

How the Holy Spirit Moves Us to Prayer and Praise

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“Then they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen” (Luke 24:52-53).

I find those two verses fascinating. Without a seven-piece band on an uplifted stage. Without fancy light effects. Without an assigned worship leader or a liturgical song set and programmed order (nothing wrong with those things when kept sanctified with the Spirit’s order). Even yet without the mighty Holy Spirit, those early disciples were continually in the temple praising and blessing God.

Think about that. They were “continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.” Then they themselves became the temple. It is amazing to ponder that thought!

It happened because their hearts beheld the ascended vision of Jesus: “While He blessed them, He parted from them and was carried up into heaven” (Luke 24:51).

How could their hearts not be full of joy and wonder and awe? Jesus had risen from the dead! He appeared to them. He ascended into heaven before their very eyes.

Luke 24 is one of my favorite accounts in the Bible. It is packed with the disciples’ wonder at the risen Jesus. It is full of the joy and faith that came from Jesus opening their understanding of Himself through the Scriptures (vv. 27, 32).

Their hearts burned with holy fire!

Can you imagine them waiting in the upper room for the promise of the Spirit? How would He come? In what form would He enter?

How would it feel to have His power?

Their hearts couldn't wait. They were full of expectation. All they could do was praise God and pray.

"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers" (Acts 1:14).

Where were the multitudes and even the hundreds to whom Jesus appeared after His Resurrection? The closer He got to the cross, the fewer there were. He even appeared to 500 after His Resurrection. But only 120 waited ... and praised ... and prayed.

Beloved, when your heart is full of awe and wonder, you will do the same. You will praise and pray!

Say these words to yourself frequently: He is here with me now. His Spirit is in my heart. I've been baptized with the Holy Spirit and fire, fire, fire!

"Mary the mother of Jesus"—there is something deep within that expression. When the angel first came to announce to her that she would bear a child, Jesus, she began to marvel and then magnified the Lord: "For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation" (Luke 1:40-50).

When your heart is as full as Mary's was, you too will magnify the Lord in prophecy. We shouldn't need external forces and influences to praise and worship and magnify the Lord. He lives in us! Let your heart be in awe of Him, and your mouth will be full of praise. {eo}

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