

6-16-2024, COTR Texarkana

Title: The God Connection, pt-7

Purpose: Provoke people to stand against spiritual opposition, use the power of prayer to defeat it and live a lifestyle of generosity in a hedonistic world.

Truth for Today: The best dads are saved, spiritual men, filled with the Holy Spirit and committed to their family and the Kingdom of God.

Text: Acts chapter 4

Topic: Father's Day, Opposition, Prayer, Generosity

Series Title: Series Title: The God Connection...The Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

Series Purpose Provoke people to (1) Develop a vital relationship with the Holy Spirit, (2) Allow Him to work in us, (3) Have faith to let Him work through us supernaturally using spiritual gifts.

The God Connection, pt-7

I. Introduction

A. Hat Sharon

B. Review Series: The God Connection...The Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. At salvation, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside us and starts a work in us called sanctification. Then, He wants to work through us, using our natural abilities, our resources and spiritual gifts to impact the world for Jesus. // sod cutter needed repairs inside before work could be done through it. We're now going through the Book of Acts and interpreting it 1st as church history but also a model or a handbook to encourage us to embrace the supernatural work of the Holy Spirit today.

C. Today we're going to tie in Father's Day to Acts ch. 4 because the best dads are saved, spiritual men, filled with the Holy Spirit and committed to their family and the KOG. We'll learn (1) What to do when we face spiritual opposition, (2) The power of prayer to defeat spiritual opposition and (3) Living a lifestyle of generosity in a hedonistic world. This will apply to everyone, not just dads.

D. Title: The God Connection, pt-7

II. Committed Christians will face spiritual opposition, but the Holy Spirit will give us courage and boldness to face it.

A. Context, cripple healed & people saved, [Acts 4 (NLT)] While Peter and John were speaking to the people, they were **confronted** by the priests...² These leaders were **very disturbed** that Peter and John were teaching the people that through Jesus there is a resurrection of the dead. ³ They **arrested them** and...put them in **jail**...⁴ But **many** of the people who heard their message **believed** it...⁵ The next day the council of all the rulers and elders...⁷ ... demanded, "By what power...have you done this?" ⁸ Then Peter, **filled with the Holy Spirit**, said to them ⁹... are we being questioned... because we've done a **good deed for a crippled man**?...¹⁰...he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ...¹²...**God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.**"] Opportunity, spiritual gift, salvation and opposition.

B. Satanic inspired people will oppose anyone advancing the KOG. [John 15:1(NLT)] "If the **world hates you**, remember that it hated me first.] Christians are in a spiritual war

against demonic powers and the people under demonic influence. The more serious we are about serving the Lord the greater the opposition.

1. The main reason for the arrest was they had been telling people about Jesus. The Jews were concerned that their teaching about the resurrection of Jesus could lead to an insurrection with serious political repercussions.¹
2. Opposition in America, Testimony lady Instagram, FFRF. They came after me as an elementary school principal because a teacher on my campus allowed a student to have her Bible in class. The teacher didn't encourage or ask the child to bring her Bible, but she didn't discourage or disallow it either, and they were hot! I got a seething letter from the group threatening a lawsuit if action wasn't taken. TEA a text book mentions Jesus and Golden Rule to kindergarteners.
3. Pakistan 6-1-24 email, businessman was beaten, and business burned

C. What does it mean to be 'filled with the Holy Spirit'?

1. Review: Def.: to be wholly imbued (inspired or permeated), influenced by the Holy Spirit.² This special relationship with the Holy Spirit, separate from our salvation, began on the Day of Pentecost, [Acts 1:4 "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised...5...in just a few days **you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.**"]
2. What does it mean to be "baptized with the Holy Spirit"? A religious experience, involving special manifestations of God's power and presence.³ TDNT: to be overwhelmed or saturated by the Holy Spirit. **Do it in me Lord**
3. Pattern of early church: (1) They were saved, filled with the Holy Spirit and used spiritual gifts, (2) They constantly looked for an opportunity to advance the KOG (3) They boldly and spoke about Jesus, (4) People believed in Jesus and were saved, (5) The world opposed them but, (6) They kept on with their mission.

III. Fervent prayer releases the power of the Holy Spirit to advance the gospel

A. [Vs 23 As soon as they were freed, Peter and John returned to the other believers ...²⁴...**all the believers lifted their voices together in prayer to God...**²⁹ And now, **O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word.** ³⁰ **Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of...Jesus.** ³¹ **After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.**

1. Their prayer wasn't for personal safety it was for boldness and spiritual power. Telling people about Jesus was more important than a fun, trouble free life.
2. Opposition/ trouble/ pressure causes us to pray more. The response to spiritual opposition/ spiritual warfare was fervent, church wide prayer. **App.** Believers in the Middle East; school principal; COTR
3. Spiritual power, spiritual gifts and the supernatural were a part of the early church. [Hebrews 2:3-4 (NLT)...this great salvation that was first announced by the Lord Jesus himself and then delivered to us by those who heard him speak? ⁴ And **God confirmed the message by giving signs and wonders and various**

miracles and gifts of the Holy Spirit whenever he chose.] Spiritual gifts are a sign from heaven that validates the message about Jesus is true.

4. **App.** I wonder if kids were at the prayer meeting. Dads bring kids to prayer.

IV. Conclusion: **The Holy Spirit changes our hearts from hedonism to generosity**

- A. **[Vs 32** All the believers were united...**And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had...³⁴ There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them ³⁵...to give to those in need.]** Context: Jews from across the Roman Empire were still there from the Feast of Pentecost and others had lost jobs because they were Christians. There is no sense of able-bodied people refusing work. This was not motivated by socialism or forced redistribution of wealth but by hearts that had been transformed by Jesus to value God's priorities more than their own.

1. If the same need arose in America, I wonder if we'd respond in the same way?

Our problem is def.; hedonism: the pursuit of pleasure and self-indulgence as the primary pursuit of life. We've been raised in a culture of more, bigger and better and we're entitled to it. Part of being filled with the Holy Spirit is allowing Him to change our hearts from selfish to unselfish and stingy to generous.

2. The world we live in and our kids are raised in is materialistic, selfish and hedonistic. **Picture Titus VBS.** We want to allow them to enjoy the world but be more committed to the KOG. **Henry and Titus in nursing home pic**

- B. Summary (1) Committed Christians will face spiritual opposition, but the Holy Spirit will give us courage and boldness to face it. (2) Fervent prayer releases the power of the Holy Spirit to advance the gospel. (3) The HS changes our hearts from hedonism to generosity. (4) The best dads are saved, spiritual men, filled with the Holy Spirit and committed to their family and the Kingdom of God.

V. Response

- A. Prayer:

- B. Souls: The best dads are saved...from what? How can I be saved?

VI. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message

1. Polhill, J. B. (1992). *Acts* (Vol. 26, pp. 142–143). Broadman & Holman Publishers.
2. Zodhiates, S. (2000). In *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.
3. Swanson, J. (1997). In *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (electronic ed.). Logos Research Systems, Inc.

VII. Supplemental Material

- A. Last week in Ch. 3, we saw how a miraculous healing resulted in many souls being saved. We talked about physical healing and 3 paths of healing: (1) God designed our bodies to heal themselves; (2) God uses doctors, medicine or natural healing remedies, (3) Divine/ supernatural healing. [1 Cor. 12:9 (NLT) to someone else the one Spirit gives **the gift of healing**. Mark 16:17–18 (NLT) These miraculous signs

- will accompany those who believe...¹⁸...**They will be able to place their hands on the sick, and they will be healed.**”] We also talked about reasons why some people are not healed when we pray.
- B. Context: famine in Jerusalem, 2 Corinthians 8:1–4 (NLT)...the churches in Macedonia. ² They are being tested by many troubles, and they are very poor. But they are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity. ³ For I can testify that they gave not only what they could afford, but far more. And they did it of their own free will. ⁴ They begged us again and again for the privilege of sharing in the gift for the believers in Jerusalem.]
- C. Peter’s response as he was under the influence of the Holy Spirit, [Vs 9... are we being questioned today because we’ve done a **good deed for a crippled man**? Do you want to know how he was healed? ¹⁰...he was healed by the powerful name of Jesus Christ...¹²...**God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.**” ¹³ The members of the council were amazed when they saw the **boldness** of Peter and John...¹⁷ But to keep them from **spreading their propaganda** any further...¹⁸ ...they...commanded them never again to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But **Peter and John replied, “Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him?** ²⁰ **We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard.**” ²¹ The council then **threatened them further**, but they finally let them go...²¹...For everyone was praising God ²² for this **miraculous sign—the healing of a man who had been lame** for more than forty years.] **Do it in me Lord**
- D. [Acts 1:8 (NLT) But you will **receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses**, telling people about me everywhere...]
- E. Opposition will come but the Holy Spirit will give us boldness and power to face opposition to carry out our mission of reaching the world for Jesus.