**1st Century Church connecting with a 21st Century World Part 2: Spiritual Transformation**

**\*\*VID Muller Home Invasion We Love the Muller Family. They have done so much around here for so long… it would be easy to take them for granted. We don’t want to take anyone for granted. Join me in giving them a round of applause.**

Let’s quickly review some things from the 1st week of our series…

Mission = Puprose

Let’s take some time to remember our Mission here at Redemption Church. Let’s say it together.

**<Mission>**

**To declare the Good news of Jesus and see others become followers of Christ.**

**Vision = method to accomplish your mission. What is the best way to fulfill your purpose? That is your vision.**

All churches should have the same mission… Their vision can be different… Our vision at Redemption Church is… Let’s say it together…

**<1st Century TITLE>**

We want to look like, walk like, talk like the 1st century church that we see in the book of Acts.

Over the course of this series we are going to point to 6 things we find in the 1st Century Church that we want to live out here at Redemption. We want to live out this 1st century vision in such a way that it is effective in a 21st century world.

Last week we took note that the The 1st century church was **<all about Jesus.>**

Jesus is very much alive in the book of Acts! He shows up in every chapter!

The apostles were all about Jesus! He was their focus, he was their message, he was their motive.

If we are going to be a 1st Century church we must make this All About Jesus.

As we look at the church in the book of Acts something appears that we want to live out.

A 1st Century Church experiences and expects **<Spiritual Transformation>**

Let’s talk about the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

Acts 2:1-4 (NIV) When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. **2**Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.**3**They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. **4**All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

What occurred on this day was Radical!

It was unforgettable!

It was life changing!

They were set ablaze like Fire! All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

The 1st church experienced and expected Spiritual Transformation.

Jesus talked about this Transformation!

Acts 1:8 (NIV) ..you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses..

This Spiritual Transformation is Powerful. “You will receive POWER…

The greek word for power is <Dynamis> (dü'-nä-mēs)

Strongs Concordance says…

strength power, ability

**a)** inherent power, power residing in a thing by virtue of its nature, or which a person or thing exerts and puts forth

**b)** power for performing miracles

**c)** moral power and excellence of soul

**d)** power and resources arising from numbers

**e)** power consisting in or resting upon armies, forces, hosts

Jesus wants His believers to be filled with Dynamis Power… He wants it to reside in them… the power to perform miracles, the power to live moral excellence, a power and resource that outnumbers every foe, With this power you are a 1 man or woman army…

1 more thing about Dynamis power… The word Dynamis is the root word for our word Dynamite.

Dynamite has a way of Tranforming everything around it. Imagine a stick of dynamite going off right here in this altar… do you think things would look a little different? Would it transform this place?

A 1st Century church experiences and expects Spiritual Transformation… When the Holy Spirit showed up in Acts 2 it changed the landscape… it was like a stick of dynamite went off.

If we are going to be a 1st century church… we must have God’s Spirit come and transform us with Dynamis Power!

This kind of power showed up in Acts 8. Last week… We talked about Philip running for his life through a city in the area of Samaria. He went to this city and he preached… WHAT WAS HIS MESSAGE?? He preached Christ because the 1st century church was ALL ABOUT JESUS…

Now here we are in Acts Chapter 8 again… We preach out of this chapter a lot. Why? Is it just a familiar chapter we fall back on when we don’t know what else to talk about? No!

Acts eight is what we want to see happen in this met roplex. It’s a story where the simple good news of Jesus is declared and the city gets turned upside down for God. Does anyone want to see that happen in your city?

Acts 8:6-8 (NIV) When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. **7**With shrieks, evil**[**[**b**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%208&version=NIV1984#fen-NIV1984-27173b)**]** spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. **8**So there was great joy in that city.

Please pay attention to the great and amazing things happening in the city…

The HEARD the gospel.

They saw and experienced Miraculous signs.

Evil Spirits came out of many people.

Many are healed.

There was great joy in the city!

NOW PLEASE STAY WITH ME AS WE UNPACK THIS… Let’s talk about Simon the Sorcerer

Acts 8:9-12 (NIV) Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, **10**and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, “This man is the divine power known as the Great Power.” **11**They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his magic.

This city in Samaria was under the control of 1 person! This sorcerer named Simon lorded his power over the people. He had the entire city convinced that he was a God and had the power of God.

V10 “This man is the divine power known as the Great Power.”

The word for power… **<Dynamis>**… The whole city declared that Simon the Sorcerer had Spiritual Power… but then they heard about Jesus…

The city is still under control of 1 person… but now… that person is Jesus!

LISTEN UP – Plano Texas is being duped by something or someone that has fooled them into believing it has Dynamis power… when it doesn’t. Maybe it’s materialism, maybe it’s an addiction, maybe it’s religious pride… whatever it is, it is like Simon. It has deceived them into believing it has true power!

The Answer for your city is what transpired in Acts 8! Somebody needs to preach Jesus and watch REAL dynamis power show up!

Acts 8:12-13 **12**But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. **13**Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

They heard the gospel, Miracles happened, people were healed, demons cast out, great Joy, they believed, they were baptized, INCLUDING SIMON!!

**But there is a problem!**

Wait… what do you mean there is a problem. You are preaching about Spiritual Transformation Pastor Chris… Samaria was Spiritually Transformed…

Well let’s see what happens…

Acts 8:14-16 (NIV) When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. **15**When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, **16**because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them

Wait a second… These people believed, were baptized, healed, delivered, had joy, experienced miracles… but there was more waiting for these people… They had not yet received the Holy Spirit!

Most people would walk away from what they had experienced and declared themselves to be rather spiritual… But God had more for them.

**I suggest we expect a Spiritual Transformation beyond what we have ever experienced!**

Maybe you experienced great things from God in the past… but do you believe God has more for you today?!

Churches today… Lead people through a simple prayer and then tell them they are saved… and then that’s it… they never tell them that there is more for them. God has so much more for you..

THERE IS A DYNAMIS POWER… A SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION THAT GOD HAS FOR YOU BY THE HOLY GHOST!!

The 1st century church challenged people to go past simply believing in the Son of God, past, repentance, past baptism, past living a life of purity, past attending church… They challenged people to be Spiritually Transformed by the Power of God’s Spirit!

In Acts 8 Peter and John laid their hands on people and they were filled with the same Holy Ghost that fell on the day of Pentecost… And Simon… his response

Acts 8:18-19 (NIV) When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money **19**and said, “Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.”

When Simon saw Life Transforming power come from the Apostles he offered to buy that power…

Don’t be ashamed of this Holy Spirit Power! The People that you would never expect to be open to it… people like Simon… They are going to see it… they are going to realize they don’t have it… and they are going to say “How can I have that?”

Don’t be ashamed to minister in the Holy Spirit! Simon saw it and realized… That’s REAL DYNAMIS!

The thing is… You can’t buy it. It is given freely. Peter tells Simon Acts 8:20 (NIV) “May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money!”

Simon wasn’t wicked for wanting the Gift of the Holy Spirit… He was wicked for thinking he could purchase it.

NOT EVERY CHURCH IS OPEN TO THE MOVING OF THE SPIRIT!!

There are some churches that demonize any move of the spirit. There are some that go so far as to say anything Spiritual that happens today is the work of Satan… MIXED UP!!

There are some that deny God still moves like He did in the 1st Century Church.

2 Timothy 3:5 describes Christians like this…

2 Timothy 3:5 (NIV) having a form of godliness but denying its power.

The word for Power there… Anyone want to guess what word is used in the Greek?

**<Dynamis>**

A 1st Century Church doesn’t just look Godly… It is filled with God’s POWER! Does anybody want Redemption Church to be a place full of God’s Power!

**Redemption Church believes in the Holy Spirit!**

**The same Holy Spirit is moving the exact same way it did in the book of Acts!**

**We believe in the Gifts of the spirit! We believe in healing and in prophecy. We believe in speaking in tongues.**

**<SUPER – NATURAL>**

**We believe in the SUPER NATURAL…**

**We believe God is wanting to use you in Super Natural ways.**

**Would you be willing to let him?**

What Good is a Super-Natural God if all you ever experience is the Natural?

The 1st Century Church walked in the Super Natural. They experienced and even expected the Holy Spirit to show up!

Shouldn’t a life that is filled with the Super Natural God experience more than just the natural?

**<Seeker Sensitive>**

In the early 1970’s a Church near Chicago was started that took a new approach to doing ministry. They had a vision of being a Seeker Sensitive church.

A lot of great things have come out of this movement… Instead of referring to unchurched people as SINNERS they called them Seekers. They tried to make services more interesting to people that would otherwise describe church as boring. They tried to make sermons relevant and not talk over people… They did this with a lot of success.

Here at Redemption there are several things we try to implement from the Seeker Sensitive movement. We try to make our services open and inviting. We try to put a lot of care in how an unchurched person might perceive the message or worship. We want our services to appeal to those who don’t know Christ and hope that they will come to know Him and become a part of this community.

But how seeker sensitive was the 1st century church? One staple of the seeker sensitive movement is to remove every awkward moment from the church service…

How awkward was the day of Pentecost? It was so awkward people thought they were drunk? They spoke in tongues and some people think that is really strange.

Don’t get me wrong… we are committed to making every person who visits or attends Redemption feel comfortable and at home.

But we are going to Challenge you to experience Spiritual Transformation for yourself.

Some, of the Seeker Sensitive movement might consider it bad marketing, but we do 3 things around here. When we greet you at the beginning of every service we go over them with you. This is part of our vision… **The 3 things…**

**Everybody Worships** – We ask, we challenge everyone here to worship. We try to have a worship service that everyone can be a part of.. We know that if someone really surrenders their heart in worship… they are destined for a Spiritual Breakthrough.

We respect where each individual is on their journey… but we encourage everyone to take their next step.

<CHURCH PICTURE1>

Here is an un-named church.

I have served as Redemption Creative Arts Pastor since 2006. I often spend time looking at Set design and other art related works to inspire us here. We want to be a vibrant passionate church that relates to the 21st century… So I have this church set design website I love to look at…

Check out this Christmas one… I thought it was well done… I thought… man I’d love for our stage to look like that. This looks this church is a happening place. I want that for Redemption.

<CHURCH PICTURE2>

Look at the lighting. Wow. These people know what they are doing. I’d love for us to be able to do some creative things like this. To really set the mood and atmosphere in unforgettable ways… helping people get lost in worship… It’s obvious this a creative church… love that

<CHURCH PICTURE3>

And look at all the people. It looks like standing room only. I want that Redemption!

And then I noticed… Wait a second… They are in their worship service… and everyone in the entire room… from the stage to the back row is just standing there… Many with crossed arms…

I’m not here to attack another Churches vision… I’m here to set the Vision for Redemption.

I DON’T WANT THAT FOR REDEMPTION CHURCH… Let me come right out and say it… I don’t want that for you. I am right now issuing a challenge to every person to up the level and depth of their worship at Redemption. If you will take bold new steps in your worship it will lead to Spiritual Transformation.

It’s one of the 3 things we do here… Everybody Worships! Our prayer and our focus is to see you grow in that worship.

Many will say to that… “well… my worship is this personal thing that I do on the inside…”

Dynamis is dynamite and you can’t hide it on the inside. When it goes off EVRYONE HEARS IT AND SEES IT!

1 Peter 2:9 (NIV) ..you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

You should declare the Praises! The King James says you should SHOW FORTH PRAISE! It should be seen!

I challenge you to step up the level of your worship.

**Everybody Receives the Word of God -** Thing #2

If you will receive the Word of God it will transform you! Listen carefully and hide it in your heart.

The ministry team here tries very hard to bring you the Word of God! We try to deliver the message He has for His church.

How do we decide what to preach??? We pray. Our ministry team hangs out and talks about what God has been leading us in… what our study of God’s Word has been revealing… We usually ask something like this… Is that something that Redemption needs to hear… Is it something that will bring transformation to the lives of those that receive it?

**Everybody Comes to the Altar and Talks to God** – Thing #3

* **MUSICIAN**

You talk about not being Seeker Sensitive… Most churches have removed an Alar Service. Even churches that consider themselves have removed it.

There is a church in this Metroplex that no longer even asks people to come forward to say the sinners prayer… the thought is that it is too embarrassing… So instead the Pastor prays the prayer and invites people to text in that they have prayed that prayer…

I’m sorry, but my heart is grieved by that… All over Dallas Fort Worth people met at Churches that didn’t push for Spiritual Transformation.

A 1st Century Church Experiences and Expects Spiritual Transformation.

There is Dynamis power in this altar. Does anyone want to get a hold of that kind of power today?

**<SUPER – NATURAL>**

I want to come back to a question I asked earlier

What Good is a Super-Natural God if all you ever experience is the Natural?

As you come to this altar today… I challenge you to experience and expect the Super Natural power of God.

Is there anyone that is hungry for what only God can do?

If you are sick and need Healing I want you in this altar… in the first 2 feet… let us pray with you… God will heal you

If you need or want a touch of the Super Natural – I challenge you to push yourself deeper in the altar than you ever have.

Haven’t you had enough of the Natural?

The Natural says you suffer from depression… **Aren’t you ready for the Super Natural.**

The Natural says you are out-numbered, out-witted, and out-classed…

The Natural says you are sick…

The Natural says ONCE AN ADDICT ALWAYS AN ADDICT…

The Natural says your kids are bound to mess their lives up…

The Natural says your family doesn’t know Jesus…

The Natural says it is not possible…