

wait for the gift my Father promised you whereof you heard me speak about, for John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. The work of the church is to be a work that is not carried on by people simply trying in their human strength to do the best they can. It is a work for which Jesus Christ has given us the Holy Spirit, and He did His work in the power of the Holy Spirit. He lived as a man, but as a man in the power of the Holy Spirit. He was God but He rarely availed Himself directly of His supernatural power. He lived in the power of the Holy Spirit and gave us an example that we should live in the power of the Holy Spirit. So the promise of the Holy Spirit is the second important factor in this passage.

The third important factor is the order to witness. He told them in v.8, You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and in the ends of the earth. He did not say you will be my lawyers. He didn't say you will be those who will try to persuade people. He didn't say you will be those who will think through all the problems of the universe and help people to understand them by giving them a new philosophy that will be superior to that of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. He said, You are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem, ~~xxxixxxx~~ (right where they were), in the neighboring areas of Judea of Samaria. And to the ends of the earth.

A witness tells what he's seen. He tells what he's heard. He tells what he has experienced. And the Christian is to witness to what he has seen and heard and experienced through Christ. Therefore it is very very important that if we are going to make our lives count for Christ that we make sure we have something to witness to. That we have personally experienced the saving power of the Lord; that we realize what he's done for us and what it means to us, and how different our lives are from what they would be if we had followed the lusts of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life to the full as people are doing today more than perhaps at any time during the last two or three centuries. See what the results are, see what the effects are. See what God has done for you and be a witness. ~~ix~~ There's a place for being a lawyer, but your primary function is to be a witness.

Then a fourth thing that stands out in this passage is the surprise the apostles had when suddenly he began to rise up into the sky. The great fact of the ascension. Jesus put an end to His bodily presence on earth, for the time being. In fact for many centuries. Suddenly it came. They did not expect it. They had in those 40 days ~~xxxxxx~~ with him they were used to his being with them, but He wished them now to act in the power of the Holy Spirit. He said, Lo, I will be with you always. And he is with us. He dwells in us. He is very important in our activities. But the Holy Spirit is to empower us for service, to lead us and be with us. So He gave them the definite evidence that His bodily presence had departed. Suddenly, unexpectedly He began to rise up into the heavens. A cloud received Him out of their sight.

The fifth thing that stands out in the passage is the fact that when he arose and they were confused and uncertain what to think