

Sunday - February 28, 2021

I Will...Empower You

Dr. Jim Cooley, First Baptist Birmingham

Today's Scripture: Acts 1:4-8

⁴And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; ⁵for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ⁶Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. ⁸But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

YOU ARE NOT DESIGNED TO THRIVE APART FROM JESUS

- To be a soul means that you have the capability to be in a personal relationship with God
- *"And you he made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others." Ephesians 2:1-3*
- If I had to describe what it means to live apart from Christ, I would use a single word - Powerless

JESUS PROMISES TO EMPOWER THOSE WHO PUT THEIR WHOLE TRUST IN HIM

- *"But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ... that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." Ephesians 2:4-5,7*
- The Bible always describes a Lord who takes the initiative
- Ephesians says He made us alive
- The first thing Mark tells about Jesus is his call to four fishermen; "Follow Me and I will make you become fishers of men." Mark 1:17.

- In Acts, as He prepares to ascend, He says “You will receive power.” Acts 1:8
- It is always Jesus who takes action first

WE ARE EMPOWERED IN ORDER TO ACT

- Empowered is not about how you feel; it is all about what you do
 - God does not empower anybody to act as a battery
 - God empowers you to be an extension cord
- As a follower of Jesus, real joy never comes from what you hold in; it is always the result of letting God’s power flow through you into the world

HOW DO YOU RECEIVE HIS EMPOWERING?

- You have to know Him personally
 - “that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His suffering.” Philippians 3:10
- You have to trust what He is doing
 - “God said it; I believe it; that settles it” Billy Graham
- You have to actively rely upon His power
 - If you believe the power is present, then you act as though God will use it in your life
- You have to live a surrendered life
 - You are never empowered to do what you want to do
 - You are empowered to do what he calls you to do