

Acts 14 - Part 1

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Preacher: Nathan Raynor

[0:00] We are back in the book of Acts after a six week break for the Advent season and New Year's. We're back at our verse by verse exposition. I'm excited for that. I hope that you are as well.

Get to Acts chapter 14. Take something, your finger, your ribbon marker. Maybe there's a way to save it on your device if that's the way you're doing it. Mark Acts chapter 14. There's a bit of a typo on your bulletin, which was not Andy's fault.

It's my fault because I decided late yesterday afternoon that we're going to look at Acts chapter 14 all together. Not all today, but we're going to look at it in its entirety across the coming weeks. And so it's going to be the text for today is Acts chapter 14 and we're going to address some points and move on. But before we do that, I want us to look at Acts chapter 1. Mark Acts chapter 14. I want you to go back to Acts chapter 1 with me.

There's some other places I want you to turn as well. Because it's important for us to remember, right, it's been some time since the first start of our study in Acts, right?

[1:04] When we started in Acts chapter 1, it's been some time. So time has passed. And I want to remind you that the book of Acts is Luke's second volume. First, he wrote the Gospel of Luke, which is his account of Jesus' earthly ministry.

The book of Acts is Luke's account of Jesus' heavenly ministry. So the Gospel of Luke, Luke's earthly ministry. The book of Acts, Luke's account of Jesus' heavenly ministry.

It's most commonly known as the Acts of the Apostles. I think it would more aptly be called the Acts of the Risen Jesus Christ. Jesus acts as our risen Savior by the agency of the Holy Spirit in the lives of his followers.

And that's what Luke is recording for us here. In the book of Acts, we see the repetition of the phrases full of the Holy Spirit and filled with the Holy Spirit throughout Luke's record.

Let me give you some examples if you're taking notes. It's chapter 2, verse 4. Chapter 4, verse 8, and verse 31. Chapter 5, verse 3. Chapter 6, verse 3, and verse 5.

[2:20] Chapter 7, verse 55. Chapter 9, verse 17. Chapter 11, verse 24. Chapter 13, verse 9 is bringing us up to where we are.

And there are some more places beyond our text today. But then at the very end of chapter 13, in verse 52, Luke writes this.

And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. I suggest to you this morning that we carry that knowledge, that Luke intends for us to carry that as he's pinning this record, that they were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit into this next account.

So fix that in your mind, right? The disciples filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit as we are progressing into chapter 14. But before we get there, before we get into chapter 14 this morning, I would like to ask and answer two questions concerning being filled or being full of the Holy Spirit by way of reminder for those of you who were with us when we began our study of Acts and to catch up those of you who were not.

Okay, so you're in Acts chapter 1. The very first question, what is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promises in chapter 1, verse 5?

[3:47] Beginning in verse 4, we can read, and while staying with them, he, this is Jesus, ordered them, the disciples, not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which he said, you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.

So what is this baptism of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promises in chapter 1, verse 5? To answer that question, let's look at how this phrase is used in the New Testament.

In its entirety, it's only used seven times in the New Testament. It occurs four times as the prediction of John the Baptist concerning Jesus, the Christ.

So four of those seven times, one example, Matthew 3, verse 11. John the baptizer said, I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. You can find similar predictions made by John the Baptist, Mark 1, 8, Luke 3, 16, John 1, 33.

[4 : 59] So in each of the gospel accounts, John says something to this effect, four of the seven times. The next two passages refer directly to the day of Pentecost.

So speaking in both forward tense, Acts 1, 5, right? Jesus says, this is going to happen. You will be baptized. And then Acts 11, verse 16, Peter refers back to this promise that Christ made, Acts 1, verse 5.

I hope you're tracking me right now. Peter says this, and I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

The only other reference, so we've taken care of six of the seven, the only other reference, and it is a variation of this statement. It's found in the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 12, verses 12 and 13.

After Paul has spoken about various spiritual gifts, he says, For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

[6 : 08] For in one Spirit, we were all baptized into one body. Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, and all were made to drink of one Spirit. The Spirit, right?

1 Corinthians 12, 12 and 13. The Spirit was the element in which the Corinthian believers, Paul's saying believers everywhere, have been baptized in the Spirit as the element they were baptized into, right?

Which moved them positionally into the church. I encourage you to look at 1 Corinthians 12, 12 and 13 with that in mind later on, right? The Spirit was the element in which they were baptized, and that baptism moved them positionally into the church.

They were baptized in the Spirit and found themselves in the church. This is confirmed in other places. Paul says in Romans 8 and 9, anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him.

So, to be baptized in the Holy Spirit is to be regenerate. To be baptized in the Holy Spirit is to be regenerate. If you have believed in Christ, you've been made a new creation.

[7 : 22] And this is baptism in the Holy Spirit. With that said, I do not believe that disciples were converted at this point in Acts chapter 2, right?

We come to the beginning of Acts chapter 2 in the day of Pentecost. Because they'd already given many evidences of repentance and faith. We find ourselves in this interesting in-between time with the way in which God is working in the world by His Spirit.

I think it's important to remember that we are observing the transition, Acts chapter 1 and Acts chapter 2, between two economies of the Holy Spirit. It's moving from one way of functioning to another way of functioning.

So, I do not think that the promise in 1.5 that the disciples will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now, and the fact that they were all filled with the Holy Spirit in chapter 2, verse 4.

So, if you look at chapter 2, verse 4, are synonymous. Baptized in the Spirit and filled with the Spirit are not synonymous, but rather that they both happened.

[8 : 28] Right? Chapter 2, verse 4, they were baptized and filled. Baptized into the church, unified by the gift of the Spirit, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

And then we see the results of that as they speak on the day of Pentecost in many tongues. Okay? So, I hope you're with me. What does it mean? What is meant by the promise of Jesus that they will be baptized with the Spirit?

This thing happens to them. They're unified. They're drawn into the church together. But this is not the same as being filled with the Spirit. Right? We're not like so many these days.

Right? Not recognizing that we're saved unless we do some externally miraculous thing. Right? If we have believed in Christ, that is the miracle that finds us in the church.

Right? That is the baptism of the Spirit. We have been changed. Therefore, we believe. Right? This is the baptism of the Spirit. Right? Second question. What is meant by they were all filled with the Holy Spirit?

[9 : 32] In chapter 2, verse 4. Okay? So, not synonymous with baptized. Baptism of the Spirit is to be regenerate. Right? To be called gods in Christ. So, what is meant by they were filled with the Holy Spirit?

In chapter 2, verse 4. The primary role of the Spirit of God is the exaltation of Jesus Christ in the salvation and perfection of His church.

This is the primary role. He does this in many ways. But the primary role of the Spirit of God is the exaltation of Jesus Christ in the salvation and perfection of His church.

Let me give you one textual proof. If you'd like to go there with me, you're welcome to. Ephesians chapter 3, beginning in verse 14. Paul writes to the Ephesian believers, For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, that according to the riches of His glory He may grant you to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in your inner being.

Why? Verse 17. Why? Why is Paul praying that they would be strengthened by the power of the Spirit? Verse 17. So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, that you being rooted and grounded in love may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

[11 : 07] So Paul's prayer, my summary, Paul's prayer is that they would be strengthened with power through the Spirit of God so that Christ would be exalted in their hearts, that they would comprehend the sacrifice that He made on their behalf.

The Spirit of God is often called the shy spirit. His job is not to exalt Himself. His job is to exalt the risen Christ.

Martin Lloyd-Jones, one of the old dead guys that we love, wrote this, of this text, the Spirit does not glorify Himself, He glorifies the Son.

This is, to me, one of the most amazing and remarkable things about the biblical doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit seems to hide Himself and to conceal Himself.

He is always, as it were, putting the focus on the Son. And that is why I believe, and I believe profoundly, that the best test of all as to whether we have received the Spirit is to ask ourselves, what do we think of?

[12 : 13] And what do we know about the Son? Is the Son real to us? That is the work of the Spirit. He is glorified indirectly. He is always pointing us to the Son.

And so, you see how easily we go astray and become heretical if we concentrate over much and in an unscriptural manner upon the Spirit Himself. Yes, we must realize that He dwells within us, but His work in dwelling within us is to glorify the Son and to bring to us that blessed knowledge of the Son and His wondrous love to us.

It is He who strengthens us with the might in the inner man that we may know this love, this love of Christ. So, the primary role of the Spirit of God is the exaltation of Jesus Christ in the salvation and perfection of His church.

And, the primary means that He uses to accomplish this is the Word of God believed and spoken by the people of God. The primary way that the Spirit of God does this work of the salvation and perfection of the church of Jesus Christ is the Word of God believed and spoken by the people of God.

So, now, we are one time baptized in the Holy Spirit, but it is possible as a follower of Jesus to be full of the Spirit or to not be full of the Spirit.

[13 : 41] This can be an ongoing fluctuation in the life of a believer. We have the Spirit, but it is possible to be filled or full of the Spirit or to not be filled or full of the Spirit.

This is why Paul exhorts the Ephesian believers to be filled with the Spirit in Ephesians chapter 5. So, please do turn there with me. Ephesians chapter 5. You're going to need another bookmark or another finger.

Some fancy Bibles have multiple ribbon markers. Hebrews. So, Paul is giving exhortation, a strong command to the Ephesian believers here.

Ephesians chapter 5, beginning in verse 18. He says, and do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.

There's a command given here. Be filled with the Spirit. And I would suggest to you that therefore there's some activity on our part in the work of sanctification that Paul says to us, be filled.

[14 : 49] We should be able to be filled with the Spirit. And there's going to be some things that are going to result from this, right? Verse 19 through 25. I'm going to fly through it really quickly.

Addressing one another. Being filled with the Spirit means we will address one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Verse 21. Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.

Verse 24. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. And it goes on.

So there's these outflows, these results of being filled with the Spirit. Christian living. We do the things. We're obedient to the high calling of God in Christ that's laid out for us in the Scripture.

[15 : 47] We're able to do these things because we are, in fact, filled with the Spirit. But it's still a little abstract at that point, is it not? Like, so what does it mean? How is it that I'm filled with the Spirit?

Keep your finger in Ephesians chapter 5. It's going to get challenging now, I know. And turn to Colossians chapter 3. There's a parallel text in Colossians chapter 3 to Ephesians 5, 18 through 25. Beginning in verse 16. This is shorter. Beginning in verse 16. And I'm going to pick up halfway through it. You may track my logic if you're paying careful attention.

But halfway through, Paul says, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing, this should sound familiar, psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Wives submit to your husbands as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

[16 : 54] So parallel thing, he's walking through the same things, the same results of what it means in Ephesians chapter 5 to be filled with the Spirit. Right? Are you tracking me? You can flip back and forth.

I'm okay with that if I hear flipping. Right? Notice the parallels between the two. But there's a difference. In Colossians chapter 3, the beginning of verse 16, he says something different than be filled with the Spirit.

What does he say? Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly. So, take from this, from these two texts, that to be filled with the Spirit is to let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly.

And there's a lot of meditation that could happen on that. What does it mean for the Word of God to dwell in me richly? Certainly, it starts with reading the Word of God. Okay?

We're not going to go too much beyond that today. Right? But reading it, picking it up regularly, knowing the Word of God is a starting point for letting the Word of God dwell in you richly.

[17 : 54] Now, if that's just far too abstract for you, right? If you go, oh, come on, Nathan. You're drawing some major connections between the two. I defend they're good connections. But it helps, I think, to go to another text.

So, Romans chapter 8. You'll want to go there too. Romans chapter 8. verses 5 through 9. And I'll apologize to you if I'm moving too fast for you, but I know how long my notes are.

So, you don't know that, I know that, but I'm trying to push, push back to Acts chapter 14 and to the text itself today. I think this is so important, though, as we walk into Acts 14, right?

They're filled with the Spirit. What happens, right? Acts chapter 14. Paul and Barnabas go and they're filled with the Spirit. What happens? What's the result of them being filled with the Spirit?

Okay, so Romans chapter 8, verses 5 through 9.

So, right at the outset here, Paul is drawing this dichotomy, right?

[19 : 02] You're in one of these two categories, right? If you live according to the flesh, you set your mind on things of the flesh. If you live according to the Spirit, you set your mind on the things of the Spirit. Verse 6. For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.

For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile toward God, for it does not submit to God's law. Indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

So, stated rather strongly in the negative, right? The person who is not a follower of Jesus Christ, does not have the Spirit of God, cannot set their mind on the things of God, right? And the result of that is that they cannot keep the law.

They're incapable of doing that, and they cannot please God. So, what is the adverse, right? If you took this and stated in the positive, then, those who are in Christ, who have the Spirit of God, who set their minds on the things of the Spirit, can keep the law, can be obedient, and therefore please God.

So, are you catching the connection here? The Christian life is a very mindful life. Our minds are constantly active, set on the things of the Spirit.

[20 : 14] But what are the things of the Spirit? The book that he inspired, the closed canon, that he gave us this text.

He set on mine. So, are you with me now? Does Romans 8, 5 and 9 cap that off for you? I hope it does. I hope it does. I don't have time to convince you further. So, the primary role of the Spirit of God is the exaltation of Jesus Christ and the salvation and perfection of his church.

And the primary means that he uses to accomplish this is the Word of God believed and spoken by the people of God. I'll email that to you if you want it later. There's a wonderful quote.

I've used it multiple times since we started studying Acts, but I'm going to read it to you one more time. Dan Phillips, who is a contemporary pastor, said this, Show me a person obsessed with the Holy Spirit and his gifts, real or imagined, and I will show you a person not filled with the Holy Spirit. Show me a person focused on the person and work of Jesus Christ, never tiring of learning about him, thinking about him, boasting of him, speaking about and for and to him, thrilled and entranced with his perfections and beauty, finding ways to serve and exalt him, tirelessly exploring ways to spend and be spent for him, growing in character to be more and more like him, and I will show you a person who is filled with the Holy Spirit.

[21 : 36] Recall Acts chapter 13, verse 52, and the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. And yes, you can take your fingers out of all those spots, and let's observe an episode in Jesus' heavenly ministry by the agency of the Holy Spirit in the lives of his followers.

Beginning in verse 1 of Acts chapter 14. Now at Iconium, they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed.

But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

But the people of the city were divided. Some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles.

When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews with their rulers to mistreat them and to stone them, they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia and to the surrounding country.

And there they continued to preach the gospel. Now at Lystra, there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. He listened to Paul speaking and Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be met well, said in a loud voice, stand upright on your feet.

[23 : 09] And he sprang up and began walking. When the crowd saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, the gods have come down to us in the likeness of men.

Barnabas they called Zeus and Paul Hermes because he was the chief speaker. And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds.

But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out, Men, why are you doing these things?

We also are men of like nature with you. And we bring you good news that you should turn from these vain things to a living God who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them.

In past generations, he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.

[24 : 18] Even with these words, they scarcely restrain the people from offering sacrifice to them. But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.

But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.

When they had appointed elders for them in every church with prayer and fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. Then they passed through Pisidia and came to Pamphylia. When they had spoken the word in Perga, they went down to Italia and from there they sailed to Antioch where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled.

And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles and they remained no little time with the disciples.

Beloved, this is God's word to us written for his glory and our good. We would all do well to listen to it in order to believe its promises and obey its commands.

[25 : 39] Our study in this chapter is going to be structured along the following seven points. I'm going to do my very best to get through the first three this morning, although that's looking dismal already.

If I'm unable in a very MacArthurian way, MacArthurian, yep, that works. I'm going to roll the points I can't make into next week and maybe the week after that.

But this will be the structure for our study of Acts chapter 14. The person who is filled with the Spirit, number one, is fruitful.

Number two, is opposed. Number three, speaks boldly. Number four, acts humbly. Number five, develops disciples.

Number six, is committed. And number seven, loves fellowship. So seven points.

[26 : 44] Let's start with the first one. The person who is filled with the Spirit is fruitful. On your bulletin this morning, it was included a Charles Spurgeon quote. Spurgeon once said, there will never be any mighty work come from us unless there is first a mighty work in us.

No man truly labors for souls unless the Holy Spirit has first worked mightily in him. Now as soon as I say, the person who is filled with the Spirit is fruitful, if you're a good student of the Bible, you may think that I am preaching from the wrong text.

You may think, wait a minute, this is not Galatians chapter 5 verses 22 through 24 which says, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such things, there is no law. I'm essentially saying the fruit is different than these fruits. Why am I able to do that?

In Galatians chapter 5, Paul talks about fruits that are motivational fruits. Fruits that generate activity. He goes on in verse 24 of Galatians 5, and those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

[28 : 01] desires. So the fruit of the Spirit are these replacement passions and desires. And those passions and desires generate work. Things that we do as a result of these passions and desires.

So when I say the person who is filled with the Spirit is fruitful, I mean in the Mark chapter 4, verse 20 sense, parable of the sower. But those that were sown on the good soil are the ones who hear the Word and accept it and bear fruit thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold.

God intends to save His people and He uses the proclamation of His Word to accomplish this. Due to being filled with the Spirit, Paul and Barnabas are fruitful in their ministry.

They see conversions. Right? Verse 1. We see the very evidence of this right in the first verse that they speak in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed.

And the temptation at this point is to quickly say what is this way that they spoke in? Right? What is this such a way that they spoke in? And to falsely think that it was some methodology on their part to see people converted to Christ.

[29 : 23] There are a lot of people these days that teach lots of methods to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. But beloved, the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of salvation. We preach the gospel.

The Spirit of God uses the gospel to bring about those He intends to believe. We can be sure that Paul didn't do some fancy thing. There were no parlor tricks. Even as he pleaded with them to place their faith in Christ and he writes a bit of this to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians 2 verses 1-5. He says, And when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom, for I decided to do nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. So the way that he came and can we not come alongside Paul and say, yes, I feel the same weakness and fear and trembling in the mission of God in my life. [30 : 33] Paul didn't try to dress that up. He just spoke the Gospel in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. And then he says in verse 5 of 1 Corinthians 2, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

There are many preachers today who think that if they craft the perfect sermon it will generate results. And it will of a certain kind. I am deeply aware and I don't always function out of this reality but I am deeply aware that if I preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, God will change people's hearts. I with Paul say of Romans 1.16, for I am not ashamed of the Gospel for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. So the, such a way that Paul and Barnabas are speaking is that they are filled with the Spirit and they are fruitful. They are fruitful at Iconium. We can see that the, first that these great number of Jews and Greeks believe and then when an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews is verse 5 to mistreat them and to stone them. [31 : 55] They learn of it. This is not a matter of cowardice. This is a matter of prudence. And they flee to a region, Lystra, Derbe, cities of Lycaonia. Verse 7 says, and there they continued to preach the Gospel.

They continue to preach and they continue to be fruitful. In Lystra, after Paul is stoned and presumed dead, which Luke mentions in such passing way, verse 20, but when the disciples gathered around him. This is new territory. Remember, beloved, Paul and Barnabas go to Lystra. There they are proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We get no record of converts. converts. The story about them being praised as Zeus and Hermes. But when he's stoned and drug out of the city, there's a group of disciples that gather around him. Followers of Jesus are there gathered around him when he stands back up. So there's fruit in Lystra. There's also fruit in Derbe. When they had preached the Gospel to that city, this is verse 21, and had made many disciples. [33 : 05] So the person who was filled with the Spirit is fruitful. But you may not be fruitful in exactly the same measure.

I am not this morning suggesting that if your life doesn't look like the life of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey, that you were not Spirit-filled. It's not what I'm suggesting this morning. But what I am suggesting is that the person who is filled with the Spirit will be used by God for the exaltation of Jesus Christ. And that, in some measure, this means you will make disciples of Jesus Christ. This means there needs to be the evidencing of the Spirit of God filling your life. You need to be seeing people come to faith in some measure. Remember Mark 4.20. I read it to you a bit ago. Those that were sown on the good soil. Beloved, are you good soil? are the ones who hear the Word and accept it and bear fruit. [34 : 10] We're given some categories. I don't think they're meant to be strict categories. 30-fold and 60-fold and 100-fold. Paul and Barnabas certainly are our 100-fold category.

We need, as followers of Jesus Christ, to fall somewhere in there. People who are filled with the Spirit will be fruitful. Now, let's talk in the bit of time I have left about the external miracles found in our text. There's a couple things that happen that are rather amazing things that happen. Verse 3, we see that signs and wonders are done by the hands of Paul and Barnabas. Beginning in verse 8, there's

a man who's been crippled since birth.

That's significant and he's never been able to walk. It's not just that he has a sprain and they give him a little word and he has enough gumption to get up and walk on the sprain. His feet are messed up.

He's never been able to walk and because of what Paul says to him, God works in his life, he's able to spring up. Verse 10, and begin walking.

[35 : 15] So these rather externally miraculous things happen. There are a wide variety of views out there these days about how that functions now.

If we're now filled with the Spirit, do we have the power as God's people to do this? The question at hand. Do I have the power to say to somebody with a lifelong ailment, it's healed?

And there's a spectrum. There's from one end something called cessationism, which would be to say that all gifts of healing and tongues have completely ceased. The other end of that spectrum is called continuationism.

Active. Those gifts are still active. And there's a lot of people that fall somewhere in between those two. I'm going to tell you that I'm a little more towards this cessationist spot.

I don't know that I'm quite planting my feet in that camp because I don't think we have really clear biblical evidence that those gifts have in fact stopped. I don't think there's any like clear explicit biblical evidence that just says no more.

[36 : 17] God never works in that way any longer through the lives of his people. I do have a problem with the far other end of it. And I've kind of hinted at that along the way.

People and denominations that exalt the Spirit above Christ is troubling to me. It's very troubling to me. We also need to note going on here and for our day that there are external miracles happening in our text.

People, signs and wonders, they're able to see these things happen. There's a man who's now able to walk. But more than that, more importantly than that, there are internal miracles happening.

The many people, not counted specifically in this text, that have believed. They've become regenerate. They've received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They were once enemies of God. They now have become his friends.

This is an incredibly miraculous thing and it still happens in our day. I hope that you have your heart warmed on a regular basis by seeing people come to faith in Christ.

[37 : 22] It's miraculous. People so set against the God of heaven and earth suddenly turned toward him. It's extremely heartwarming. So, miracles do still happen, undoubtedly.

Internal miracles, which I would say we should rejoice for because they have eternal significance primarily. So, let me say a few things about miracles. Okay? So, wherever you fall on this spectrum, I want to give you some tools to help you filter through supposed or possibly real miracles in our day.

Okay? Miracles are always used, always used, to confirm the message of Jesus Christ. There is never a time in the scripture that a miracle happens and the gospel is not also being preached. Right? Or the miracle happens to set the stage for the gospel to be preached. Never a time. And in fact, they're very, very careful to note that for us.

So, if you watch some YouTube video of a bunch of high school kids praying for someone who suddenly just feels a little better, that pain in my knee is gone, and the video cuts, they never talk about Christ.

[38 : 37] They might pray in His name, but they never share the gospel of Jesus Christ with people. Be wary of things like that. Miracles are always used to confirm the message of Jesus Christ.

This is why Jesus performed miracles Himself by His hands. John 10, 37, 38. Jesus says, I am not doing, if I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe Me.

But if I do them, even though you do not believe Me, believe the works. Works are meant to draw your attention that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me and I am in the Father.

The fact that Jesus was performing miracles was to draw attention that He was from the Father and the message He was speaking was true. This is why Jesus continued to perform miracles by the agency of the Holy Spirit in the lives of His followers.

Again, look at verse 3, chapter 14. So they remained for a long time. What does it say next?

Speaking boldly for the Lord.

[39 : 38] And what does God do? Christ, working in them by the agency of the Spirit who bore witness to the word of His grace granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands.

Confirms the message of Jesus Christ that they're proclaiming. Before the man in Lystra is healed, Luke records in verse 7, and there they continue to preach the gospel.

It's in the midst of them preaching the gospel and this man hears the gospel that Paul sees him, sees that he has faith to be healed and heals him.

Be wary of any ministry who makes it their aim to perform external miracles, that that is their ministry. If they gather together and say, let's go out on the street and perform miracles today. The apostles never sought to perform miracles. There's never this stated intention. It's time, guys. This part of our ministry where we go and perform miracles, it just happens.

[40 : 41] Along the way, being filled with the Spirit, they do these miraculous things for the sake of the proclamation of the gospel. The apostles were always preaching the gospel when a miracle was performed or followed the miracles with gospel proclamation when one was performed.

Suppose that external miracles performed by individuals who do not preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. You can name some of those people. Benny Hinn does not preach the gospel of Jesus Christ yet claims to perform miracles.

In our backyard, beloved, Jensen Franklin does not preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. He preaches a prosperity gospel and yet claims to perform miracles.

It's damnable to do such a thing. It's misleading to do such a thing and it should make us angry. We ought to be offended that God is offended.

The third part of the Trinity that lives within us is claimed, he's paraded about in a way that is not consistent with what the Bible says he does.

[41 : 55] Primary work, always about the exaltation of Jesus Christ. So what those men do may be spiritual in nature, but I can promise you that it is not the work of the Holy Spirit.

Very, very cautious and warn people that you know and love of the same. Well, I made it through point one.

John MacArthur would be so proud of me. Okay, so I'm going to conclude this morning. with some questions for your further consideration.

Number one, do you have the Spirit of God? If you recall the terminology Jesus and Paul used, have you been baptized in the Spirit?

Do you have the Spirit of God? Martin Lloyd-Jones talked about, I read that long quotation to you, what do we think, what do we know, is Jesus real to us?

[43 : 03] It's a great evidence that the Spirit of God is working in our life. Don't wait to speak in some other language. What do you know to be true of Christ?

And how is it that the Spirit of God is working in you? Last week, I read this quote from Charles Spurgeon. If you can sin and not weep over it, you are an heir of hell.

If you can go into sin and afterwards feel satisfied to have done so, you are on the road to destruction. If there are no prickings of conscience, no inward torments, no bleeding wounds, if you have no throbs and heavings of a bosom that cannot rest, if your soul never feels filled with wormwood and gall, when you know that you have done evil, you are no child of God.

Do you have the Spirit of God? Are you being moved toward holiness? Second question, if you have the Spirit, and I hope that all of you can with confidence say, yes, I do.

Jesus is real to me and he's working obedience in me. If you have the Spirit, are you filled with the Spirit? Do you find in yourself any failing in this matter?

[44 : 21] I wrote matters, so I got to one, in this matter of fruitfulness. repentance. Repent and believe. Repent and believe that you are loved by God in Christ.

Confess your failing, confess your sinfulness, and believe that the promises of Scripture are true. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

What a great motivation, beloved, to pick ourselves up when we have failed and to press on into holiness. Third question, why are you not filled with the Spirit?

Why are you not filled with the Spirit? Same question, stated a different way, a little more priming. Does the Word of Christ dwell in you richly? Does the Word of Christ dwell in you richly?

If not, if you're not picking up the Bible in a way that you're taking it up inside yourself and that it dwells within you, what do you value over Jesus Christ and the Word that testifies of Him?

[45 : 31] What do you treasure more than Jesus and this book that tells us about Him? We see the face of Christ in the Scripture, and there's a slew, many, many things that could fall into this category and you would do well to search your heart and ask God to expose those things that you place in higher importance than Jesus and His Word.

Let's pray together.