



## **The Royal Task-Part 2**

### **Serious About Our Assignment**

**Pastor Mike Fabarez**

**Pastor Mike** Well, I suppose it's true of everyone in the room, when you face some formidable task that you say under your breath or maybe even out loud, I just can't do this. It's just too much. It's too hard. There's got to be someone better for this job than me. There's that experience, of course, I think so common in our lives. What may be surprising is that it's very, very common to read of that experience in the Bible. When it comes to things that God is asking people to do we see that all the time, passage to passage, biblical character to biblical character, even in the most fruitful, productive, revered heroes in the Bible, in one way or another they all seem to say I can't do it. It's just too much, too hard. There's got to be someone else that God can pick who would be better equipped to do the job that you're asking me to do. But it seems that God ensures that as a response because he keeps picking certain kinds of people to do these really big tasks. You've got Pharaoh for instance in the Old Testament, he needs to be confronted, there needs to be some kind of persuasive speech given to Pharaoh. So who does God pick to give it? Well, he picks Moses who, apparently by the Hebrew phrase that he uses to describe himself, it's some kind of a speech impediment that he has. It's a Hebrew word that talks about the heaviness of his mouth, of his lips. He just can't speak right. And that is the guy that God says, here, you go talk to the most powerful man in the ancient world.

**Pastor Mike** Or when there needed to be a commander of an army, a commander-in-chief that's going to lead a fighting force. It's very important with all these neighboring countries that wanted to attack Israel, so we need a real warrior here and God doesn't pick a Patton kind of person, he picks a young teenage boy whose only mastered weapon is a slingshot of all things. You've got the sins of Israel piling up. The leaders need to be confronted, the elders of Israel need to be confronted with their compromise. So God picks a young Jeremiah. Inexperienced, never taught, never spoke. Picks him out of obscurity and says, yeah, you're going to go speak to the most important and revered people of our generation and tell them they're wrong. Of course he says, like we often say, it's too much, too hard. I can't do it.

**Pastor Mike** God needs to raise the incarnate Son of God. We need someone, of course, to raise this child who's experienced, who knows what they're doing, who has a great background, it would seem, of good training and upbringing and instead he goes to the dusty town of Nazareth and he picks a young teenage girl and says you're going to be the one to raise the Son of God. All the promises of the Messiah bound up in that child and you're going to raise that kid.

**Pastor Mike** Got to take the gospel to the Roman Empire. Traveling around before the great leaders, the political leaders and the Herods of the day and we need someone to speak before those folks. Of course, you're familiar with the Apostle Paul in his writings in the New Testament. You might even envision this guy is so capable that just rushes onto the stage to do his work and proclaim these truths to all the elite of the ancient world. But if you read carefully his autobiographical sections of his writings and you really look at the whole composite of who he is,



I mean, people have rightly diagnosed the Apostle Paul with a pretty serious case of stage fright. He came to speaking engagements fearful and trembling and afraid.

**Pastor Mike** Then the 11 who we meet here in Acts Chapter 1. I mean, they're fishermen, they're from the lower classes, they're uncouth, they're inelegant, they just don't do things that well, at least by the world's standards, and God entrusts to them a message and says you are going to turn this generation upside down and transform this culture. I mean, God is picking those kinds of people who say what we often say about a variety of things in our life but certainly when it comes to spiritual things in our lives when God asks us to do something, it's easy to stand back and say, "God, there's got to be someone better equipped to do this than me." And yet God says I need you to do what that first generation of people did. I pick the low things of the world. The simple and seemingly uneducated in the elegant things of the world to do the most important work. We've got to take seriously the assignment we have the way that first generation of Christians took seriously their assignment because Christianity is done with our generation if we don't pick up the mantle. If we don't take the baton and move that message into our world. It's our responsibility.

**Pastor Mike** It's why we're called evangelical Christians. We're supposed to be evangelistic, taking this message to our peers, our generation, not only here but everywhere. And one of the first verses you'll learn as a kid in church about that need for us to take the message beyond ourselves, it certainly was Acts Chapter 1 verse 8 and we've reached that section of Acts Chapter 1 in our second installment of our study of Acts. And we're reading these four verses, verses 4 through 8 this morning to try and understand how this very simple command that is so difficult, though it's simple, to comprehend how we could take a message and transform a culture with it. Well, they took their job seriously. It's time for us to take our job seriously. It's a message you don't really need me for because even from the time we were a little kid this is a very simple passage to apply. They were called to be witnesses. You're called to be witnesses.

**Pastor Mike** But before we get to all of that, this passage begins with some very important and really theologically rich statements that we need to understand. Like a kiosk that shows us where we're at. It's good to know where we're at. Certainly as this passage stands between the testaments to understand exactly what's going on here in a pivotal chapter, probably more pivotal than most of us recognize. In Acts Chapter 2, things are changing in such a radical way. We need to understand that.

**Pastor Mike** So let's pick up the story where we left off last time. Acts Chapter 1 verse 4. Let's study these verses, verses 4 through 8 this morning. Before we get to that very simple application, that really is what I hope and I've prayed and our pastors have been praying you leave with a renewed sense of resolve to do what the subtitle says, to take this assignment seriously, that you and I would at least understand why this is so critically important in light of God's big plan. And so we're going to look at that as we jump back into this narrative as it says in verse 4 that, "While he was staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem." He adds a passage about going out, that's what verse 8 says, but it starts with stay where you're at.



**Pastor Mike** Don't leave the city. But wait. "Wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, 'you heard for me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.'" "Bapitzo" every time we have a baptism up here, if you're an old school Compass Bible Church person, I'm sorry to be repeating this but that's one of those words, like the word we saw last week with apostle, it's transliterated into English, it's not translated. So to transliterate this old word in Greek into English, the Greek New Testament, of course, into English, we don't have a translation, we need to understand what the word means or it's just nonsense on the page. We just kind of try to pick up a little bit from the context. Well, here's two completely different contexts. Being baptized with water and being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Well, bapitzo, if you were to translate it, as I've said countless times from this platform, it means to be immersed, it means to be dunked, it means to be dipped in, enveloped in. You can take somebody, a physical body, and you can envelop it, dunk it, submerged it in water, or you can take a person and who they are and envelop them, dunk them, submerge them in the Holy Spirit.

**Pastor Mike** You're either baptized with water or you're baptized with the Holy Spirit. Those are two of the major distinctions of what that word means in the New Testament. Clearly he says John was out there baptizing in water and John even said the one who comes after me is mightier than I am, I'm not worthy to untie his sandals, he's going to come baptizing you with the Holy Spirit.

**Pastor Mike** And while that's been kind of a "whoo-hooo-whoo" kind of a statement these days, you need to get those images out of your mind to understand what that means in the context of what's happening here as we head toward Acts Chapter 2. When all of that happens in Acts Chapter 2 at this particular point, 40 days after Christ was resurrected, you've got a group of people being told. "Remember the promise? The Father said this was going to happen and I'm reminding you of it just like I did during my earthly ministry before my crucifixion, just like John the Baptist did when he was dunking people in water. There is going to be a submerging of your life into with the Holy Spirit and it's coming soon."

**Pastor Mike** It all happens on the day of Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus was crucified on the Passover. Pentecost. That's where the word comes from. 40 days it says in the context here, he's been teaching them about the Kingdom of God. Now, we've got about a week left, if you factor in the weekend of Jesus in the grave, you've now got about a week left before this happens not many days from now.

**Pastor Mike** So when they come together they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" Now a lot of people throw the apostles under the bus, like they often do, by saying, "Well, that question comes out of nowhere." I've read commentaries this week, and you know, they downplay it. Listen. Stop. This is not a bad question to ask right here. Because if you know anything about what Jesus taught regarding the work of the Holy Spirit, which of course is just harkening back to Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 34, Ezekiel 36, all the promises of what God is going to do in the future, it relates to the Spirit of God and it's always in the context of the establishment of the Kingdom of God in Israel. It's a promise he makes to Israel and Judah. It's about those 12 tribes.



**Pastor Mike** And if the Spirit's going to come like the Father promised and Jesus taught about it, building on the prophet's promise of the Old Testament, then of course we're going to ask this question. I guess if we're going to get the Spirit, we're going to be baptized with the Spirit, well then, I guess the kingdom is the next thing. So is that what that means? Not many days from now you're going to ascend the throne. Israel is going to be the prominent nation. All the nations of the world as the prophet said will come and flood into Jerusalem and bring their wealth into the city and there will be an unmitigated, unfettered governmental leadership of the throne of David. The Government will extend and the extent of his government there'll be no end. Is that going to happen? Now your resurrected, you've got a resurrected body. Is this when the kingdom is going to be restored? It's a good question if you're going to talk about the Spirit coming and the promise of the Father.

**Pastor Mike** Jesus then redirects and gives them a whole new perspective. He doesn't say that's not going to happen, he just says it's not going to happen now and I'm not going to tell you when it's going to happen. He said to them, verse 7, "It's not for you to know times or seasons." There is a calendar but you're not going to know it because, "The father has," set those he's, "fixed those in his own authority." But here's the thing, don't worry about setting times and dates. Don't worry about trying to figure out and discern the calendar as it relates to God's eschatological future. What you need to do is understand this: the promise of the Spirit? Yeah, it's coming. "You're going to receive that power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you will be," here's the task at hand, "my witnesses."

**Pastor Mike** Here's the verse you learned as a kid, if you came to church as a kid. "You're going to receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you'll be my witnesses," and it's going to start right where they're at. They're staying, as it says in verse 4, in the city of Jerusalem. They're going to start there by witnessing, saying all these things about Christ and who he is and what he did, how he relieved the problem that we have before God, that we deserve punishment but we don't get punishment because Christ took it all upon himself. You're going to testify to all of that, that changes people's status before God. The willing submission to the authority and dominion of Christ as the King, that's the Kingdom. Right?

**Pastor Mike** At least for now, that stage of the kingdom before the kingdom is restored to Israel, all of that you're going to start to witness about that in Jerusalem and then in Judea, the surrounding environs of the capital city in the southern part of Israel, and Samaria. You might remember that sandwiched between Galilee and Judah down south. You've got this period, this section, this geography between the two where you had all these folks from the ten tribes who had intermarried with the Assyrians back in the 7th century B.C. The Jews hated the Samaritans and the Samaritans hated the Jews. Jesus obviously stretched out his hand of evangelism to the woman at the well, one of the very familiar stories of Jesus talking about the Samaritans and how they should be reached with the gospel. Well here, you're going to go reach them with the gospel not only in Judea but also Samaria. Then speaking of spreading the gospel, we're just going to take this to the ends of the earth.

**Pastor Mike** Even by the time we get to Acts 28 we're not even to the ends of the earth. If they thought about the ends of the earth they might have thought about the Straits of Gibraltar all the



way out to Spain. I mean, they thought beyond Rome but certainly we're going to get it at least to Rome by the end of the book of Acts. And Paul, as he says elsewhere, wants to take the gospel message, as he says in the book of Romans, to Spain.

**Pastor Mike** So, here's the application in verse 8 that is so easy. If they did this and carried the gospel beyond the first century then here we are 20 centuries later in the 21st century, then we've got to take it to our generation. That's obvious. That's simple. But let's just deal with this whole passage and at least understand some theological foundations for where we're at in the timeline and why this is such a big deal that we have this thing called the baptism with the Spirit that is supposed to, in some way, empower us to do the work that's still ongoing and started in the first century.

**Pastor Mike** So we need to understand, as I want you to jot down in your worksheet today, "Understand God's 'New' Plan." I put new in quotation marks because it's not new in the sense that he says, well the old plan wasn't working and let's go to Plan B. This is not Plan B. History in God's timeline is all linear, it's heading somewhere. He's doing something. There's that progression and that linear eschaton, that future end to where he's going and it's going to end with the eternal state, the New Jerusalem. That's what we know of in the Scripture, the eternal state. That reality, though, as we move toward it, we're going to move past the old to the new.

**Pastor Mike** That's the first thing I want you to jot down, Letter "A". There's something that's happening that's new now. The first component of that, really the essence of that, is something we call the New Covenant. Jot that down. There's a new covenant that's being inaugurated, at least in this passage, look at verse 4, we're supposed to wait for the promise of the Father. The promise of the Father was, though it was hallmarked by the Holy Spirit and we'll talk about that in a minute, it was this promise that the old thing was going to be replaced by the new thing. We call it the New Covenant. The first thing you learn about the Bible, right, when you were a kid when you were kind of getting the lay of the land. There is an old side and new side. There's the Old Testament and the New Testament. Testament is another word for Covenant. There's the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. That's an oversimplification of everything in the Bible but that's not a bad place to start. Thirty-nine books of the Old Testament. Twenty-seven books of the New Testament. Old - new.

**Pastor Mike** You've got the Old Testament, the Old Covenant, the old promise, there's another word for it. The old agreement, the old arrangement and you have the New Covenant, the new arrangement, the new contract, the new way God's going to do it. Now all of that was foreseen in the Old Testament and we need to understand it. So I want to take you to Hebrews Chapter 8 for just a minute and I want to look at how it's described from the New Testament perspective. The Old Testament was not like, "Oops, we tried something and it didn't work," even though in this passage it's going to be described as having a fault, the reality is the fault was in us. And that's exactly the purpose of the Old Covenant to point out that fault.

**Pastor Mike** So let's look at this. Turn to Hebrews Chapter 8. Call that up on your phone or your device or look it up in the old-fashioned Gutenberg Bible there in front of you and let's look at verse 7. Hebrews Chapter 8 verse 7. "For if that first covenant," that first agreement, that first



arrangement, that Old Testament stuff, "if that had been faultless," if there were no problem with it, "there'd be no occasion to look for a second. But he," God, "finds fault with them when he says..." Now he's going to quote one of the key passages about the New Covenant, the New Testament. And he does this, think this through now, in the 6th century before Christ. So almost 600 years before Christ arrives, God the Father makes the promise that is going to inaugurate a new chapter that Jesus is the focus of.

**Pastor Mike** He quotes Jeremiah 31:31 and here's how he quotes it and it's right out of the text of the Old Testament. "Behold, the days are coming..." Now remember Jeremiah, by the way, he's called the Weeping Prophet, not because he has emotional fragility but because it is bad things are happening. Israel had sinned, they'd compromised, they had become idolaters and God is going to punish them by taking them away into captivity or imprisonment to the Babylonian kingdom. So that was a really bad time and a lot of people thought, "Well, I guess it's done here. You've given us all these righteous rules and precepts but we don't keep them, we're in trouble, so maybe it's over." God steps in through the prophet, not only Jeremiah, but Ezekiel as well, clearly stating, "No, there's a new covenant coming, a new arrangement of things. I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah."

**Pastor Mike** Now, Israel we talk about the whole thing, the Twelve Tribes of Israel, but in the Old Testament Israel sometimes represented those ten northern tribes, sometimes called Ephraim, and then the southern tribes, Judah. So we got Israel and Judah, all twelve tribes even though they were split up. Right? You might remember after Solomon's reign. Rehoboam and Jeroboam split the kingdom in half. Well, they're all going to be unified. God's going to make a promise with them. And it's "not like the covenant," Hebrews 8 verse 9, "that I made with their fathers on the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt." That's called the Exodus. God took them out and he establishes a law. Charlton Heston goes up and gets the tablets, comes back down. Remember that? That is the picture of the starting of the Mosaic Covenant. And that's when the first five books of the Bible were written: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

**Pastor Mike** And Deuteronomy ends with this statement in summarizing the whole of the Mosaic Law. It says this in essence, I mean, I'll quote it for it. It says do these things and "you shall live." It's really simple. Here are all the commands and just do them and everything will be fine. OK? What was the problem? They didn't do them. God found fault in them because they weren't able to do them. In other words, here was this plan. He wanted this to resonate and it did. I mean, by the time we're here 800 years later Jeremiah is getting the word that, you know what? There's going to be a new arrangement because in the old arrangement we've got a problem and the problem is you didn't keep it.

**Pastor Mike** Look in the middle of verse 9. "They did not continue in my covenant." They didn't keep it. They didn't do what was said there. "So I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord," which sounds very passive but when God the giver of all good things steps back you're in big trouble. Right? He sends his rain on the evil the good, he provides food. So when God shows no concern for them, that's kind of a very polite way of saying God is now going to give you a real rough time. You're going to have a hard time without God's favor on you. Even non-Christians

have a general sense of God's favor on them. We call that common grace. And so here's the thing, all the things in the book of Deuteronomy that say if you don't keep these things, then these things will happen and they started to happen. So, do these righteous things and you'll be fine. If you don't do them you're going to be in trouble. All of that's happening and it's happening chronically in the Old Testament.

**Pastor Mike** "But this is the covenant," verse 10, "that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord." He's still quoting Jeremiah 31. "I will put my laws into their minds, and I'll write them on their hearts." And you might want to put in the margin if it's not already there, if you want to get very specific about that, the statement of that new covenant in Ezekiel Chapter 36 verse 26 makes very clear that that law, that sense of internal having all of the rules and precepts written on our heart, all of that is because I've sent my Spirit to dwell IN you.

**Pastor Mike** You're going to have this relationship with the third person of the triune eternal Godhead. He's going to personally live within you. That's the picture, the spatial preposition. He'll be in you. He's going to dwell in you. And he's going to move you to keep my laws and keep my statutes, as Ezekiel 36 says. But in this passage, the same idea, put my laws in their minds and I'll write them on their hearts, "and I will be their God." It's not like they're going to show no concern for me. They're going to concern themselves, they're going to care, they're going to love me and know me. And you know what? I'm going to show concern for them. They'll be my people, my own possession and everything will be cool, copacetic, we'll be in sync and harmony. "And they shall not teach one another," verse 11, "each one his neighbor and each one his brother saying, 'Know the Lord,'" You should know God, you should serve God, you should obey God, you should love God. You won't need any of that external pressure, "For they shall all know me." They're all going to have concern for me. They're all going to know me and love me, "from the least of them," the simplest ones, "to the greatest," the most intelligent and the most regal.

**Pastor Mike** What about their sin? "I'll be merciful," verse 12. "I will be merciful toward their iniquities and I will remember their sins no more." How are you going to do that? Well, because God, the Holy God, who can't just turn away from sin, he has to somehow deal with the problem of sin. He's going to send his Son, the Lamb of God, that substitute, that looks a lot like those sacrifices you're all involved in, and I'm going to take away the sin of the world, I'm going to lay all the transgression, as Isaiah 53 says, on him. He will be crushed as a sacrifice, a burnt offering. That picture will be all Mike Fabarez's sins, all your sins, will be laid on him and God will have all of his just righteous response to sinful things dealt with forever in that act, that one sacrifice, as he says two chapters later, the writer of Hebrews. There will be that once-for-all sacrifice, as he quotes again, by the way, two chapters later, Jeremiah 31, saying how do we get all that? How do we get that connection where we know the Lord, where we have all of that connection with God and the Spirit indwells? Well, that'll be because sin is removed by one sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

**Pastor Mike** So I got sin taken care of. Speaking of a new covenant then what do we do with the old one? "In speaking of the new covenant," verse 13, "he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete is growing old and ready to vanish," which is an interesting statement. Clearly the book of Hebrews was written before 70 A.D. when the Roman general Titus came in



and destroyed the temple. If you read between that period of time, in the three and a half decades before the destruction of Jerusalem, from the time that Christ died and that really weird miracle happened where the temple curtain was torn in two, you got a lot of weird things happening.

**Pastor Mike** Even the rabbis and the leaders and the priests testify to the fact that something's wrong with the temple. There was a lot of disillusionment about the temple practices and the participation in all this. It just wasn't right. And clearly, God had, whatever blessing and favor he had brought to the practice before Christ's death, even Christ participated in bringing the offerings to the temple, well now - not acceptable. And everything went downhill, of course, until the Romans came in and destroyed the temple. All of it is gone, at least the ceremonies of it are all gone and all of that Old Covenant, done. The Old Covenant, obsolete, at least in terms of the demands of what is required. As Paul put it, the law of sin and death, or obedience and life. Couldn't do that. Well, I can't do it. What's the difference then? Paul says, well then it's been replaced by what? The law of the spirit and life.

**Pastor Mike** So we've got the problem of here's the Old Testament, the Old Covenant, do this and you'll be fine. And you know what, the New Covenant is going to replace it by taking care of the sin problem, sending the Spirit into your life. You're going to be moved from the inside. The external pressure will not be the only thing. Matter of fact, it won't even be the necessary thing. It'll be the internal drive of God moving his people to keep his statutes. That is the picture of a forgiven people. It's a new covenant. There's much more we could say about that but that's an amazing thing that's about to happen in Acts Chapter 2. That pivot is huge. Everything in the Gospels leading up to Acts Chapter 2 is still technically prior to that New Covenant. Christ is coming in and even the things he does at the Last Supper in lifting up a cup and talking about the cup of the New Covenant, it's yet to happen. Because the ceiling feature of it, the one hallmark of it all is the changed relationship people would have with the Spirit.

**Pastor Mike** Back to our passage. Acts Chapter 1 makes it very clear. John was immersing people in water. You're going to be immersed with the Holy Spirit. And it's going to happen not many days from now. So Acts Chapter 2, the relationship with the Spirit changes. Letter "B", jot that down. There's a new covenant that's about to be inaugurated and then there's "A New Relationship," let's get specific, with the Holy Spirit. You going to have a new relationship with God but the reason it's different is because the Spirit of God has a different relationship with you. Now this is hard to parse. It really is. It's hard to needle this in and tease this out and say what's the difference.

**Pastor Mike** Matter of fact, I spent 90 minutes trying to do it in a lecture in our Holy Spirit series on Thursday nights. These are maybe helpful because they're not Sunday morning messages and there's charts and all kinds of things. You can go to [PastorMike.com](http://PastorMike.com), which basically takes you to the [FocalPointMinistries.com](http://FocalPointMinistries.com) website and you can look up the sermons on the Holy Spirit. We did 12 weeks, I think it was, on studying the Spirit. And one lecture was just about what is the difference between the Old Testament person's relationship with the Spirit, the Old Testament saint's relationship with the Spirit, and the New Testament Christian's relationship with the Spirit. It's a very important thing to figure out. What is the difference?



**Pastor Mike** If you want to summarize it you can put it down this way, jot down this reference, John Chapter 14, John 14:16 and 17. It all comes down to the prepositions which speak volumes about the relationship. Here it is. The Upper Room Discourse, before Da Vinci's picture of the Last Supper. Right? Here Jesus is giving them instructions about what's going to happen after he dies and after he's ascended. He says this: "I going to ask the Father and he's going to give you another," and he gives the Holy Spirit a name here, the "parakletos," the one called in alongside of you to help you. But even that's an understatement because it's not going to be alongside of you.

**Pastor Mike** "He'll be with you forever," there's something about it. There was a transient nature to the way the Old Testament worked in the Old Testament economy. It's why David could pray, "don't take your Holy Spirit from me." Why? Because there was no promise of a permanence. But here you're going to get the Spirit and it's going to be permanent. He's going to come upon you, not just for a certain task, although he helps us through our tasks. But the Spirit of truth is going to come to you and you're going to receive him and "the world can't receive him because the world knows nothing of him, but you know him," here's the key phrase, "he dwells with you and will be in you." There's the prepositional change. "With you, in you."

**Pastor Mike** Now, what does that say? Well, it speaks volumes about the change in relationship. But it doesn't mean that the Spirit of God wasn't active in the Old Testament, it doesn't even mean that there wasn't language about being indwelt by the Spirit in the Old Testament. There certainly was. Don't oversimplify it. It was even described of the artisans who were building the fixtures and furnishings for the Tabernacle. They were described as being filled with the Spirit of God. So the Spirit of God had a close relationship with people in the Old Testament. But there was a sense in which the Spirit came upon people for tasks. The prophets would have the Spirit come upon them and they prophesied. The King, Saul, when he was picked as king, the Spirit came upon him and he was able to be empowered to do the work of leadership. The Spirit of God came upon David. The Spirit of God came upon a lot of people in the Old Testament as a connection of God's favor and empowerment but it was transient, it was task-related, sometimes it was office-related.

**Pastor Mike** But in the New Testament every last person, every single person, so much so that Paul would say to the Romans in Romans Chapter 8, if you don't have the Spirit of God you're not even his child. So we know this: the Spirit of God and everything that begins in Acts Chapter 2, it starts a kind of relationship with the Spirit that you could describe, as Paul does in Ephesians 1, and that is if you get the Spirit it's like you getting a pledge or a promise of your coming inheritance. It is a guarantee of what's coming. It is a permanent relationship. That's why the Spirit can be spoken of in terms of, "I will never leave you, I will never forsake you," or as Jesus put it, through the personal work of the Spirit, "I am with you always even to the end of the age."

**Pastor Mike** So the Spirit of God is the key feature that distinguishes Old Covenant from New Covenant, not in the absence in the old and the presence in the new, but the kind of relationship, which we can say so much more about. But at least stand back and recognize the Old Testament saints look at the Christians in the New Testament and us today in the New Covenant age and say this: "Wow. You've got a kind of security, a kind of permanence, a kind of intimacy, a kind of empowerment that's different than the kind we had in the Old Testament. Don't underestimate it



in terms of his activity in the Old Testament. Don't make a caricature of their relationship with God. It was serious, it was deep, it was real, there was conviction, there was empowerment but it's different today and that's why God made the promise of a new covenant being characterized by a relationship with the Holy Spirit that is unique and different and more profound.

**Pastor Mike** Words in the New Testament are used like "baptism" as we see here, being placed into, immersed into, regeneration. He changes who we are. Sealing, the guarantee, the permanency of it, the security of it, indwelling, the sense of full complete harmony and relationship with a forgiven person, that indwelling of the Spirit. All of these are words that give us a descriptive about something that's better. Could we say more? Of course we could and I have. But do your homework on that to recognize this: that what's about to start in Acts Chapter 2 is a change in the way that the people who are right with God have a relationship with the Spirit of God.

**Pastor Mike** And though you're going to see, as you see here, think about it, these eleven had a relationship with God and a relationship with the Spirit, he was dwelling with them. But something was going to change and he was going to be IN them, something that could be described by the word baptism. And all I'm trying to make clear right now is that just because they got that midway through their relationship with Christ doesn't mean that we get the Spirit in some baptism moment of crisis midway through our Christian life. This is a discussion about a promise of the inauguration of the New Covenant marked by the indwelling of the Spirit and that becomes normative after the book of Acts.

**Pastor Mike** Well, what about in the book of Acts where you got Cornelius in Acts Chapter 10 and it seems like he's tracking with God and then all of a sudden he gets this baptism with the Spirit? Well, that was the point of the book of Acts, that the experience of the indwelling of the New Covenant promises for Christians is not just a Jewish thing, it goes to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and even into the Italians and the Romans by Chapter 10 and the rest of the book of Acts. In Philippi, these are statements in the book of Acts, as we'll see, that validates that the promise was not just for the Jewish people but for the Gentiles as well. A new covenant inaugurated, a new relationship with the Spirit, a closer, different, more permanent secure kind of relationship.

**Pastor Mike** Well they say, as I already told you, "Hey, if I get the Spirit and the New Covenant is inaugurated then I guess the kingdom is going to be restored to Israel. There was a heyday under David. Are we going to get that heyday back with the son of David sitting on the throne and all those promises about a child and the government resting on his shoulders? All that was promised of you Jesus. Are you going to take the throne now in Israel? Are all the nations going to flood into you? Are all the riches of the world going to come to Jerusalem?"

**Pastor Mike** And he responds. Look at our passage, Acts 1:6. When they said that in verse 7, he says, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority." That's very important for us to realize. That that statement about the coming of the kingdom restored to ethnic Israel is something he is saying the perspective needs to change for you. Though you might see it as an immediate connection - New Covenant - Spirit of God - Kingdom, restored kingdom to Israel. There's a gap between those two. And like someone from



the Old Testament seeing the two peaks of the mountain but not seeing the intervening valley between them, they couldn't separate those until Christ turned it on its side and said, there's something in between and the something is in verse 8.

**Pastor Mike** The new perspective is: Wait, Wait, Wait. Don't worry about the coming Kingdom right now. Pray for it every day and work toward it, hasten the coming Kingdom of God. You can certainly do that by getting involved in verse 8 but right now you need to have a new perspective about the coming kingdom of Israel. Letter "C", let's just put it that way, "A New Perspective." It was a new perspective about the timing of the earthly kingdom. As a matter of fact, as you read the rest of the New Testament, you start to see, Romans Chapters 9 through 11, that that coming Kingdom is still on the schedule. It's just not as soon as we think because there's an intervening valley of collecting a group of people from every tongue, tribe and nation, to use the language of the book of Revelation, that will fill, what he calls in Romans Chapter 11, the Times of the Gentiles.

**Pastor Mike** So I know you're thinking about the restoration of ethnic Israel and all those promises of the prophets but just wait. A new perspective is the long perspective. The perspective is the attention is not at the Kingdom being inaugurated. Now, it's that you filling up every seat in this gentile bus called the Church and having every seat filled so that we can get on to the Kingdom. That's a picture that was different for them and a perspective that changed everything about even their evangelism. So much so that later in the book you see Peter preaching and saying this: "I just want you guys to repent." Why? "So that we can have Christ who has received into heaven and he's waiting there to be dispatched," Mike Fabarez paraphrase, "to when we get all the bus seats filled here and the Times of the Gentiles is complete. Then he can be released back, dispatched, and we can start this, he calls it the "times of refreshing can come," a theme from the Old Testament prophets.

**Pastor Mike** So the restoration of the kingdom is not something unbiblical. I'm not an amillennialist. I don't think there's no millennium. I think that's the picture of what we see in the book of Revelation. There will be a physical, ethnic Israel where the promises are fulfilled. That's my view on eschatology. But the point is we've got this intervening time. Whereas it says in Romans Chapter 11, if the rejection of Christ meant all these riches for the Gentiles as they were grafted into this wild olive tree, what will the acceptance be but riches for the world? Then everything is going to fall into perfect place. God will restore Israel as was promised.

**Pastor Mike** As a matter of fact, this is worth jotting down I suppose. Jeremiah Chapter 31 I said is that key discussion about the New Covenant. Well it's really not over until Chapter 33, when at the end of the chapter he says this: There are people who count out the national ethnic Israel. And he said know this: if you can count out the order of the sun and the moon and the stars, then you can count out ethnic Israel as a nation. Matter of fact, he ends it this way. If there's no fixed order in heaven, no sun and moon, "then I'll reject the offspring of Jacob and David my servant will not choose one of his offspring to rule over the offspring of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." In other words, no, of course I'm going to do that. I mean, if the sun is still shining then I've got a plan and here's how the last line goes, "I will restore their fortunes." That's the picture, to restore national Israel. That's very important. It's why we have not replaced Israel as the Church. The



Church has not stepped in and taken their place. Oh, they're enemies because of their rejection of the gospel. But they're friends because of the promise to the patriarchs and those promises and covenant promises are irrevocable.

**Pastor Mike** Understand that new perspective for them and that was tough and yet it motivated the last one. And that is this, verse 8, "You'll receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, so that you will be my witnesses." You got to get to work. You got to start sharing this message.

**Pastor Mike** It's a very important thing. I call it this: a new mission, Letter "D". It's not that the Jews of the Old Testament weren't interested in non-Jews becoming followers of Yahweh, the real God, the Creator God, the only God that is. It is that they were not sent out to aggressively evangelize them. There were proselytes, we call them, even when they left Egypt in the Exodus, as Moses led them out there were a lot of Egyptians who said, "Hey, I'm going to be in with you guys. I think all these plagues have convinced me I need to be a part of you." And so they were proselytes. They were not of Jewish descent from Abraham but they joined in. And even in a couple of books, like Jonah, we see a concern that God has in sending prophets out and making a very clear statement about God's judgment and wrath and you see the Ninevites or the Assyrians turning in repentance to the God of the Bible. I mean, you see that with Obadiah. You see that in Nahum. You see some of that.

**Pastor Mike** But the picture of Old Testament Israel basically is this big city set on a hill and people can stream to it if they want. "We got the real God. If you'd like a relationship with the real God you can come join us." That changes. Matter of fact, I wrote it down this way in my notes, it's a new mission, I put it down this way, a new mission to aggressively reach the world. It's no longer "come and join us if you'd like." It's "we're going to go out and get you and bring you in." Matter of fact, Jesus illustrated it that way in his parables. He said, "Go into the highways," and byways, "and compel them to come in so that my house might be full." That was a new perspective. Not only that, it was a new mission, it was a new job. Between the coming of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom, you need to go out and aggressively reach people with the gospel. That's the picture. It's so important in the Scripture that we see that and to realize that the Times of the Gentiles is going to be ended when people fill that quota, if you will, of those that God has elected for eternal life.

**Pastor Mike** New Covenant, new relationship, new perspective. New Covenant inaugurated, soon to inaugurate in Chapter 2, a new relationship of the Holy Spirit which is different, improved, qualified in a way that is permanent. A new perspective on the timing of the Kingdom and a new mission to aggressively reach the world. That's a bit of God's new plan. But again, back to Sunday school lessons here, what we really need is to know that we have a role to play in the 21st century in that same basic aggressive reaching of the world. Aggressive doesn't mean mean, it doesn't mean non-diplomatic, doesn't mean angry. It just means aggressive. It means making a point of it and taking our assignment seriously. God has a new plan and you're in the middle of it right now and it's not over yet.

**Pastor Mike** I put it this way, number two, you need to "Get Serious About Your Role in This Plan." And the plan is to reach this people group that we are in the middle of for Christ. A couple

of things in this passage in verse 8. Go back and kind of recapture this for our application, our perspective. "You will receive power." What power do we need? I thought all the power was in the message. You tell the illustration of the seed and the sower and, I mean, it's like throwing of the grenade. That's how you've illustrated, Pastor Mike. Anyone can throw a grenade. You don't have to be a pitcher to throw a grenade. Just an old lady can roll a grenade in front of you. It's so powerful, I get that. I understand that.

**Pastor Mike** But there is something to say about the cost of the messenger. Right? There's embarrassment, there's, in our case, mocking and there's exclusion and then in the first century and it's coming for us again, there's persecution, there's imprisonment, there's confiscation of your property, there's even death I suppose in the most extreme examples. Did you know this word "witness" translates the Greek word that if you transliterated it you'd get the English word "martyr?" That's the word, martyr. That word is helpful. Now, don't get this wrong because the word martyr in our minds, in our English parlance, means something very specific about dying for your testimony. But the whole concept came from the fact that God called us to be martyrs, not in the sense of necessarily suffering, but all of us really being real and honest about the task, it's going to cause suffering. In other words, this is going to be hard. Your role in this new plan is something that is going to be difficult.

**Pastor Mike** That's why every time I preach on evangelism there's always pushback. There are always people like, "Well, it's not my role, it's not my part. There are other people that do it better than I do." I understand that. That's why I started with this. We're all going to say about evangelism, it's too hard, it's too difficult, it's a struggle. But the Bible would say to us he's going to give you his Spirit, not to have some weird, freak-out, euphoric experience. It's not about goosebumps. The Spirit's job in your life is to empower you to push through the nervousness. To be able to, like the Apostle Paul, if you do have stage fright, to be able to take the stage in the lunchroom at work and speak up about Christ. If you have lips, as the Hebrews text says, your mouth is heavy and you can't even speak well, to be able to step up and for God to remind you, "I am with you Moses. I will get this message out through you."

**Pastor Mike** It's about a bunch of uncouth and inelegant fishermen saying before Herod and the Roman Empire and the Imperial Guard, here's the message of Christ that you need because you're sinners and without Christ you're in big trouble with your creator. I mean this is about the Spirit empowering you to do the very thing that needs to happen in every single Christian generation. If we're evangelicals then we should be evangelizing. Evangelism is scary and it's hard. But it's not that complicated. Matter of fact, it's very simple in terms of its concept it's very simple. And the Bible says in this text he will empower us to do that, to be his witnesses.

**Pastor Mike** Then he lays out, at least for them and I don't want to stretch the application too far, but he gives three words here. Right? Three words and a phrase. Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, ends of the earth. Those categories, I want to start to think in those categories as I make the very simple application after a lot of discussion about theology, here's the very simple application. If you and I don't do our jobs, if we don't get serious about our job. Right? Not only will we be the kinds of people that God is not going to say, "Well done good and faithful servant." We're going to



sacrifice the role that God has called us to and really not make the impact that God designed us to make. You sit here in South Orange County in the 21st century, this is our mission field.

**Pastor Mike** I want you to think in terms of those four categories. Matter of fact, I going to ask you to something bold. I've asked you to do this before but I'm going to ask you in a more specific and systemize way this morning. To help me with this I going to have the ushers come down the aisle and give you a packet. In this packet, it's an evangelistic package, there are various things in it. As soon as you get it, the ushers are going to come down the aisle right now, and they're going to give you these things. When they do, I want you to open this packet up and there are several things in it.

**Pastor Mike** I want you to look for the thing that looks like it's a business card size. It's an evangelism card it's called. I just want you to look at that for a second. It's a very simple technique, I've done it before, I've asked you to do this before, not in this particular method, but what I'm going to have you do is write down four names. I want you to write down four names. Listen, if you blow me off then I'm going to pray you don't sleep tonight (laughter) so don't blow me off. Okay? I want you to pull out a pen, I want you to take that card and I'm asking you, rarely do I try to exercise any pastoral authority in any specific way, but here's my pastoral authority. If I am your pastor please write down four names.

**Pastor Mike** Without stretching the application too far let me give you the categories based on those words. Let's start with this one. Find that little business size card and you'll see, if you turn it over, there's a place for five names, the last one is your signature. We'll get to that in a minute. But four names. And I want them to correspond with these four categories. The first thing they were told to do is to go reach Jerusalem. I want you to think about this. Jerusalem is where they were. Jerusalem is where most of these people lived. And you know what they did every day in Jerusalem? They had to go buy food. They had to go buy clothes. They had to go sell in the marketplace. These were people they worked with every single day. So I want you to pick one name, the first name that comes to mind of a person who is not a Christian who you work with. If you're retired then a person who you meet at the coffee shop every morning, someone who you see in your neighborhood as you talked to over the mailbox, someone who every day you rub shoulders with who is not saved. The first name that comes to mind that you think, you know what, I know they need Christ and I want to identify one name. You probably have 15 names. Just one is all I'm asking for this morning. Pick one. Pick one and write that name down. Jerusalem.

**Pastor Mike** Then there was Judea. Now Judea, for Jerusalem, the environs of Jerusalem obviously were surrounded by a region called Judea. Judea was, compared to Samaria, this was the friendlies, this was the kinship, this was the familial connection of the people who were hearing this command. You talked about Judea and you thought, "OK. Judea. Those are my people." Now, it doesn't have to be familial in terms of biology, but I want you to put someone down on that second line that you feel like, you know what, this is someone, you know, not just that I work with or have to rub shoulders with. But this is like, this is part of my kin. And it may be biology, it could be you're a family member or an extended family member. But if it could be within the family of parents on your soccer team, it could be someone you've connected with that, you know, your family goes to your school or your Boy Scout troop or whatever. Here is



someone that I'm kind of in the same familial category within some area of my life. Pick a name. Get that name of that person, get that face in your mind, go, ok, here's someone I know and I know they're not a Christian or I'm not sure they're Christian or however they define Christianity, it's probably not biblical, but I'm want to put a name down of someone who I want to start praying for that I'd like to see reach for Christ this year.

**Pastor Mike** So I got two names now. Jerusalem - someone you rub shoulders with all the time and you don't think is a Christian. Number two, Judea - someone in some kind of familial circle, some kind of sphere of influence, sphere of relationship. It could actually be a biological familial circle, someone that I know needs Christ maybe in my family.

**Pastor Mike** Samaria. Whoa. The Jewish people didn't like the Samaritans. The Samaritans didn't like the Jews. These were hostile, but these were the people I know do not agree. I know that they're hostile toward what I'm going to say. I know that they don't like the gospel. Now, why in the world would I put down someone like that? There was a guy name Ananias from Damascus. When I say Ananias you usually think of who? Who was his wife, Sapphira, and they were liars and got in trouble with God big time? God was making a point about the purity of the early church but... Don't think of Ananias of Jerusalem. I want you to think of an Ananias of Damascus.

**Pastor Mike** Ananias of Damascus was told to share the gospel to a guy named Saul who was holding the cloaks of people who were, as we would put it, they were creating the first Christian martyr. Stephen was witnessing for Christ and he paid with his life. Saul, who would be later become who? Paul, the apostle. And you know what Ananias of Damascus said when God said, "Go share the gospel with Saul of Tarsus?" You know he said? "I don't want..." Here's the quote, literally in English. Here it comes. Right? "I've heard a lot about this man and the evil that he's done to your people." OK? I want you to think on that third line of someone that you think, "Wow, there's an anti-Christian in my circle of influence." Why would I want you to think big like that? Well, because, you know what? Sauls come to Christ, and they become Pauls. And they're hostile to the gospel.

**Pastor Mike** Matter of fact, sometimes, as Paul was described, they're kicking so hard against the goads because they're being convicted. Saul was lashing out against the church. Why? Because he was under the conviction of God's Spirit. He was about to become a Christian. There is someone you know who is probably the most vocal against Christianity in your circle and sphere of influence that you think will never become a Christian. Don't think that way. They may never, I don't know. But let's be bold and put down a name like that in your life.

**Pastor Mike** I got my Jerusalem, people I work with every day, someone on that list, someone I think, "Oh yeah, I want to start praying for that person." I got your Judea, someone in a familial connection, maybe a family member, maybe someone in some kind of club or group I'm a part of. Then I want you to think of the Samaritan, someone you know disagrees with your theology.

**Pastor Mike** And then, what's the last one? Ends of the earth. That's like a free spot on bingo. Just put a name down. It could be someone actually literally far away. Maybe it's some person on the West Coast you used to go to college with that you know and keep in touch with on Facebook or



something. I don't know. Pick someone, anyone. It can be just someone that doesn't fit in one of those categories where you thought, here's the person I'm thinking of. Maybe it's the first person you thought of when I talk about the obligation we have to share the gospel. Who in your circle needs the gospel?

**Pastor Mike** Now, I've asked you to do this and I've got a good view up here. I get to see who does it and doesn't do it. And I am praying that you have insomnia tonight night if you don't do it (laughter) and that you find the card and you get up and you say, "OK. Pastor Mike said I couldn't sleep this night, so I'm going to fill this card out. And then I want you to sign it and say basically all that that card says and that just says, "I'm going to attempt to reach these people for Christ. I'm going to commit to that."

**Pastor Mike** I want you to think, I preached to a lot of people, hundreds and hundreds of people this weekend, and I've asked them all to fill out this card. Can you imagine how many names are on cards right now of non-Christians? How great it is to think about that. It takes boldness to do it but it starts with a willingness and a target. "Aim at nothing, hit it every time." I just want us to paint a target in our minds. I want to think about seeing that person reached for Christ. Now, I said I've done this before. I haven't done it quite so formally, but you know what, I'm grateful for people who have done it because sometimes when they do it, it's just what they need to take the next step. And to take that next step is really to see God sometimes getting the kind of work done because of the power of God's Spirit in the message and in the messenger to see lives change and I want to show you that it actually happened. I just stumbled across this story. When I talked to Nancy one day on a Sunday morning I said, "Listen, I've got to get this on camera." So, I want you to look up at the screens and listen to this. You and I need this right now. Listen carefully.

**Nancy** I remember it just like it was yesterday. Pastor Mike was preaching about being bold and sharing the gospel. I was very convicted leaving that message and I was actually praying about the boldness to go out and share. One day I was at work and I met this amazing girl I was teaching with and I just felt that this was the opportunity I was praying for. A couple of weeks later Pastor Mike said if there's anybody that you feel convicted to reach out to or anybody that you should be praying for, write their name down and pray for them. And I remember looking down at the bulletin and writing down Andrea's name. We started talking and I reached out to her and invited her to church and got her phone number and that night I got home and I texted her and we began a conversation. And little did I know that God was working in her life as well.

**Andrea** Normally, I'm happy, I'm cheerful and that's the way that I am at work. There's no way that Nancy would have known how hurt I was inside. My life was completely directionless. The one factor in my life that was missing was God.

**Nancy** I'd never really invited anybody to church like this before, never the one-on-one interaction. It can be very scary at work to have the boldness to come up to one person and share and invite them to church without having the overwhelming fear of being turned down or rejected.





**Andrea** When Nancy invited me to church that day my heart exploded. Just a few days prior to for the first time in years I sat down and prayed. I asked God to give me a direction. I asked for a door to be opened. I just didn't know where to start. I went to church with her a few weeks later and that began my journey with Compass.

**Nancy** Looking back I am so thankful that I fought through the feelings of being nervous and scared and that I asked God to help me in advance. After inviting Andrea to church and developing a relationship with her and going through Partners and seeing how God was working in her life at the same exact time he was working in mine, it's given me a great reminder to be reminded to go and share the gospel.

**Andrea** Since Nancy invited me to church I feel like I'm part of community. I'm part of Nancy's life. She's now one of my best friends. I have a relationship with God that I never had before. It's made an internal difference in my life and the lives of my daughters.

**Nancy** Since God got a hold of Andrea's life, I have seen such a transformation in her. We never know where people are in life, what they're struggling with, what they're going through, but we know that we are called to share the gospel and we know that everybody needs Christ.

**Andrea** So let me ask you this...

**Nancy** So let me ask you this question.

**Nancy & Andrea** Who are you inviting to the church?

**Pastor Mike** You would have clapped more enthusiastically if it weren't for the fact that you know it's your turn now (laughter). It's your turn now. The lowest possible bar is just inviting someone to church, to put them in the firing line of the means of grace, which the Bible says are things like this, the preaching of the Word. I may be preaching to Christians every week but non-Christians come, they hear this, as it says in First Corinthians, and they're convicted. I mean, they have a sense that even though the message is for Christians and I'm preparing disciples to do work that Christians should do, they hear the gospel through all this. Even this morning the gospel is present in the sermon and they get convicted and they become Christians. They get involved in our Partners program and they become Christians.

**Pastor Mike** So, at the lowest level is just inviting them to church. So there are two invite cards in this evangelistic packet, that are in there, that are just invite cards to church. You got four names on there. Hopefully, two of them are local and geographically local that you could invite. Just hand the card to them and invite them, prayerfully invite them to church. That's the lowest bar. Then in that evangelistic guide you can see in that, and I want you to do this. I know I'm asking a lot today, but can you take this whole packet and if you have a quiet time, if you spend time with God in the morning, take this packet into your quiet time. If you have it at night, take it tonight or tomorrow morning before you start your workday tomorrow. Just take that out and read through that thoughtfully and prayerfully. Do your Daily Bible Reading, spend time in the



Word, go through your regular prayer list, but take out this guide and just read through it, read thoughtfully and slowly through this material.

**Pastor Mike** Some of it is just talking about your testimony. Some of it is talking about your fears. Some of it is just showing you another talk-through of the umbrella illustration, we call it, a way to illustrate the fact that we need Christ and if we don't have Christ we're in trouble because our sins will end up condemning us. So, that may be a simple approach. It may be beyond inviting them to church, it may be, hey, go to [ShareTheUmbrella.com](http://ShareTheUmbrella.com) and watch this and then say, I just want to meet with you for coffee and talk about it. I mean, what a simple way to share the gospel. Then you can go through it and the pamphlet that you have and just talk through the gospel. You can give them a Bible. Go to the bookstore, buy a Bible and give them a Bible and say, "Hey, just go to the Gospel of Luke. I just studied it with my church. Just read through that and then let's just discuss it." Get him in line with the means of grace, things like Bible reading, churchgoing, the fellowship of Christians.

**Pastor Mike** Listen, there are four names I hope you wrote down and if not, as I said, I want you to write them down before the day is over. And I want you to start praying about those people. YOU, see, will be that key. That's what I'm praying for. You will be the chosen instrument of God. When I use that phrase "chosen instrument of God" I think of Ananias of Damascus, not Ananias of Jerusalem, Ananias and Sapphira, Ananias of Damascus. When God said to him in response to his, "Lord, I've heard about this guy. He's an evil man. I know all the things that he's done. I hear he's come to Damascus with the authority to put us in bonds and chains and to imprison us." You know what God said? "No. Go. For he is my chosen instrument and he's going to bear my name before the Gentiles and before kings and before my people." Now that is the usage of the words "chosen instrument" but I think to myself as I read the passage, you know who the chosen instrument was to reach the chosen instrument? Ananias. Ananias just had to work through his nervousness. Nancy just had to work through her nervousness. You and I, we've got to work through our nervousness and share the gospel.

**Pastor Mike** I had to great evangelistic encounters this week talking to non-Christians about the gospel. One of them coming to repentance this week. The other one sent home to think about it and grappling with the truth of the gospel. We need more of those conversations. God wants to reach people in South Orange County for Christ. And you can be the chosen instrument, think about this, to reach chosen instruments. Do you know on these lists, if even just 80% of us, 75% put down, four names, think of the people on those lists. If people come to Christ from that list who might be on that list?

**Pastor Mike** If you go to Moody there's a special little dining room called the Kimball Room. It's called the Kimball Room and most people know that if they know much about the campus, my alma mater, Moody Bible Institute. Well they all know Moody and hopefully you know Moody, D.L. Moody, one the most effective evangelist of his generation in the mid-19th century and late-19th century. I mean, he reached thousands of people for Christ. Well, there's a Kimball Room, a little special dining room for the VIPs and the brass of the school to eat in and it's called the Kimball Room because Kimball was the man who led D.L. Moody to Christ.



**Pastor Mike** And if you know Moody history, a little bit about the conversion of Moody, you know that guy was instrumental in it all. He was his Sunday school teacher with his young 19- 20-year-old guy who was ambitious, wanted to make, you know, a million dollars, the equivalent of in his day, and just ride through life, he was in Boston working at the shoe store. And Kimball, people want to know his first name, his name was Edward. Edward Kimball. He goes to meet with Moody to share the gospel with him. And the day he's walking down there, because this guy he knows does not know Christ. He's walking to meet him and he almost chickens out. He walks past the front door of Holton's shoe store and then turns around in conviction and comes back and walks in and shares the gospel. In the back of that shoe store, as he's packing up shoes to put out in those boxes, he comes to Christ.

**Pastor Mike** In secular modernized 21st century Boston, if you're in Boston, next time you go through Boston and you've got a couple hours, go downtown and go to Court Street, you can find this all online. If you go to Court Street in downtown Boston you can still find a plaque on the wall. And it reads, "Moody." It says "D.L. Moody." Big letters on the brass plaque. Go take a picture by it and post it on Instagram for fun. It says, "Evangelist. Friend of man. Founder of the Northfield school." Right? The most important and famous school that he created and is still around. Right? Moody Bible Institute. And it says, "on this spot was won to Christ," and whatever it was, April, whatever date, 1855." That plaque is still there. It's now a bank on Court Street in downtown Boston.

**Pastor Mike** Even if you know Moody's history you might know Edward Kimball. But you probably don't know Samuel Holton. Samuel Holton really has a role in this as well. Samuel Holton was the owner of the shoe store. Samuel Holton had hired D.L. Moody. The only reason that D.L. Moody knew Edward Kimball and Kimball took an interest in sharing the gospel with Moody is because Samuel hired D.L. Moody and said if you're going to work here you're going to come to my church. Now you'd get arrested today for that probably but what a great thing. Come to my church.

**Pastor Mike** He comes to church and there's a pastor of the church there in Boston, his name is Dr. Kirk. And Kirk got up and preached every week and he was a highfalutin, well-educated preacher and he had big words up there and Moody looks back and talks about his time in Kirk's church and he says, "Actually, frankly, honestly, I just slept through the sermons. But then I went to Sunday school. And there was a guy there, Ed Kimball, who took an interest in me. And when I didn't understand something he helped explain in that small group setting," which is the perfect setting for him to get to know a guy who cared about his soul and finally walked one day on his lunch break to go meet D.L. Moody and win him to Christ. There's still a plaque on the wall, you'll see Moody's name in big letters on that plaque, but you won't see Kimball's name and most people don't even know anything about Sam Holton. But were it not for Sam Holton, humanly speaking, there'd be no Ed Kimball meeting D.L. Moody. I don't know. I'd like to think maybe one day Dr. Kirk got up in church and said, "Dude you've got to start inviting people to church." He didn't use the word "dude" back there in the 1800s, but, "You got to get people to church." And Holton heard that and he invited D.L. Moody to church.



**Pastor Mike** I know there are seven degrees of separation on just about everything but if you trace D.L. Moody's impact there's a pretty clear line, and many people have done it, all the way to Billy Graham. And you want to go back beyond D.L. Moody, well back beyond D.L. Moody is Kimball and beyond Kimball is Holton and it's all about a lot of people who recognized the importance of reaching beyond the borders, powering through their uneasiness, and even Ed Kimball, nervous about going in to share the gospel, but he did it. I just wonder on those names which we've collected, we don't collect them, we didn't pick them up, but I mean we've written down, we chronicled them is what I meant to say. There are a lot of people on that list. I just wonder who on those lists is going to come to Christ. Andrea is going to get baptized, by the way, in our next baptism service with a little more of her testimony. How great it will be to see people on this platform because you took seriously a simple exhortation from your pastor, write a name down, pray for it, see who you can invite, see who you can share with, and let's see what God can do as the Spirit of God empowers us to be witnesses in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth.

Let's pray. God, help us to be good evangelists in our day. We're not doing it for plaques on the wall. We don't even need our name on a plaque but we'd sure like people who we share the gospel with to become great in the Kingdom of God. We'd like to fish for people who would become great fishers of men and women in our culture. And who knows who might be saved because of this simple exercise this morning. You've told us we're praying to a God who can do far immeasurably more than we could ever ask or imagine. So right now, we're just asking that we'll be faithful. Sweaty palms. Shallow breathing. Afraid to talk about Christ in a world that we know we're going to get some pushback from. God, help us to lovingly reach out to our generation. May it transform our church, may it have to accelerate, even just because of people getting saved, the planting of more churches. God, do good things through us I pray as we're faithful to do what you've asked us to do.

In Jesus name. Amen.