

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

FILL UP BEFORE YOU GO | SUMMER ROAD TRIP

ALEX DIAZ | JULY 27, 2023

Hey, Traders Point. How's it going? Well, hey, for those of you who don't know me, my name is Alex. I get to serve as the campus pastor at our Midtown location. So huge shout out to those of you at Midtown, and at every campus or wherever you're watching online. We're so glad to be able to get together and worship the Lord and seek Him.

Week of Prayer + Fasting

Before we jump in to the teaching, I want to remind you of something that Pastor Kyle said last Sunday. We're going to begin a week of prayer and fasting. It's something we do as a staff twice a year. And this year our leaders decided to do this as a church so that we can be praying and fasting for God to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine.

Now, we believe that God has some great things in store as He continues to use us as a church, but we need to be in prayer together. So you can go do tpcc.org/prayerandfasting. You can get all of the information there.

I will point out that one of the things that we will do is we're going to pray at the exact same time of the day, every day this whole week. And I'm excited about that because wherever you go, whether it's the city or even if you have to go somewhere around the globe, you can join us in prayer at the exact same time.

It's also dear to my heart because my wife and I dated long distance for two-and-a-half years. Two different continents. And we prayed at the exact same time every day. And it actually worked out for me, she's pretty cute. So let's make sure that we are connecting to each other and doing that.

Now, we're going to be jumping in to the end of this series *Summer Road Trip* and we're going to start in Acts, chapter 19, verses 1 through 4. And it says this:



"While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?' he asked them. 'No,' they replied, 'we haven't even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.

"Then what baptism did you experience?' he asked. And they replied, 'The baptism of John.' Paul said, 'John's baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus.'" Acts 19:1-4 (NLT)

The title of this message is *Fill Up Before You Go* and there is going to be a subtitle with three words. And the three words are:

JESUS GIVES POWER

Tell the person next to you, Jesus gives power. Let's bow our heads and pray.

Father, please meet us today in this place. May Your Holy Spirit guide us, encouraging us, challenging us. Speak to us this morning. And we pray that He will guide us with Your Word from now and forever until eternity. Infinity is Your name Jesus, Son of God. Amen.

Have you ever run out of gas at the worst possible time? I know that I have, though not with my car. I ran out of gas with a lawn mower. You see, I'm a terrible gardener, believe it or not, and I decided one day that I was going to take care of my lawn. So I went to Lowes and I bought a lawn mower because I wanted to use this myself. And I knew it was a really good lawn mower because it was red and it was shiny.

So I bought this lawn mower and I brought it to my house and I put it on the lawn and I knew I wanted to get those really nice, cute lines that some of you all get when you're mowing your lawn. So I lined it up in my lawn and then I pulled the string, and nothing happened. And I realized then that I was out of fuel.



And that's when I could identify with millions of people around the world, including a woman named Bertha. Now Bertha was married to a man who liked to build things in his garage. And one of the things that he wanted to build was a car. So he worked on this for months and finally got this thing together. It wasn't much of a looker, but he wanted to build this car in order to do something for his family.

So, he tried to sell it but, because it wasn't a good looking machine, he wasn't having much luck with that. So this led him to deep depression and he started to complain and moan about it. And at some point he decided to completely give up.

His wife, being the leader that she was, decided she was going to change the situation and she took over. One day when her husband was out of the house, she took her two boys and decided to go on a road trip.

So they got into this machine that he had built in the garage and they started a road trip for about 66 miles from the place where they lived to her parents' house. And halfway through the journey they ran out of gas.

Now, you know the feeling of running out of gas when there are no gas stations around. And this was the case for Bertha and her two boys. There was nowhere near by where they could get fuel. So, being the leader and the problem solver that she was, she found a pharmacy and she figured out if she could get a solvent, a chemical that could work as fuel, she could make the machine work again.

So she bargained with the pharmacist, convinced him to sell her this stuff. She found solvent and poured it in the engine and low and behold, the car worked. And she made that machine go.

Now more things happened in the course of that trip. They ran out of water for the engine. But she used her hairpin to unclog the line and they filled it with water and kept going. At some point the brakes were not working so she found pieces of leather and put them in the brake pedals so they could work.

Finally she made it to her destination and she became very famous. In fact, she became so famous in that region that they started to sell those cars. Now, I forgot to tell you the



name of her husband. She was married to Karl Benz, the founder of Mercedes Benz. This was the first road trip ever in a vehicle. And they ran out of gas.

So 130 years later I have no gas and I'm looking at my lawn mower and I have a decision to make. Do I leave it be and call somebody to do it for me, or do I figure it out. And I thought, "I'm going to figure it out."

So, I went to the gas station and I picked up some gas and I brought it back to my house. I looked all over at this brand-new, red, shiny lawn mower and I figured out that if I could pour gas into the mower, then it would work. So I finally found one. And I knew it was the right one because it had a magic lamp on the top. Four hundred dollars down the drain, right at that moment.

I don't know if you've ever felt in your life like you are perhaps out of fuel. Or maybe you are a believer and you've been doing this Jesus following thing for decades and you're just feeling out of fuel. Or perhaps Christianity is new to you and you don't know how you're going to serve in the way that He has called you to serve.

Or perhaps you're not a Christian whatsoever. Somebody invited you here this morning or sent you the link to watch online and you're going, "I don't know about this, but what I do know is that I have experienced being out of fuel myself."

In Acts, chapter 19, we see a group of believers who are following Jesus, they are trying to figure out how to serve Him best. And Paul finds them and tells them about this fuel that will never run out. About this way to get a strength that will never leave us behind that we will be able to use forever and ever.

The content of this passage is that Paul shows up and they let him know that they have been baptized before. Now, at the time, baptism—especially in that region of the world—was somewhat common. Baptism by emersion, people would be emersed in order to show their membership to some sort of group. This was purely a thing that signified that they were following a particular leader.

The baptism of Jesus is different. If, by immersion... We are immersed in water and the Bible says that as we follow Him, as we place our trust in Him, that we receive this gift of the Holy Spirit.



And Paul tells them, “You have not been aware, you’ve not been told that when you are baptized in Jesus, that’s not like any other way that you put your membership in some other group, that is a way in which you say yes to the Savoir of the world and you receive the Holy Spirit.” And this is a context in which we find these believers.

As we finish up this series *Summer Road Trip* where we have made these stops and we have learned that we need to be people who are hospitable and usher people into the kingdom of God, we have learned that we have to disciple others and make sure that we are passing on what we’ve been taught, and that we are able to contextualize and share the message of Jesus wherever we go.

And on this layover on this road trip we are going to find out what those believers found out, that there is a fuel in the Holy Spirit that He has given us in order to accomplish the mission. Here’s what you can write down if you’re taking notes:

When Jesus gives a mission, He gives us power to accomplish it.

When Jesus gives a mission, He gives the power to accomplish it. As believers we all have been given a mission. We are not left on this earth just so that we can enjoy the grace of God alone, but so that we can be with others so we can serve God in a particular way. And we have to receive this fuel that we get from the Holy Spirit.

So we’re going to learn from these believers in these next few verses how that happened. Now, in verse 4 Paul is saying to them:

“John’s baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus.’ As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. ...

“Then Paul went to the synagogue and preached boldly for the next three months, arguing persuasively about the Kingdom of God.” Acts 19:4-8 (NLT)

Here's where we can see, in this passage:

Jesus gives power to every Christ-follower in an extraordinary way

Jesus gives power to every Christ-follower in an extraordinary way. There are many things to break down in this passage and we're not going to get a chance to dive too deeply into it because diving into the knowledge of the Holy Spirit is like trying to swim the whole ocean on the planet.

But we're going to get appetizers, an amuse bouche, if you will, where we can learn what these believers learned from the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now, who is the Holy Spirit? You see Jesus came to this earth. He actually is God in the flesh. Jesus, who was born in a manger, and lived for over three decades and then He, as a sinless sacrifice, gave His life for us. And through that He paid the penalty for our sins.

And three days later He came back to life conquering death. There are many witnesses who saw this. There is historical evidence that Jesus actually came back, that He conquered death. And He actually hung out with hundreds of people for a few months. He ate with them. He taught them. He ministered to them. And so there were many, many witnesses.

At some point He knew that, in the body, He would go up to the right hand of the Father. But He tells the disciples, "I am going to leave you a counselor. I am going to leave you a Spirit. It is My Spirit; it is the Holy Spirit that will be with you.

Now, what does the Holy Spirit do? The Holy Spirit does so many things. But there are a few that I can share with you in the short time that we have left. For example the Holy Spirit gives guidance.

I've been getting into baseball recently because my son has been playing. And he's so excited. I'm learning so much. I've been watching major league games so that I can



learn how to do that. And I saw that some of the pitchers were able to now get some sort of direction from a device that they use now that's called PitchCom.

Through this device the catcher doesn't have to do signs any more but the pitcher can receive this information and hear it and then he can throw the ball in the particular way that he needs to throw it.

Now the thing with PitchCom is that it is good for pitching in a major league baseball game, but it only happens at a certain time of the day at a certain time of each year.

As believers we have guidance and the presence of the Holy Spirit who is with us every day of our lives that we don't have to turn off because He is with us and He gives us direction.

Now, the Holy Spirit also gives us gifts. He empowers us in extraordinary ways. The New Testament mentions in several places how the Holy Spirit does that. And Paul doesn't only talk to the Ephesian church, he also talks to the Corinthian church about this. In 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, verses 4 through 11 he says:

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

"To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

"All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines." 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 (NIV)

What is he saying here? This is not an exhaustive list, but he is saying, "The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to have extraordinary wisdom and knowledge. He gives us the ability



to have faith, to be able to pray for healing that will happen either overnight or over time, to pray for miraculous workings of Jesus, to deliver prophecy and to give a sermon, even to be able to deliver the Word of God in a way that other people can understand.” There are so many ways in which the Holy Spirit gives to us.

Now, there are a few words here that may trip some of us up because in a church like ours there are people who come from many different traditions. And one of them, for example, is the word *tongues*. Sometimes when we read this word we think of the fact that there are people who we have observed in the past who have done this in front of us and we may not understand it.

In the original language that word actually meant *language*. That may be a little out of context for English speakers because we don’t use the word *tongue* for language. I don’t tell you, “Hey, I am speaking the tongue of English right now.” Or, “I am fluent in the Spanish tongue.” We don’t use it that way. That would be weird. But what we do use is the word *language*.

In other languages, though, those words are interchangeable. So in the Spanish language, we do use the word *tongue* in order to denote language and we also use the word *language*.

The reason I’m saying that is because one of a couple of things have been happening. And I believe that we can explore that and receive that.

It’s either that these believers were receiving a language that was given to them so that other people could hear the Word of God through the gospel, this happened in Acts, chapter 2 when they received the Holy Spirit and they began to speak in all of these languages and people who were visiting from other places of the Roman Empire could understand in their language, or it could also be a prayer language, something they are receiving in order to minister to the Lord and to their hearts. And so, either way, we can connect with God in this way.

But what I do want to say is this. The line that we need to draw is this. There are some extremist interpretations that say that in order for us to show or display our salvation, we need to have the gift of tongues. And that is not the case. It is not what we see in the Bible. What we see in the Bible is that we are saved because we have put our faith in



Christ, because we have said, “Yes, Jesus. You are the way, the truth, and the life. And I go to You, only You.”

Now, there is another word in here that may also trip us, which is the word *prophecy*. And sometimes when we hear the word *prophecy* we may think of an Eight Ball. Or we may think of some sort of oracle or magic lamp. And it really is not that. In the original language the word *prophecy* means to speak forth. It is the forth telling of the Word of God. So there may be revelation that God gives and we forth tell that.

There is the Word of God, so whenever you see teaching that is happening whether in your small group, when you encourage one another with a Word from the Bible, when you see preaching in a Christ centered, Christ believing church like this one, that is also speaking forth the truth of God. And we are able to tap into the power of God in a way that is very special.

Now, I know that there is so much more that we can say about this, but I’ve been trying to figure out a way to be able to find a principle that we can use for this so that as we go on our own journey we can continue to feel the way the Holy Spirit works.

So I was meeting with a very respected theologian called Landan Rose. For those of you who don’t know, Pastor Landan is one of our pastors here on staff. And I love connecting with him. And the way that he shared this principle with me, I think, is very appropriate. He said: “Prophecy is God speaks, we speak.” And I just think that is beautiful.

God speaks through His Holy Spirit, through His Word, and we believers, Christ-followers, then speak and we deliver the Good News. And we do that because we have been empowered by the Holy Spirit.

You may be wondering, “Well, how am I gifted? I don’t see any of the things that you mentioned or that Paul mentions to the Corinthian church or anything in the New Testament. I don’t see that in me.” If that is you, I want to help bring this down to the molecular level with five questions.

The first question is this:



What does the Church say?

Here's what I mean. If there is a gift that you think that you have, something that you think you're good at that you may be able to serve the church with, then what do people around you say? Christ-followers—what is their reaction? Do they say, "This is something that you should continue to do." Or do they run away?

For example, if you love singing and you feel that God has called you to sign up for the Worship Team but every time you sing people run, that may be a sign that that is not your gift.

But let's say you have the gift of hospitality or that you are able to minister to people or that you are a great teacher for children and people see this and they affirm you in this way, Christ-followers tell you, "This ministered to me because of the way that God is using you."

It doesn't mean that you have to be perfect now. No. We are never perfect, but we can identify ways in which our passions can meet needs and the church can affirm that.

We can also ask:

What does the Spirit say to you?

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit, another thing that He does, is He gives us the power to receive peace that surpasses all understanding. As believers we can leverage this peace when we are looking for direction. The Holy Spirit can give us a peace that most people do not understand.

You have seen it in other believers when they go through very difficult times and they are able to have a peace that surpasses all understanding. So if the Spirit is putting that in your heart, it may be that what you are passionate about is the gift that He has given you.



Also:

What does the Bible say?

There is not going to be a gift that God gives you that is not mentioned in the Bible, at the very least in principle. Some of you may say, "Well, the Bible doesn't mention Kids' Ministry." That is true. The Bible doesn't say Kids' Ministry. But Jesus does say, "Let the children come to me because theirs is the kingdom of heaven." There is a principle that we can find there.

Does it give me joy?

Now notice I'm not saying, "Does it make you happy?" It can make you happy, the way that you are gifted as you serve God in this way, but you may be called to serve Him in a very difficult time. And if that is what is supposed to happen, then you want to have joy because happiness is fleeting, but joy in Him is everlasting.

Does it give others joy?

Are you able to minister to other people and to do that in a way that lets them know that they are loved by God.

So we have made it very specific and very accessible here. Hopefully you all received a card on your way in. If not you can go pick one up on the way out, but it is a card where we have marked different areas where you can serve here at Traders Point.

The majority of us are going to be called to serve in our local church. There may be others who are going to be called in other parts of the world, maybe other cities or regions. But, as we are called here, and the Bible says that He dictates the times and the places where we are to live and work and breathe, that means that we are to get connected in our local churches to minister to the body. And to do that in a way that we have been gifted.



Some of you may be thinking, “Well, I don’t want to do it because it’s *just* greeting, it’s *just* babysitting, it’s *just* connecting tables.” And if that is you, I want to encourage you to not have an attitude that says *just* fill in the blank because anything you do for God is for the kingdom.

I want to illustrate this with a story. It is a story of my friend, Eric. I met Eric when we were serving in Florida years ago. And Eric told me what he had experienced in his life. Eric had been far from God for most of his life. He was so far from God that he was working as a video editor for a film industry for adults. And he was a frequent attender of night clubs and places like that.

He did that because he wanted to fill the hole in his heart with all of that. But, at some point he realized that he couldn’t and he told me that he was in one of those night clubs and he realized at that point, “None of this is filling me. I’ve been pursuing this for years and none of it is giving me what I am seeking. I think I’m done. I’m done with this life.” And he made the decision that he was going to end his life on that same day.

So he got in his car and he started driving. And as you would expect, traffic in south Florida is always there. There is always traffic. So he didn’t think too much of it. Except on this one street there was a man who was out with what I call a light saber in a vest. You’ve seen them because have volunteers here to do that out in the parking lot.

And this man was moving the light saber in a way that was basically moving traffic into the parking lot of a church because it was a Sunday morning. Eric gets a little frustrated but he decided he needed to go the bathroom so might as well just stop by the church.

So he parks his car, goes into the lobby and guest experience volunteers chased after him, but he ignored them and said, “I’m not here for what you all are doing. This is not for me. I’m here to use the bathroom because I have an appointment to get to.”

So he walks to the bathroom and one of the guest experience volunteers had in mind to figure out how to minister to him. So when he came out and realized, once he met Eric outside of the bathroom, that he couldn’t get him into the auditorium, he decided to give him a gift. And he said, “Just wait here before you leave. I have to run in and get something.”

He found a Bible and put it in Eric's hands and Eric took it, got in his car, and drove for a couple of hours down to the Florida Keys. He found a dock. He parked his car. Got out. Walked on it. And here's the way that Eric described this to me. He said, "The breeze was hitting my face and I was about to jump when I felt a nudge that I needed to read that book."

So Eric took a few steps back and he got in his car and he read for hours. And he read about the abundant life he could have in Jesus, about how He forgives our sins no matter how big, about the fact that He died for him and that He gave His life and came back to life for him, that He loved him that much. And with all that love, at that moment, he gave his life to Jesus.

And you see how this guest experience volunteer who did that, that person was not *just* greeting. That person was ministering. That person gave the best sermon Eric had ever heard.

So, the way that we have to understand what serving at our local church is that whatever we do is helping and getting hopeless people connected to the hope and the help that Jesus can give. And we do that in many different ways, but we do it in ways that will give Him glory because He gives us power in extraordinary ways to serve Him.

Continuing to read in verse 9. It says:

"But some became stubborn, rejecting his message and publicly speaking against the Way. So Paul left the synagogue and took the believers with him. Then he held daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus." Acts 19:9 (NLT)

Jesus gives power to withstand and adapt in the face of opposition.

Here's the other thing that we can learn from these believers. Jesus gave them power to withstand and adapt in the face of opposition. I love the reaction that these believers had.

Paul is basically using the same play that he did wherever he went to start a church, which was this. He was going to the synagogue first. He would preach a sermon. People



would throw tomatoes at him saying, "You're wrong." And then he would take the ones who believed and they would just simply find a different venue. And I love that.

I love that he didn't sit there going, "Oh, that was a terrible sermon. They are not listening to me." He was so compelled and so persuasive that he took the people who would follow Jesus in that moment and would go find a different venue because the church was able to be adaptable and flexible. And when I say the church, I mean you and me, the people of God.

It reminds me of the way that water works. We had a house where we lived at the bottom of this hill. We would get a lot of moisture. So we had to prepare to sell it. And part of that was treating the crawl space in order to eliminate the moisture.

So the contractor came in and blocked all of the walls with plastic and then he said that we needed to spend more money and install what is called a sump pump, which basically takes water out.

And I was a little put off by the fact that we needed to spend extra money on this because we were already covering the crawl space with plastic. So I told the contractor, "Why do we need something else?" And he said this, "Because water always finds a way."

The church is the same way. The church of Jesus, the reason that we are still reproducing, multiplying believers after 2,000 years and will continue until Jesus comes back is that the church always finds a way.

This is why a church grows deeper and larger in the face of persecution. Around the world this is, for example, why we see the church in regions of the world like China where, before the civil war in 1949 Christians in China were about half a million. And then beyond 70 years later, they multiplied and there are more than 60 million and possibly even way more than that.

In Iran, for example, Christianity is growing annually at a rate of 19.6 percent. In Afghanistan (you know we had a war there) Christianity has been growing there at a rate of 16.7 percent. The church always finds a way. Amen.



And, by the way, I know that you are like this. Some people here are married and the reason that you know that you are like this is because some of you all men were very persistent to get the woman you are sitting next to right now. And the reason I know that it is very clear to tell that you all married up. And so did I. It takes one to know one. We were persistent.

And those of you who are single, you might be thinking, "Well, that doesn't apply to me." Yes it does. You're persistent with the relationships you want and the experiences that you pursue.

One of the bands that I love the most is You Too. I love You Too. When we lived in Florida I found out that they were going to have a concert in Tampa, which was about four hours from where we lived.

My wife and I decided we were going to go and get great seats. So we saved. We bought those tickets months in advance. And we went to this concert and you all, it was amazing. I worshipped in that concert. I worshipped Jesus in that concert. It was so great.

Best concert of my life. We drove back to Miami. And then, months later, I find out that You Too was going to be playing in Miami, basically in my back yard. So I told my wife, "We have to go." And she said, "Why? We already went?" And I said, "Because they are here. They are going to come here to my back yard." By the way, first world problem. Nobody does this.

But I wanted to go so we saved again and we got really good tickets. And then the day of the concert came a few months later and I go to find the tickets. And guess what? The tickets were lost. Somebody had lost the tickets. So I was devastated. I was so sad. And my wife, she went online and found the cheapest tickets that we could find.

So we got to the stadium and we climbed up as far as the nose bleeds were and even beyond that. These tickets were behind the jumbotron, they were that far away. The air, the breeze, caught the music of You Too. But we did it because we wanted to because of the love, the passion that we had for that. You all, we always find a way for the things that we love.



But the reason we do that as believers is not in order for our name to be known or because of some selfish desire. Here's a verse in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 2, verse 2 that shows us:

*"But after we had already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had the boldness in our God to speak to you the gospel of God amid much opposition."*¹
Thessalonians 2:2-4 (NASB)

The reason that we serve God even when there is opposition is so that others can know, suddenly we have the boldness to show with our actions and speak with our words the gospel of Jesus so that other people will know and come to Him so that they can find the hope that we have received in Him. And that is the purpose that we have. Somebody said it this way:

"A certain amount of opposition is a great help to a man. Kites rise against, not with the wind." Lou Nicholes, *Missionary/Author*

And so opposition and persecution will be part of what we go through. In our part of the world we're not experiencing persecution because our lives are usually not in danger by preaching the gospel.

But we do experience some sort of opposition that is relational. People may make fun of you because you are serving in the church. People may see that you are different because you have found Jesus. And that is alright.

You might find obstacles when serving God, but because we're doing this so that His name can be glorified and others can know we do it. And we will always find a way because Jesus gives us the power to withstand and adapt in the midst of opposition.

Now we keep reading in verse 17. It says:

"The story of what happened spread quickly all through Ephesus, to Jews and Greeks alike. A solemn fear descended on the city, and the name of the Lord Jesus was greatly honored. Many who became believers confessed their sinful practices.

"A number of them who had been practicing sorcery brought their incantation books and burned them at a public bonfire." They were doing witchcraft. They took all of the witchcraft books and they burned them. "The value of the books was several million dollars. So the message about the Lord spread widely and had a powerful effect." Acts 19:17-20 (NLT)

I love that. I love that:

Jesus gives power so that the world may know Him

I love that Jesus gives us power through the Holy Spirit so that we can stand and adapt in the midst of opposition. And I love the fact that Jesus gives us power so that the world will know who He is—so that the world will know who He is.

It reminds me of the prayer of Jesus that we see in John 17. On the night before He was betrayed, Jesus is ministering to His best friends, to the disciples, and they are having supper together. In fact, they are having communion together. And He is connecting them to what He is about to do. And then he prays. And His prayer is so powerful that they heard it and they memorized it and wrote it down for us to have.

And there's a verse in chapter 17 in the book of John that tells us what Jesus was saying. He said:

"I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me." John 17:21 (NLT)

He's, once again, giving us the objective for how we are supposed to follow Him. It's so that the world will know. We receive this power in the Holy Spirit so that the world will know who He is.

And we receive this power so that we can pursue Him in unity. In some sort of counter cultural, counter intuitive unity that allows us to come together—those of us who have different backgrounds—in order to show who He is because of the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

And notice that when they were spreading the word about there was the idea of it having a powerful effect. They were having a powerful effect. And I don't know how that hits you but I know that for me, I want to feel that effect. I want to see the Holy Spirit doing things in my life that are extraordinary.

A few weeks ago I was having lunch with Pastor Bart from our Carmel campus. And we were talking about the things that give Bart life. He loves to talk about discipling others and reproduction and multiplication. And I love hearing him talk about all of that.

We were having lunch down the street here in Whitestown and at some point we see an elderly woman begin to lean to the side of her chair. So her husband sees this and he begins to hit her to try to get her to respond. And they slowly bring her down.

Now, I don't know if you've ever been trained in CPR, I've been trained in CPR three times in my life with the dummy and all. But in this moment, I was the dummy because I did not jump in to do CPR. I was scared of what was happening. Luckily there was somebody else in the restaurant who was able to do CPR on this woman.

So while this was happening we looked at each other and we decided to pray. And as we were praying there were other people in the restaurant who were believers. How cool is that? I don't if they come here or not, but they were believers. And we all start praying as we are eating Thai food. I mean we were just praying with bad breath. And we were praying that the Holy Spirit would come down in this moment.

And then, after a few tries, the lady who was administering CPR actually said, "She's not responsive. There are no vitals." But she continues to do that and we continue to pray. And then at some point she took a breath and she came back to life. And Bart and I looked at each other and we go, "Whoa. That was the best lunch we've ever had."

Now, you may bring that down and go, "Well, there are so many things happening there." Sure. But I believe that the presence of the Holy Spirit was there. There were many of us



believers who were praying for that. Something powerful happened in that moment. And that is the kind of power that the Holy Spirit gives—the power to see Him.

Now, He may not always answer in that way. For other people He may answer in a different way because He dictates our seasons and how long we have on this earth. But He will always answer with this powerful effect of the Holy Spirit.

And I love that, going back to chapter 19, that he says in verse 21:

“Afterward Paul felt compelled by the Spirit to go over to Macedonia and Achaia before going to Jerusalem. ‘And after that,’ he said, ‘I must go on to Rome!’” Acts 19:21 (NLT)

Now there may be a handful of you here who are actually called to that part of the world. I know that I am not, though I would like to be called to Italy because it’s awesome. But for the rest of us who are called here to this time and place, we have to figure out the Holy Spirit and how we are being called and empowered.

What is our Rome? What is our destination? This is not to say that we don’t enjoy the journey as we travel with Jesus, but what is that season that is in front of us that He is preparing us for so that we can serve Him, so that we can be with Him and be able to embark on a journey that gives Him glory.

So what is that for you? Is it serving here or somewhere else? Is it serving in the region, in this part of the world, or somewhere else?

And some of you may be wondering, “Well, I want to do that but I haven’t even decided to follow Jesus.” And today is the day that you are receiving this and learning that Jesus died for you. He died for your sins and gave you full forgiveness. And it’s a life that He wants to give you, this gift of the Holy Spirit so in a very specific way your life can fulfill what He has planned for you so that you can give Him glory.

So, as we finish this series *Summer Road Trip* the idea is not to look at that phrase and think to ourselves, “My road trip and these thoughts, spiritually, are over.” Far from it. This is just the beginning. And the encouragement today is to be fueled by the Holy Spirit so that we can serve Him in the way in which He has called us.



Now, we're going to finish. I'm going to ask you to please stand up, wherever you are stand up. And I want you to open your hands as a symbol of the fact that you're about to receive something.

And what is that? Instead of finishing with a prayer, we're going to finish with a benediction. This missionary who was in Ireland for a long time, his name was St. Patrick, would create these benedictions to bless people with prayers when they would embark on new seasons or new journeys, especially.

He wrote one that I want to speak over us as we decide today to start being fueled by the Holy Spirit to usher people into the kingdom, to disciple others, to bring the Word to others in their own language, and to be empowered in a way that He has called us to serve.

This is the benediction:

May the strength of God pilot YOU
May the power of God preserve YOU
May the wisdom of God instruct YOU
May the hand of God protect YOU
May the way of God direct YOU
May the shield of God defend YOU

May the host of God guard YOU against the snares of evil and the temptations of the world

May Christ be with YOU
Christ before YOU
Christ in YOU
Christ over YOU



May the Lord's salvation be always YOURS
this day and forever more

Amen.

