

The Moment We've All Been Waiting For...

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[0 : 0 0] well do you believe it that God could pour out his spirit even here today that his spirit would rain down that you would receive power well my thanks to Bethany thank you to Russell for using their abilities to serve us and encourage us what a wonderful thing and what a wonderful time we've had already it's good to be together good morning folks it's good to see you again some of you more recently some of you not it's good to see you brother again this morning we're continuing in Acts part 3 I was grateful for David's message last week and this morning we're going to be reading from Acts 2 verses 1 to 13 so if you have a Bible you can open that up if not don't worry a lot of times these texts were read and heard spoken and heard so you can just listen in if it's up behind me it's up if it's not just listen in let me pray and then we'll read together

God our Father in heaven we thank you that you are faithful to us you're faithful in all the earth that you are glorious mighty and power and that you have poured out your spirit and we pray this morning as we open your word that you would speak to us through your spirit that we might see your son that we might know your son your son might be exalted proclaimed that we might be built up and encouraged admonished exhorted that you might speak to us Lord by your spirit in your son's name we pray Amen well Acts chapter 2 verse 1 when the day of Pentecost arrived they were all together in one place and suddenly there came from heaven a sound like mighty rushing wind and it filled the entire house where they were sitting and divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance now there were dwelling in Jerusalem

Jews devout men from every nation under heaven and at this sound the multitude came together and they were bewildered because each one was hearing them speak in his own language and they were amazed and astonished saying are not all these who are speaking Galileans and how is it that we hear each one of us in our native language Parthians and Medes and Elamites residents of Mesopotamia Judea Cappadocia Pontus and Asia Phrygia and Pamphylia Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene and visitors from Rome both Jews and proselytes Cretans Arabians we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God and all were amazed and perplexed saying to one another what does this mean but others mockingly said they are filled with new wine this is God's word we thank him for it well what is that one thing that you are waiting for have a think in your mind what are you waiting for is there something on the horizon is it a return to normality is it an easing of these restrictions perhaps a holiday maybe it's Christmas we know some people who are already counting down to Christmas is it new year is it a new pastor is it a new program is it a new body a new creation is there something coming that you are waiting for something you are anticipating perhaps something on the horizon that excites you something that you're looking forward to maybe something that would solve a current problem something that would make things better well maybe there's something that you're thinking of maybe for others it's already been most of us have things whether big or small that we're looking forward to anticipating excited for waiting for the other night

Levi was anticipating his daddy coming home and just as I got to the front door I could see through the slit of glass him standing at the top of the stairs and shouting daddy where are you and so that made me open the door quicker kick off my shoes quicker run up the stairs and say here I am here I am and a most wonderful embrace a wonderful welcome the most wonderful welcome you could imagine probably better than any of us have experienced this morning I don't know if anyone was standing at the front like where are you there you are excited pure excitement pure love love and joy to see someone is there someone that you would give that welcome to is there someone coming someone you're looking forward to seeing do you feel like that coming here but what about the Messiah for the Jews this is where we are in Acts the Messiah for the Jews they longed for the day that he would arrive they longed for it it's something that

Christians celebrate every year the Sunday before Easter isn't it Palm Sunday Hosanna anytime I hear the word Hosanna I just think of the girl's name but it's just the Greek version of what they would have shouted they wouldn't have shouted Hosanna they would have shouted Yashanna Yashanna Yashanna to the son of David Yashanna in the highest Yashanna Luke records it saying blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord peace in heaven and glory in the highest they were excited that Jesus was arriving in Jerusalem because to them it was the Messiah to them salvation was coming the arrival of the Messiah meant the arrival of salvation liberation the restoration of the kingdom Luke writes that the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice the crowd goes wild yes here he is they were causing such a stir claiming this to be the arrival of the most important person rolling out rolling out the red carpet here comes your king the moment we've all been waiting for and so at that moment the

[7 : 20] Pharisees wanted Jesus to rebuke his disciples for insinuating that his arrival was the arrival of the Messiah but we know what Jesus said didn't we if they were silent the rocks would cry out yeshanna but although that they were anticipating the coming of the Messiah only one person anticipated the cross only Jesus himself knew where his victory would take place on the cross in his death in the tomb and resurrection it's like the main event and now the moment we've all been waiting for the arrival of the Messiah the start of Luke's gospel the conquering of the enemy at the cross the arrival of God's spirit being poured out at the start of Acts Luke's recording these things the coming of the kingdom yet surprisingly all these things all of these anticipated things happened in unanticipated ways so let me ask you in order that we're not making similar mistakes does Jesus forgive people now yeah does he do it now by sacrificing himself again no does Jesus come to people now yeah does he do it by being born a virgin every time no that would be unfortunate

I just want to highlight what Luke recorded in his gospel though it affects every human in every age the first arrival of the Messiah was a one-off event there are things that happen differently now because that was the beginning the moment the Jews that were waiting for so in relation to this whatever you believe about the Holy Spirit or about baptism in the Holy Spirit or about tongues or whatever I want to say clearly that this thing that happened in Acts 2 was a one-off thing Luke is being descriptive not prescriptive in Acts wherever you stand on the Holy Spirit stuff that's not Luke's agenda I just want to say clearly that if we think that Acts 2 is a pattern to be followed then we're missing the point of Acts 2 altogether now you may have questions about other parts in Acts and I'd be glad to chat about that but we mustn't jump too quickly to what these things in Acts mean for us before we see why Luke wrote them for them and what was going on for them then so what is going on in

Acts 2 well this this is the moment that they've all been waiting for the moment that John the Baptist spoke about in Luke chapter 3 he said I baptize with water but he who is mightier than I is coming he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire and now it's happening so these two greatly anticipated moments the Messiah arriving the spirit being poured out are both connected in John's mind because although John pours out water he says that it will be the Messiah who pours out the spirit it's the Messiah who does the spirit baptizing thing no one else John baptizes with water but there's only one person who can baptize with the Holy Spirit and that's the Messiah who we find out is Jesus so Luke has already hinted at Acts 2 at the beginning of his gospel and now that the Messiah has come and did all his earthly work he ascends to the father and his disciples have joy because they anticipate what is coming they anticipate what

Jesus told them waiting and waiting as Jesus told them until they would receive the promise and they would receive power that's the last thing that Luke records in his gospel of Jesus saying Luke 24 49 and behold I am sending the promise of my father upon you but stay in the city until you're clothed with power from on high that's the last and in the last line of Luke they returned to Jerusalem with great joy they were continually in the temple blessing God now if you're waiting that is a good example of how to wait they were like they were like children who'd just been told they're going to Disney World you couldn't wipe the smile off their face Luke doesn't say that they were sad that Jesus left they were in John 14 15 16 before it all happened but now they're not the promise of the father power and high they're waiting for that anticipating the spirit was coming and they knew it they didn't know exactly when or how they just knew they had to wait in Jerusalem till it happened don't go home to

Galilee don't even go into the world yet wait at the heart of the holy city of God this is important and they only had to wait 10 days that's all they had to wait 10 days Jesus was with them after his resurrection for 40 days and then Pentecost from his resurrection was 50 days from Passover so the day of Pentecost arrived 10 days after Jesus ascends and this is the Pentecost is a major major day in the Jewish calendar there were certain feast days in the Jewish calendar three major ones that Jews were required to travel into Jerusalem we read in Deuteronomy 16 16 three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God at the place that he will choose at the feast of unleavened bread that's Passover the feast of weeks that's Pentecost and at the feast of booths later on in the year they shall not appear before the

[13 : 09] Lord empty-handed three times a year all the men as family representatives had to travel from all over the world into Jerusalem to the temple for these special days Passover Pentecost booths and they were both agricultural celebrations theological historical celebrations in Passover the Jews celebrated the Exodus and the beginning of the new planting season on Pentecost Jews celebrated the first harvest and the giving of the law and on booths Jews celebrated the last harvest and God's provision in the desert now Pentecost was on the first day of the week 50 days after Passover it's called Shavuot which means weeks Pentecost is just a Greek word that means 50th so from Passover seven weeks plus a day after the first fruits offering during Passover now this might seem like a lot of background stuff but there's a huge significance to all of this and the timing of this is just incredible so we can easily miss how God connects the dots simply because we're not first century

Jews living with this tradition of feasts so if you're not familiar with the feasts and festivals there are things that writers like Paul write that can just go over your head but when you see the significance it's just hugely encouraging and massively significant so during the festival of Passover there was a day called the Feast of First Fruits do you know it?

some of you might Passover started on the Friday at the beginning of Passover a spotless lamb would be sacrificed at 3pm on the Friday for the sins of the people the same time we know Jesus gave his life on the cross he's the Passover lamb and then the next day was the Sabbath and then the day after the Sabbath was the Feast of the First Fruits on that one day on the Sunday and on this Sunday people offered the first grain that shot up they had to bring this into the temple so they brought the first grain that shot up to the temple and it was waved as an offering before God to give thanks because this indicated that the whole harvest was coming the sheaf was the early first fruits of the harvest now if you didn't bring this into the temple if you didn't bring a sheaf of grain then there was just no evidence that God was giving you a harvest would there be and there was no confidence even that there was a harvest coming but if you had this little bundle this little bundle indicated that

God was giving you a harvest this is evidence physical real evidence so if you had this the first grain to bud when you seen this you knew that more was to come thankful to God you would bring this to the temple and offer it to him as thanks that he's given you a harvest you can be absolutely sure in confidence because this little bundle is physical evidence that he's given something in the ground isn't that amazing now you'll see why this relates so I mean it's like when you look at a fruit tree and if there's nothing on it you're just you're not sure that it's going to be fruitful but if you see a few apples then you're like yes it's producing fruit something's coming definitely there will be more now I'm all aware that most of you probably won't be a Jew who owns a field would I be right in saying that but if you're a Christian trusting and believing in

Jesus then let me give you this confidence see when Paul writes in 1 Corinthians chapter 15 that there must be a resurrection because Jesus was raised his argument is stronger and more significant than you may think people are saying that there's no resurrection of the dead and Paul argues that their statement would only be remotely believable if Jesus hadn't already been risen from the dead see Paul Paul isn't saying that Jesus rose so clearly people can rise from the dead that's not what he's saying in fact what he is saying is that Christians will definitely rise from the dead because Jesus is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep Jesus is the physical evidence that those who are connected to him will rise the harvest is coming see just as Jesus died at the time of the Passover lamb was sacrificed because he is the lamb that takes away the sin of the world also when he rose from the dead as the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep those who would be raised to life it was on the day when the first fruits were presented as an offering to nothing that you can do to stop it it's a certain fact

[18 : 25] Jesus the risen Jesus the fact that he is risen is evidence that more will follow definitely otherwise there would be no sheaf of grain to present in the first place the only doubt that you could have about your resurrection is if Jesus wasn't actually risen but he is so you can be sure that you will be raised hallelujah how amazing is that your resurrection is like a stock of barley that was part of the same batch as Jesus himself but you've just still to come to fruition it's happening it's coming there's no stopping it you are organically connected to Jesus you are part of the harvest it's not some ethereal abstract thing that just because he was risen no you are in Christ he's risen you're going to rise now you might be thinking after all this yeah okay what's that got to do with Acts chapter 2 what's that got to do with

Pentecost well let me ask be careful how you answer because I might get you up can anyone count to 50 in French or a different language probably Pentecost is just the Greek word for 50th because it was the 50th day from the day that we're talking about when Jesus rose when this happened the Jews counted it's called the counting of the sheev every day it was a Christmas countdown it was the countdown to the harvest they counted down from this 50 days till they would see the rest of it so during Passover you presented that first part of the harvest on the Sunday and then you're told to count 50 days that lands on the same day the Sunday and then all the Jews would come back to Jerusalem for one day Pentecost all the male Jews from around the world had to come back after 50 days and they didn't just bring a sheev no they had more and they were to make two loaves out of the grain that come up in the harvest and they brought that to

God and again that was evidence that more God had given the harvest two loaves is an offering and this counting to 50 was anticipation to the big feast anticipation to the harvest a lot more grain to come that's a big deal the harvest to come now Pentecost it was just a one day thing Passover was a week long thing Pentecost was a one day thing it was absolutely jumping I don't know if you've ever been in a situation at a concert or somewhere else in a situation where it's just absolutely even quite often I go down to London with some friends for the American football and I don't know if it was last year or the year before but the last time I was there for the sake of the residents of the area they'd cordoned off a walkway for miles in different directions they'd cordoned off big walkways for the American football traffic because it was just a nuisance to the locals there but we were walking in this throng of people and

I was reflecting to myself there was thousands upon thousands upon thousands of people just all walking and marching towards this stadium and then from it at the end and it's just such a huge number of people this is what Jerusalem was like since the first small beginning of grain they brought to present on the Sunday during Passover they counted 50 days and traveled and massive groups of people traveled back to Jerusalem thousands and thousands flooding the city going to the temple and taking these two loaves for the fuller harvest and it's important to trace the link because the loaves came from the same batch as that first fruits offering and it's a thousands were flooding into the city going in and out the temple grounds for one major harvest feast

Pentecost and there were 120 Jesus followers just sticking together in their own group amidst this massive group of people so they were among them they wouldn't have stuck out particularly but God does something that separates this group of people from the crowd in a completely significant way all of a sudden imagine this we might actually have this now jump to the next one got some visuals for you oh there we go that's Jerusalem that's the temple grounds on a normal day that's temple grounds on a feast day absolutely even now if you could picture a small group of 120 people somewhere in or around there from all parts of the world right all these people flooding by maybe maybe up the top there you know you can imagine this group of people hanging out and suddenly something happens you're maybe someone amidst this crowd of people going through the streets and suddenly there's a noise like mighty

[24 : 23] Russian wind that came from heaven but it's not coming from the temple it's coming from this place where this random group of 120 people are now what's going on because God would normally come down with a great noise like Russian wind and his presence would be marked with fire like in Mount Sinai when Moses received the law later you would see this kind of thing in the tabernacle the dwelling place of God and then afterwards this is a thing that you would expect at the temple of God but this is happening somewhere else this is happening localized over this group of 120 people that are just amidst thousands and thousands of people remember this city is jam packed absolutely heaving and if there's going to be a move of God they might expect it to happen on a major feast day at the temple right over the temple itself not some random house fire over the temple not not over these unknown people these nobodies but at this moment these people were all filled with the

Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave the utterance this is where Luke makes a major note because it was Pentecost this was a strategic day to do this kind of what a way to describe it isn't it it's an important note from Luke every nation under heaven you can see it there if you'd ever wondered about the whole replacing Judas and Acts one thing that David was talking about why is it there if it seems like an interruption to the story when Jesus left and the Spirit comes this is why I think Luke records it as well before that because the apostles know that there's something important about their role Jesus didn't just pick twelve for fun as David said they represent the nations of Israel the tribes of Israel so Peter also knew that if Judas was a bad egg there had to still be twelve eleven just wouldn't cut it eleven apostles was not acceptable there had to be twelve because the apostles were supposed to represent the entirety of

Israel the twelve tribes there weren't eleven tribes or thirteen there were twelve and it had to be twelve apostles Israel had to be fully represented fully provided for fully accounted for look already said in chapter one they would be Jesus witnesses in Jerusalem Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth but even before that happens the ends of the earth come to them with the replacement of Judas they now have twelve disciples to cover the twelve tribes and then Acts chapter two we see these scattered Jews from every nation under heaven all coming back to Jerusalem not only that but the whole earth is represented here and this is a hint back to Genesis 10 when there's the table of nations all the descendants of Noah table of nations every nation under heaven Genesis 10 then Genesis 11 they all spoke one language then they built the

Tower of Babel and then the languages were confused and scattered but now here the scattered people from every nation are gathered back together they're devout Jews they all likely speak Hebrew anyway as well as their native tongues from wherever they are so when Luke says that when they were filled with the Holy Spirit they spoke in other tongues this is a contrast to the mother tongue it's a surprise this is the surprising thing of all of it mighty Russian wind but not over the temple instead this group of disciples fire coming down and resting but not over the temple instead on these individuals mighty works of God proclaimed but not by the priests or religious leaders no by these strangers the proclamation not in the mother tongue as you might expect but in other tongues it's amazing but it's really really controversial this thing happening is really controversial it's not the

Jewish center of worship not the Jewish religious leaders and not the Jewish language no wonder they ask what does this mean God sending a message in the language of foreigners a fisherman a tax collector a demon possessed woman sounds like the start of a joke doesn't it this is the kind of people that were used by God not the temple priests these visitors all from different nations notice that these people are not even locals they're not even from Jerusalem they're what we might call chuchters you heard the term chuchters they're from the north they're not from the holy city they're not well educated these are just chuchters from the north Galileans highlanders imagine going to the motherland on the major feast day going to the center of activity there expecting a wonderful religious experience a word from God in the mother tongue imagine that you've said to your friends on the way or your children this is what you expect when you go to these things you go to the temple you hear about God at the temple or you'll hear about

[30 : 14] God from the chief priests and all the leaders of the religion the temple priests you'll hear about God if you're lucky and you'll hear it in the real Jewish language and then you turn up and a bunch of chuchters speaking in a foreign dialect from a far off nation are telling about the wonderful works of God and your home language these highlanders strangers in some random house you're like what is going on but that's the thing that's the place that was filled with mighty Russian wind it was on them that fire rested not the temple it was through them that the truth of God was being proclaimed and God was doing it in a non-Jewish language now if you're in any doubt at this point who God approves it was no longer the temple no longer Israel's religious leaders it was no longer even the nation itself that rejected their own Messiah rather it was this ragtag bunch of chuchters who were believing in Jesus the moment we've all been waiting for generations of Jews waiting for the Messiah yet they rejected him now generations of Jews waiting for the new covenant and God pouring out his spirit on all men yet the first ones who receive this not the

Jewish leaders chuchters Galileans the ones who follow Jesus whose side are you on that's the big question it's not enough to be an Israelite you do not have a birth right to the spirit of God just because you come from one of the twelve tribes rather if you believe the gospel of the twelve apostles the witnesses of the Messiah then you have a right to become children of God he will pour his spirit out on you that's the contrast that's happening here you have all these Jews bringing their two loaves from the harvest which is the same batch as the sheaf brought fifty days earlier and many have likened these two loaves to the Jews and Gentiles as we know the sheaf fifty days earlier was Jesus himself his resurrection his fruition to indestructible life a new indestructible humanity come to fruition first in Jesus the Messiah the first fruits now

Jesus pours out his spirit on his followers and they become part of the harvest like him all these Jews hear the works of God being proclaimed in a non-Jewish language and tell you see in scripture when that happens when a Jewish person you begin to hear communication about God and not in your own language historically that's when Israel has rejected God and he's gone to other nations that's what's going on it's not a good thing to hear about the works of God from a different language other than the mother tongue that's a judgment and this is the kind of theme that Peter picks up in his explanation that we'll get to next time he says that what the people are seeing and hearing is the fulfillment of what the prophet Joel spoke about that God would pour out his spirit in all flesh and when would he do this he would do it before the day judgment is coming but all who call upon the name of the Lord will be saved so Peter also quotes

Psalms it's the judgment of God's enemies and those enemies are the ones who reject the son see the nation of Israel thought the enemies were just the Romans no Jesus came to deal with sin and death and Satan and the enemies of God are the ones who reject the son that's why by the end of Acts the people were cut to the heart rejection of Jesus means judgment and this is the event with the believers being filled with God's spirit and speaking in a foreign language that indicates the last days 3,000 people at the end of Acts 2 added to the church that day now I know that sounds absolutely astounding like 3,000 came out of nowhere but this is a day when thousands and thousands and thousands are in the city it's not an unlikely number you know it's not it's a move of God yes but don't think that you ever have to do something that warrants 3,000 people in Bells Hill added in one day you would have to have a major feast day for that to happen but nonetheless it's a move of God's spirit that cut the people to the heart because

Peter preaches the gospel see when the disciples are speaking the wonderful mighty works of God in different languages I'm not sure necessarily that it's the gospel per se because Peter then goes on to tell people the gospel and tell people what's going on and it's at that point that people are cut to the heart it's that point that people ask what shall we do and he tells them but amazing thing Pentecost the harvest and we see in the church of God the Jesus followers bringing in a harvest of thousands of people and there's a number of reasons for this and the thing is some people responded by asking what it meant and others mocked and you will always get that you will always get people who don't get it you'll get some people who will ask some people who will inquire but you will always get people who don't even care about getting it and they will just be they will just mock ignorantly but these things are significant theologically strategically practically it's organically connected to the first fruits offering during

[36 : 23] Passover just as on Pentecost believers by God's spirit are connected to Jesus the risen first fruits of the harvest and also every nation under heaven was represented for one day one day that's all Pentecost was on this one day the whole world was influenced by this 120 group of Jesus followers this wee insignificant group of Jukters how could they possibly ever make a difference like that and I suppose to speak about the 3000 how could you guys any one of us me or you ever hope to make some kind of impact like that well many times throughout the bible people know how unlikely David you spoke of this last week what an unlikely group of people for God to use but he uses them in the most extraordinary way can he not do that with any one of us let me tell you God is not impressed by people's talents and abilities in the world you think about people who are incredibly gifted who die and you think what a waste of talent but they didn't even know God or glorify

God God's really not impressed imagine there was a man who owned the cattle and a thousand hills who owned all the gold in the world and he had a son and his son's friend had a little bit of money in his family son's friend had a good amount of talent but his son's friend wasn't very kind to his son you think the man would be impressed at all about this this other kid no not one bit especially when you consider that it's God that gifts people their abilities and there are some you know us any one of us you got the Trumans who are let me tell you that whole family has been very blessed with ability but they're not self-serving in it they're not they glorify God and serve others but the thing is you don't need to be you don't need to have some extraordinary ability that all comes from God anyway and God uses the same in the same way people who are just your old regular chukter from the north now he's go by south of Bells

Hill so I don't know what that says God can use any one of us and in fact doesn't he get all the more glory when people think you couldn't possibly do that God does that he uses the things that are foolish to this world things that are weak to this world that he might get the glory does that all the time he can do that here and he has what is that thing that you're waiting for what is that one thing that you're waiting for it's now clear isn't it that's the point in Acts it's now clear who's on the right side of things it's not those who have a birthright or who have an ethnicity it's those who call upon the name of the Lord it's those who put their faith and trust in Jesus who are on the right side the son of God no longer is that the temple no longer is that from the lips of the priests no longer can you rely on your ethnicity or your birthright no longer can you rely on the faith of your parents either each and every person has this decision to make on their own whose side are you on because clearly

God has marked out who he approves of the moment we've all been waiting for except it's for those who trust in Jesus the spirit of God raining down like Russell and Bethany served us with except on all who believe in the son God's dwelling place no longer the temple he dwells dwells in those who believe in his own son Jesus what's the thing that you're waiting for as an individual or as a church if you're believing in Jesus whether it feels like it or not whether you speak in foreign languages or not whether it's wind and fire or nothing God has poured out his spirit in you God dwells with you God by his spirit dwells in you would all these other things be good yeah absolutely would it be good to have ability yeah glorify God with it a pastor yeah leadership and vision yeah more resources yeah would this or that individually or as a church be good probably but is that all it is isn't there someone more powerful more significant within each and every single one of us has

God not poured his spirit out on me and you or the person sitting beside you the regular Joe believing in Jesus one of the greatest things that any person whether a pastor or a brother or sister can tell you or do is to help you see that Jesus is your shepherd that he's our pastor that he has given us everything Ephesians one we are blessed with every spiritual blessing and the heavenlies in Christ see there was a huge temple there were high priests there was a major festival but God chose something else to show his power the world can have their silver and gold and all the popularity and all the grand shows that they want but as my old boss said there's only one show in town and that's Jesus Christ you don't need you don't need permission to go and serve and act and tell people about Jesus tell people about the hope that you have God has given you everything you need and let me tell you if you feel weak in that if you feel unimpressive in that then welcome to the club this is what

[42 : 34] God does and he will do something extraordinary despite what all things look like nothing glorious nothing glamorous nothing magnificent about these disciples if anything they were looked down upon they were the rednecks the hillbillies the tuchters of the Jews and even when they did do something miraculous even still many people would mock them but with the spirit of God in them they became part of the harvest they became new creations in Christ they became the same kind of grain that Jesus is indestructible eternal glorious the hope of glory Christ in us and through them God turned the world upside down of all the people believing in Jesus there's no one less spiritual than the next no one less equipped than the next person doesn't matter if one does this thing and another one does that thing if you believe in Jesus God has poured his spirit out in you he dwells in you the new covenant is with you just as much as with the other person or with the apostles he has forgiven you he has written his law in your heart he's given eternal life to me and you he has made me and you part of his harvest the resurrection is coming he has chosen you to tell the mighty works of

God to the world so whether people ask you questions whether people mock you be confident in the truth of the gospel of Jesus we know now who God approves of we now know who the right side is was not the temple and the whole of Jerusalem and Israel judged AD 70 did Stephen not say that that was coming did Jesus not say that was coming were they not killed for it yes but we know now that the one whom God has approved is the one who believes in Jesus the one whom God gives his spirit and power is the one who believes in Jesus the one whom God equips to change the world is the one who believes in Jesus and how God does that well you don't need to do anything flashy or glamorous just open your mouth just tell people about hope in

Jesus tell people about life that only comes from the one who has life in and of himself just tell people some might mock some not some might ask some might listen just talk tell people love people love one another and watch what God does with a ragtag bunch of chooktas like us from the north amen well Russell and Bethany are going to bless us in song and then I'll come up and pray for us at the end our great and mighty God we give you thanks that you have given us life in your son Jesus God we give you thanks that you have given us your spirit to dwell within us and that by your spirit you give us power power to endure this life power to remain in faith and stand firm in faith in the son of God and power to proclaim the mighty works of

God and the good news of God and Jesus Christ to proclaim to all nations the good news of Jesus God we give you thanks that we can even be here today and I pray that you would set our hearts on things above that our minds would not be so focused on things that we cannot do at this time but things that we can do and every and any situation Lord to see that your gospel is completely unrestricted unbound that you work in all things and through all things God give us confidence in your son Jesus that in his resurrection so too we will be raised with him and that he is indeed our Lord and Savior and God give us confidence in your spirit to go and proclaim the truth of Jesus and not worry about people who would mock not worry about our own inabilities Lord help us to see that you would work in our abilities and our inabilities in our strengths and in our weaknesses and Lord that in our life and in our death you would use us to show that Jesus

Christ is the one who has life and life eternal and now to him who is able to keep us from stumbling and to present us blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy to the only God our saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord be glory majesty dominion and authority before all time and now and forever Amen Amen