than watching others minister.

Key Statement: "I don't need you to do it for me. I need you to do it with me."

Scriptural Connection: David invited others to magnify the Lord *with* him (Psalm 34:3).

Application: We must move from individual expectations to a shared commitment to seek God together.

TARRYING — EXPECTATION REQUIRES PREPARATION

Acts 1:4; Isaiah 55:6

A. The meaning of tarrying

To tarry means to wait or remain.

The disciples waited in obedience and expectation.

Waiting upon God should not be confused with spiritual inactivity.

B. The Thanksgiving illustration

When guests are expected for Thanksgiving, preparation begins before they arrive.

The oven is hot, the food is cooking, and the aroma indicates that someone has been preparing.

Expectation should influence our preparation.

Key Statement: "Your Monday through Saturday is part of the cooking process. It's part of the marination process."

C. Preparing throughout the week

Prayer, Scripture, and spiritual attentiveness should not be reserved for Sunday.

Exhaustion and daily responsibilities can crowd out intentional time with God.

We must learn to manage the demands of life without neglecting our spiritual lives.

Reflection: What have we prepared for our encounter with God?

IV. AND SUDDENLY — THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Acts 2:2–4; Joel 2:28–29

A. God's timing and manifestation

The disciples obeyed and waited, but God determined the moment of fulfillment.

The sound of a rushing mighty wind marked the arrival of the promised Spirit.

The manifestation was sudden, but the promise had already been given.

B. The fire rested upon each of them

Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared and rested upon each person.

The Spirit's empowerment was not reserved for Peter or the other prominent disciples.

Pentecost fulfilled the prophetic promise of an outpouring across generations and groups of people.

Key Statement: "There is a tongue of fire for you!"

C. Empowerment beyond the platform

The Holy Spirit equips God's people for their assignments.

Spiritual empowerment is not exclusive to pastors, bishops, prophets, or evangelists.

The whole Church is called to participate in Christ's mission.

Application: Every believer should recognize the responsibility to be available for God's work.

FROM UPON TO WITHIN — THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE

Acts 2:3–4; John 7:37–39; John 14:16–17

A. Resting upon and filling within

The tongues of fire rested upon the disciples, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit. The Old Testament frequently describes the Spirit empowering particular individuals for particular assignments. Jesus promised the continuing presence of the Comforter with and within His people.

B. The connection to the well

A well remains supplied through its connection to its water source. Jesus describes rivers of living water flowing from those who believe in Him. John identifies the living water with the Holy Spirit.

Key Statement: “The Spirit doesn’t simply visit the Church. The Spirit inhabits God’s people.”

C. A continuing flow

The Spirit-filled life extends beyond a single encounter. The Holy Spirit empowers believers for daily obedience, service, and witness. Our gatherings should strengthen an ongoing relationship with God rather than become isolated spiritual experiences.

Application: Remain connected to the Source so that the flow continues beyond Sunday.

THE LANGUAGE OF THE SPIRIT — THE GOSPEL IS ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYBODY

Acts 2:4–12

A. The miracle of languages

Jews and proselytes from numerous regions had gathered in Jerusalem. The disciples spoke in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. The crowd heard the wonderful works of God proclaimed in their own languages. The Holy Spirit enabled communication beyond the disciples’ natural linguistic abilities.

B. The purpose of the manifestation

The miracle demonstrated God’s ability to reach people across linguistic and cultural barriers. The focus was not merely the supernatural experience but the proclamation of God’s wonderful works. Acts 2 emphasizes recognizable languages; 1 Corinthians 12–14 provides additional teaching on spiritual gifts and tongues.

C. The accessibility of the gospel

The gospel is not confined to one nationality, culture, or language. God empowers His Church to communicate the good news across human boundaries. Prayer and dependence on the Spirit are essential to effective Christian witness.

Key Statement: “The message of the gospel is accessible to everybody, but the power to deliver that gospel comes to

those who pray."

POWER WITH A PURPOSE — TO BE A WITNESS

Acts 1:8; Acts 2:11–21, 36–38

A. The purpose of receiving power

Jesus connected the promise of the Spirit with the responsibility to become His witnesses. The disciples' encounter created an opportunity for Peter to proclaim Christ. Spiritual empowerment serves the mission of the gospel.

B. The message is Jesus

Peter preached Jesus crucified, risen, and exalted. The people were convicted and asked what they should do. Peter called them to repentance and baptism, and proclaimed the gift of the Holy Spirit.

C. Empowerment for real-world ministry

The Church encounters people facing fear, addiction, spiritual darkness, and brokenness. Human effort alone cannot accomplish spiritual transformation. Believers must be equipped through prayer, Scripture, and the Holy Spirit to communicate Christ effectively.

Key Statement: "The power is not just for the experience. The power is for the assignment."

Application: An encounter with God should produce a greater willingness to serve and witness.

RESPONSIBILITY — TAKE THE ROOM IN PRAYER

Acts 2:3–4; Psalm 34:3

A. The congregational prayer experience

Members were invited to move throughout the room and engage in prayer. The experience was described as united, refreshing, and powerful. The central lesson was responsibility.

B. Moving beyond spectatorship

Prayer is not exclusively the pastor's responsibility. Spiritual engagement should not depend entirely on the worship team or visiting ministers. Each believer must take responsibility for participating in the life and mission of the Church.

Key Statement: "You took responsibility when you took the room in prayer."

C. Personal and corporate engagement

Pray rather than waiting for someone else to pray. Encourage rather than waiting for someone else to encourage. Witness rather than expecting ministry leaders to carry the entire assignment.

Application: The Church must function as a participating body rather than an audience watching a few people minister.

THE PROMISE IS FOR YOU — AND THOSE WHO ARE FAR OFF

Acts 2:14–18, 37–39

A. Peter explains Pentecost

The crowd questioned and mocked what they were witnessing.
Peter identified the event as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy.
The outpouring included sons, daughters, young, old, and servants.

B. The response to the gospel

Peter proclaimed the crucified and risen Christ.
The people were convicted and asked, "What shall we do?"
Peter called them to repent and be baptized, promising the gift of the Holy Spirit.

C. The continuing promise

The promise was to those present, their children, and those far off.
It extended to as many as the Lord would call.
The Church continues to depend upon the Holy Spirit for its life and mission.

Key Scripture: Acts 2:39 — "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

Application: The Holy Spirit is not merely part of the Church's history. His presence is essential to its continuing mission.

BREAKING THE ROUTINE — PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENGAGEMENT

A. The social expectations of church

Congregations become accustomed to familiar service patterns.
The closing music, altar call, and invitation to stand can become predictable signals.
Religious participation should not become a response to social pressure.

B. Genuine spiritual engagement

Raising hands can express surrender but is not a requirement for encountering God.
Audible prayer can express personal devotion without becoming a performance.
The purpose is to engage God sincerely rather than follow a religious script.

C. Taking ownership of our encounter

Every believer must recognize their personal responsibility to seek God.
Spiritual engagement should be intentional, not merely prompted by the preacher.
The Holy Spirit invites our participation beyond the structure of a service.

Key Statement: "Don't wait for somebody else to create the encounter for you. Engage the Lord yourself."

CONCLUSION

AN ENCOUNTER THAT PRODUCES A WITNESS

The disciples were united, obedient, and prayerful. God fulfilled His promise, filled them with the Holy Spirit, and empowered them to proclaim His wonderful works.

Peter preached Jesus Christ, the people responded, and the Church began to grow.

The encounter was not the end of the story. It was the beginning of Spirit-empowered witness.

The Church needs:

Power to overcome fear and life's challenges.

Power to live faithfully and fulfill God's assignments.

Power to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

A commitment to prayer, unity, and active participation.

Closing Prayer Focus: Lord, empower us to experience Your presence, recognize our responsibility, and become effective witnesses of Jesus Christ.