

Theme: The Church has been given the Spirit to empower us to be on mission together, taking the Gospel forth and displaying the love of God to others from our location to the ends of the earth.

I. Intro - Endoheric Lakes and Basins

- A. Lakes or basins with no outflow; usually very saline
- B. Great Salt Lake; Bonneville Salt Flats; Death Valley
- C. The Dead Sea as opposed to the Sea of Galilee
- D. If something does not have outflow it eventually dies
- E. This is true of people (servanthood) and churches
- F. Question 71: Are Christians only called to be part of the universal Church?
No, all Christians are called to be part of local churches where they are led and cared for by elders, worship God, learn the Scripture, receive the sacraments, pray together, serve one another, **and carry out the Great Commission together.**

II. The Bookends of Jesus' Public Ministry

- A. Luke 4 records the beginning of Jesus' public ministry
He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. ¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”
Luke 4:16–19
 - 1. Jesus gathers for public worship - His custom!

- 2. Jesus selects a passage to begin His public ministry
- 3. The Spirit is on me to preach the Gospel!
- 4. The Spirit is on me to set people free!
- 5. This is the prophetic summary of Jesus' ministry

- B. Luke 24 records Jesus last words in the Gospel
Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” Luke 24:45–49
 - 1. Luke ends the Gospel with Jesus giving the Great Commission to the Church - go and preach!
 - 2. The Church will go to all nations with Gospel
 - 3. The Church is thus to continue the ministry of Jesus in taking the Gospel to all people so that they can be set free!
 - 4. Furthermore, note that to do this they must be anointed with the Spirit - just as Jesus was!
 - 5. This call to be anointed with the Spirit and to take the Gospel forth and set people free thus forms the bookends of Jesus' ministry in Luke.
- C. Luke continues this theme in Acts
But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.
Acts 1:8

1. Anointed with the Spirit to take the Gospel forth
2. These are the last words of Jesus before ascending to Heaven.
3. This verse is the theme and structure of Acts, which shows the Spirit-empowered Church taking the Gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.
4. The book of Acts ends with the same theme
Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts 28:31
 - a. Paul is awaiting trial - but is still preaching Jesus!
 - b. This the fulfillment of Luke 4, Luke 24, and Acts 1

D. The entire story written by Luke highlights the call of God's people to be filled and empowered by the Spirit to take the Gospel forth to all the world.

III. Our Mission Together

- A. We must be empowered by the Spirit for mission
 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, Luke 4:18
1. Even Jesus was anointed by the Spirit for the mission!
 2. He specifically told us we must be empowered by the Spirit for the mission
I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high. Luke 24:49

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8

- a. Jesus told the disciples they must wait until the Spirit clothed them with power!
 - b. This referred to the initial gift of the Spirit in Acts 2, but we have the same need for the Spirit's power
3. This is a big part of why we gather for worship each week - to be filled with the spirit's power afresh!
 4. It is not enough to be filled with the Spirit one time - we need to be filled and empowered each day and week for the mission!

B. We are empowered to take the Gospel forth

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor Luke 4:18-19

1. Jesus' ministry was first and foremost about preaching the Good News of the Kingdom of God!
2. Jesus was sent to proclaim the truth of God in the power of God so that people might be set free!
3. We are given the same mission by Jesus
He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. Luke 24:45-47
 - a. God's mission for the Church, as told in the Old Testament, is to preach the Gospel to all nations

b. The Church is to carry on the mission of Jesus, proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom of God, and calling people to repent and believe so that they might be forgiven of their sins.

4. The Spirit-empowered proclamation of the Gospel was central to the mission of Jesus and it is central to the mission of the Church.
5. A Church that replaces the proclamation of the Gospel with practical tips for living or the call to simply minister to people's physical needs has radically disobeyed God's call and failed at its mission.
6. Proclaiming the Gospel of Christ must always be the central, overriding mission of BRCC.

C. We are empowered to meet people's physical needs

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news **to the poor**. He has sent me to proclaim **freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,** ¹⁹ **to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.**"
Luke 4:18–19

1. Jesus specifically took the Gospel to the poor, the captive, and the oppressed.
2. While this certainly includes the spiritually poor, blind, captive, and oppressed, it also includes ministering to those who are physically poor, blind, captive, and oppressed.
3. The natural overflow of the blessing of the Gospel in our lives flows out in meeting the needs of the people of this broken world.
4. Because God has created the whole person - body and spirit - the Church is empowered by the Spirit to minister to the whole person - body and spirit.

5. Although the proclamation of the Gospel is always the central and primary call in the mission of the Church, meeting the physical needs of people is an essential part of loving our neighbor and often is used by God to open doors for the proclamation of the Gospel.

6. Thus, preaching the Gospel and caring for people's physical needs is not an either-or proposition, but a both-and reality.

D. We are empowered to reach out locally and around the world

and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name **to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.** Luke 24:47

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in **Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.**"
Acts 1:8

1. Notice that both texts begin locally and expand globally
2. A healthy local church will be reaching the local community where they live and also support the global mission of God.
3. A church that is only involved locally is provincial and small-minded; a church that is supporting the global mission but not involved locally is idealistic but in reality is ignoring God's call to their own locale.

E. A healthy local church will be continually empowered by the Spirit to meet the spiritual and physical needs of people and will be actively engaged in God's mission both locally and globally.

IV. Applying the Word - Being Part of the Mission

A. We are part of the mission through prayer

1. The mission is spiritual and we must use spiritual resources to see it accomplished
2. I urge you to join in our corporate prayer each week with urgency and fervency
3. I urge you to pray each day for the mission - both local and global
4. We need to expand our prayers so that they are focused on God's missions and not just personal comfort

B. We are part of the mission through giving

1. We give to the local church so that it can be on mission
2. Where we invest our treasure shows what we truly value
3. I encourage you to invest in God's mission through your finances - first to your local church and then to other groups as well
4. Don't think of it as a "bill" - our giving is investing in the mission of God and it reaps eternal rewards!

C. We are part of the mission through service

1. We are called to put actual sweat into the mission - not just pray and give for others to do it!
2. For some, this might include short term missions trips

3. For all of us, it requires we are part of reaching our local community

- a. Pop up pantry, Lighthouse Shelter
- b. Easter Egg Hunt & Family Festival; County Fair; Winter Relief
- c. We are praying about other ways to reach our local community with the Gospel - pray with us and then join in!

4. Don't be an Endoheric lake or basin! To thrive we must have a regular outflow!

D. The Lord's Table

The Church - God's People On Mission Together

Luke 4: 16-20; Luke 24:45-49

November 22, 2020

Communion

1 Corinthians 15:58

Teaching keywords: Church; catechism; evangelism and missions; great commission; mercy ministry

Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. May God fill your hearts with joy as you labor for Him. 1 Corinthians 15:58

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. ¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him.

Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

¹⁸“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Luke 4:16–19

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. ⁴⁶ He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, ⁴⁷ and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹ I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.” Luke 24:45–49