



Series: Open The Gates (Part 6)
Speaker: Elder Woon Hin Swee

INTRODUCTION

As we close the series about life with the Holy Spirit, we want to go deeper to explore the book of Acts, often known as Acts of the Apostles. However, just a few books before that in the gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, we see Jesus as the main character of the books and the disciples as his supporting actors. In like manner, the Acts of the Apostles should be understood as Acts of the Holy Spirit as we discover that there is really nothing we can do, except with the help, direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, we can be assured that the Holy Spirit moves today in power through the lives of believers, who continue as supporting actors to God's great story.

DISCUSSION

1. Read Luke 4:18-19. When Jesus was on earth, his ministry was to preach the gospel, heal the sick and to set the oppressed free; and all this was possible with the anointing of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Jesus said, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me". What does it mean for the Holy Spirit to be "on" someone?
 - b. What would it look like in our families, work/school or church, if we lived as people filled with the Holy Spirit?

- c. Have you ever experienced the Holy Spirit empowering you to do something that was beyond your natural ability? Share what that was like.

2. In the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit was mentioned more than 50 times as He filled the disciples, directed their actions and manifested in signs and wonders. A wonderful story on this was the encounter between Philip and the eunuch from Ethiopia in Acts 8:26-40.

- a. What role did the Holy Spirit play in this encounter?
- b. Have you ever felt the Holy Spirit's prompting for you to talk to someone, to help someone or to go somewhere unexpectedly? What happened?
- c. Who in your life right now might be like the Ethiopian - spiritually searching and desiring to hear the truth? In what ways is the Holy Spirit speaking to you about this person?

3. Read Acts 7:51-54.

In this chapter, when brought before the Pharisees to defend his faith, Stephen retold the story of how God called Abraham out of Mesopotamia to be set apart unto Him and used Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt, providing for their every need through many signs and wonders. Despite having witnessed the hand of God, the Israelites resisted the Holy Spirit and turned to other gods. Similarly, the Pharisees resisted the Holy Spirit, rejected Jesus and crucified Him, prompting Stephen to call them "Stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart".

- a. What does it mean to resist the Holy Spirit?
- b. It is easy to ignore and disregard the Holy Spirit's promptings. Instead, we focus on building our own houses. Read Psalms 127:1 How can we be more sensitive and obedient to the Holy Spirit?
- c. In your life story, what role does the Holy Spirit play: leading or supporting?

WHAT WILL YOU DO

The Holy Spirit is still at work today- healing, driving out demons, working miracles and transforming lives just like Jesus did when He was on earth. It is the Holy Spirit who does the work, and we are His supporting cast. He desires to speak to us as a friend. Let us not ignore Him but incline our hearts to hear His promptings and be obedient to His words. Trust and obey, just like the words to the hymn:

*"When we walk with the Lord
In the light of His Word,*

*What a glory He sheds on our way;
While we do His good will,
He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey.”*

MEMORY VERSE

*Unless the Lord builds the house,
the builders labor in vain.
Unless the Lord watches over the city,
the guards stand watch in vain.*

Psalm 127:1

AN E1R1 REFLECTION

As believers, we have the privilege to partner the Holy Spirit in the work that He is doing. He chooses us to be his hands, his feet and mouthpiece to bring Christ to the world. He alone has the power to drive out evil spirits, break bondages, heal the sick and lead people to know Christ. Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to divine appointments and to give you courage, wisdom, and readiness to share Jesus today - in our homes (Jerusalem), in all Judea (communities) and Samaria (society), and to the ends of the earth! (Acts 1:6-8)