

# The Life Challenge

*"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10*

**Sermon Series:** Empowered  
**Title:** The Same Spirit is Alive Today!  
**Speaker:** Mike Olynyk  
**Text:** Acts 1-28  
**Date:** March 11, 2018



## WARM-UP

Does this sound familiar? You walked from the parking lot to the grocery store and you saw a homeless person sitting there, hoping someone would help her/him. You walked by. A few minutes later, you came out with your groceries and you saw the same person a second time:

- What did you do?
- What was your thought process between seeing the homeless person first and seeing the person the second time?
- Did you ever **really intend** to help that person? Why or why not?

## DISCUSSION

**The "Big Three" in Acts:** The Holy Spirit in unprecedented ways with incredible power!

1. **Pentecost:** The Coming of the Holy Spirit: Acts 1-2:41
  - Promised in John 14:15: The Advocate, Helper, Counsellor
  - Receiving and filling of power the Holy Spirit: Acts 1:8; 2:4
  - Saul of Tarsus becomes Paul the Apostle of Jesus: Acts 9
2. **The Christian Mission to the Jewish World:** Acts 2:42 – 12:24
  - Peter preaches to Jews in Jerusalem: 2:14 – 4:21
  - Stephen is martyred: 6:8 – 7:60
  - Church scattered and spreads the Gospel: 8:1 – 12:25
3. **The Mission to the Gentile World:** 12:35 – 28:31
  - Paul's Missionary Journeys:
    - i. Acts 13–14: through Asia Minor (Turkey today)
    - ii. Acts 16–20: Mission to Macedonia etc. (Greece today)
    - iii. Acts 21–28: Paul from Jerusalem to Rome:
      - Paul in Rome: 28:17-30 – free to preach

**That was then; this is now:**

Pastor Mike's proposition: The same Holy Spirit who was moving powerfully in ("rocked") the world in the Book of Acts, **is the same Spirit who is alive today!**

- The issue amongst North American Christians – **Inoculated** against the power of the Holy Spirit:
  - \* **Spiritual warfare:** Satan is alive and well today attempting to 'knock us down.' He has no place in Christ's ministry. He is already defeated.
  - \* **Fear and timidity:** II Timothy 1:7
  - \* **Lack of expectation:** Not owning the whole thing. We need to "believe and be expectant that the Holy Spirit **IS** alive and well today with us today."
- **Seeking empowerment:** "Owning the Spirit"
  - \* Do it together – loving church people deeply, no solo missionaries

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## DISCUSSION

- \* Responding in the moment in God-ordained conversations in random opportunities
- \* Enter into deep conversations with those who are seekers
- \* Get "jacked on the Holy Spirit":
  - ⇒ Lay down our crowns and let Jesus be King
  - ⇒ Listen to the whisper and expect God to act in amazing ways
  - ⇒ Rely totally on the power of the Spirit of the living God

### Applications, Ponderings:

A quick review of our key priorities—stuff we need to move from **information to transformation**:

### INFORMATION:

#### A Church on Mission:

- We are "**following** hard after Jesus, **becoming** like Him, **turning** people to God, and **engaging** in the extraordinary life He gives."
- Three Key Vision Statements:
  1. **Prayer engagement:** "...we engage prayer as the first point of action in all things..."
  2. **Holy Spirit Empowerment:** "...empowered by, responding to and walking in the fullness of the Holy Spirit...doing and experiencing things only possible when the living God is at work."
  3. **Difference-making faith:** "...we are a people who make God's kingdom visible in their homes, neighborhoods, workplaces schools and places of recreation..."

**TRANSFORMATION:** We allow the Holy Spirit to re-align our thoughts, our attitudes and our actions

Ponder Dallas Willard's statement:

"...we fail to be disciples only because we do not decide to be (a disciple). We do not **intend** to be disciples. It is the power of decision and the **intention** over our life that is missing."

### Think of this process:

#### INSPIRATION

Pastor Mike inspired us in his message

#### INTENTION

We need to **intend and decide** to be an apprentice of Jesus

#### PRACTICISM

We obey the Spirit's prompting **and do it**

- How does this statement challenge you? Agree, disagree?
- Where do you see spiritual warfare going on in your daily work place, neighbourhoods, recreational places, schools etc.
- Do you agree with Pastor Mike that we have been inoculated against the power of the Spirit; that we tend to be timid and fearful?
- In view of the message's challenges, how should our group pray?
- What kinds of commitments might our group like to make?