

“To Bear Witness of the Light”

HOW TO BE A WITNESS FOR JESUS CHRIST

Lessons About Winning Souls From the Book of John

LESSON 7: Receiving God’s Power

(Chapters 13 through 17)

The night before Jesus died on the cross, He talked with His disciples about what to expect when He would be gone back to Heaven. This talk is recorded in John 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17. This section is one of the *most important* Bible passages for the Christian. In it, among other things, Jesus calls upon His disciples to go forth as witnesses for Him (John 15:27, 17:18). He encourages them by saying that all believers will have *power* available to accomplish the task of winning souls. That power is the power of the Holy Spirit (See John 15:26-27). Jesus promised to send the Spirit to live inside us to replace Him as our Comforter and Helper (John 14:16-17). Every born-again Christian has the Spirit within. We must learn how to access His power for the work of witnessing!

1. “An Example.”

The night of the Last Supper, the Lord Jesus taught His disciples an important lesson by washing their feet. Read the story in John 13:1-12, and find the Lord’s application in verses 12 through 17.

“Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

Happiness is found when we serve others. The life that touches other lives for God is a life patterned after that of the Lord Jesus. And His life was spent for others.

In order to have God’s blessing on our ministry, we must surrender to serve others. Have we done this?

2. “Another Comforter.”

Near the end of Chapter 13, we find Jesus telling His disciples that He will be going away (vs. 33-36). As Chapter 14 begins, He is comforting them concerning His approaching departure. He is going away to “*prepare a place*” for us in Heaven (vs. 1-2). Some day He will “*come again, and receive*” us up into Heaven (vs. 3-7). Christ’s ascension began the New Testament Age, and His return for His own will mark its conclusion. But what about in between? Jesus says that the New Testament Age will be a wonderful era.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall

he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.” (verse 12)

There will be remarkable answers to prayer (vs. 13-14), the power of God’s presence in the lives of believers (vs. 15-23), wonderful new revelations of truth (vs. 24-26), and peace in our hearts (v. 27). What will make these things happen is the coming of the Holy Spirit to live inside Christians.

“If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

He came to live inside believers the evening after the Lord’s resurrection (See John 7:37-39 and 20:19-22). It is the ministry of the Spirit in the lives of the saved that gives their lives supernatural power.

“Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity (I Corinthians 6:19). The Book of Ephesians calls this being “*sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise*” (1:12-14). The indwelling or sealing of the Spirit is permanent (Romans 8:9-11). However, those who are *sealed* with the Spirit are commanded to be *filled* with the Spirit (See Ephesians 5:18). Often in the Book of Acts, the witnessing Christians of the early churches are described as being “*filled with the Spirit*” (Acts 2:4, 4:31, 6:3, 7:55, 9:17). As we yield to God, and trust Him to rule our lives, the Holy Spirit works through us powerfully. Read in John 16:7-8 about what He will do through us to bring others to repentance.

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment . . .”

We cannot convict sinners of their need or draw them to Christ, but the Holy Spirit in us can. Are you filled with the Spirit today?

3. **“A Branch.”**

Chapter 15 very vividly shows how believers are used to reproduce themselves (“*bear fruit*”—vs. 2, 4, 5, 8). We can all be instrumental in getting others saved (Note v. 16). Get the picture of how this happens by studying verses 1 through 11 carefully. Jesus is “*the True Vine*” (vs. 1 and 5). We are “*the branches*” off that Vine (vs. 2-3, 5). As long as we stay connected to the Vine, we will “*bear fruit*” (vs. 4-5, 8). We

cannot bear fruit by ourselves, any more than a branch broken off from the vine can bear fruit of itself (vs. 4-5). We must “*abide*” in Christ to stay connected and bear fruit (vs. 5-8). Abiding in Christ involves submitting our lives to Him and believing His promises (Study vs. 9-11 carefully). When we do this, His power will flow through us, and we will bear fruit (reproduce by winning others to Christ – vs. 16, 26-27). Here is how to be filled with the Holy Spirit: abide in Christ. The Greek word for abiding in this passage has the idea of staying or continuing. We must continue in Christ as we came to Him, in faith and submission. As long as we do, the soul-winning power will flow!

“He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” (John 7:38)

Promises of Power

1. *“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke 11:13)*
2. *“And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.” (Luke 24:48-49)*