

Spiritual Rip Van Winkles

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-6 Larry: Sun Nt Prayer. Sun 9AM service. Helpers CK. Laster's. Turkey's.
- B. Slide7 Wed Night: *Multiplying of Community*. AP [*embracing other sheep into this fold...including others. Whether a neighbor across the street or someone much different from us across the seas*]
- C. Prayer: What a prayer we sang this morning asking God to bless our America, land that we love. Asking God to stand beside her and guide her, through the night with a light from above. God we need *Your light* during these *dark times...* [Irving Berlin]

II. Slide8 Intro: Spiritual Rip Van Winkles

- A. It is foolish for Christians to want to *go back to the book of Acts* and model today's church after it. The book of acts was a transitional period. It was an *incomplete church* where there was no complete Bible, and no definitive doctrines. That's why there were little pockets of people like *Apollos and these Ephesian disciples* with *inadequate theology*. Everything was in transition. *Donald Grey Barnhouse, Acts, pg173.*

1. *Read Acts 19:1-10.

- B. Slide9 1st Illustration: During the latter part of the 18th century many colonist left Virginia and started through the mountains to settle the valleys that lay far to the west. Fear of Indians, the death of a horse, or the breaking down of a wagon forced many to stay in the mountains. For over 20 years the settlers sign a white man at all, until a group of travelers struggled into their area. Naturally there was much conversation about the outside world. The travelers ask the mountaineers what they thought of the new republic and the policies of the continental Congress. The others answered, we have not so much as heard of a Continental Congress or a Republic. They thought of themselves as a loyal subjects of the British king and *had not even heard of* George Washington or the revolutionary war. *Donald GrayBarnhouse, pg.159,160.*
- C. Slide10 2nd Illustration: The story of **Rip Van Winkle** was about a *Dutch-American villager* in colonial America who meets a mysterious Dutchmen, drinks

their liquor and falls asleep in the *Catskill Mountains*. He awakes 20 years later to a very changed world, having missed the American Revolution.

1. **Slide11** Now picture a group of men at a *Passover* making the long trek from *Ephesus* to *Jerusalem*. They meet *John the Baptist*, they even get *baptized* by him. And they return home. **But** as soon as they home, they're *isolated*. *No newspapers, no telephones, no radio, very rarely would news reach that area, especially about a rogue Messiah from Jerusalem.*
2. They would've heard of *Jesus* when they were in Jerusalem, **but** didn't know the story behind *His birth, life, teaching, death, and ascension of the God-man, who gives the Holy Spirit to those who believe.*

III. Slide12,13 **SPIRITUAL RIP VAN WINKLES (1-7)**

- A. *Ephesus* is in *Asia* which Paul was previously forbidden...**now** right timing.
1. **Quick Stats:** 4th largest city in Roman Empire. **Population** ¼ million. **Elegant architecture.** Temple of Artemis 1 of the **7 Wonders of the ancient world.** **And** a principle center for **magic** for the ancient world (**Magic**, defined as, any process by which human beings become able to *manipulate supernatural power* for their own ends). [Paul will spend 3 yrs here]
- B. **Slide14** These disciples were of *John-the-baptists* baptism **thus** John's disciples.
- C. **We have not so much as heard whether the HS *has been given*.** (NIV)
1. John taught *his disciples* in Jn.1:33, **He who sent me to baptize with water** said to me, **Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.**
- D. *In the name of*... was the issue.
1. **John's** baptism was *in the name of* repentance, awaiting Messiah.
 2. **Jesus'** baptism was *in the name of* the Lord Jesus. (aka *believers baptism*)
 - a) **Praise God** these guys were open. They simply were operating on old marching orders. They hadn't gotten the memo on *Jesus*. **And** they didn't cop an attitude, "*no thanks, we've got our John religion going.*" **Or**, "*we've believe this for 30 years now...*". **Nope.** They said, *Thanks we're in!*

b) They simply had a few *holes* in their cup of Christian doctrine.

E. Do **you** have all of these covered? **What baptism** did you receive? Make sure you've received **ALL** that God has to offer you.

1. **Slide15** Million \$ question: Are you living today as if **Pentecost** had never taken place? Luke 11:13 **If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him.**

F. **Response:** speaking in tongues & prophesying...*a mini-pentecost* showing true change. **Not** normative throughout Acts. **But** is the norm *when the gospel breaks into a new group*. (ch.2 w/Jews at Pent; ch.8 w/Samaritans; ch.10 w/1st Gentiles; ch.19 rest of Gentiles)

G. **Slide16** There are **5 verbs** in the Bible in connection w/the work of the Holy Spirit.

1. We are **born** of the Spirit into the family of God. (Jn.3:6,8)
2. We are **baptized** of the Spirit into the body of Christ. (1Cor.12:13)
3. We are **in-dwelt** by the Holy Spirit as He comes to live in us. (Rom.8:9)
4. We are **sealed** with the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption. (Eph.1:13; 4:30) [these 4 works of the HS are **simultaneous & instantaneuous**, for anyone who is **truly trusting** in Christ]
5. **Then** there is the **filling** of the Holy Spirit (Eph.5:18) that happens **again & again** in the life of the believer.

IV. Slide17a **SPIRITUAL TRAINING IN EPHESUS (8-10)**

A. Paul demonstrates *flexibility of method* & rents a **lecture hall** of a pagan philosopher

1. **3 months** in **synagogue**, **then 2 years** in **Tyrannus' school** daily.
[**Tyrant**, no parent would call their baby this...a toddler yes! **Prob students nicknames him this**]
2. **Western text of the Greek NT** tells us that Paul **taught from the 5th to the 10th hour**. (or from, **11am to 4pm** every day)
3. The Ephesians kept a **strict siesta** during this time.

- a) William Ramsey said (archaeologist/NT scholar), *Public life in the Ionian cities ended regularly at the 5th hour* (11am).
- b) One historian reportedly commented, *that more people in Ephesus were asleep at 1pm than at 1am.*

B. Here is the clearest example of **formalized leadership training** in the NT.

1. Obviously different from ordinary teaching in **house churches**, or even teaching in the **synagogues**.
2. These men would give up their *lunch-time, nap-time*, even their *soap opera's* in order to train.
3. Paul wrote 1st Cor. while he was here.

C. *What training have you had? Self taught? Sunday morning taught? Sun & wed night taught? Home Study taught? Radio/Podcasts taught? Bible College? Seminary?*

D. *Slide17b* (8) I would like to end w/some **practical thoughts** of **reason** and *hopefully persuade us* to remember *the kingdom of God* in 2020, **as** Paul did here in ad52.

[Paul here is talking about *a heavenly kingdom* while living in *an earthly kingdom*]

1. **If** Paul was peaching about *the kingdom of God* **then** he was preaching about *Jesus the King*.
2. **Did you know that over the last 2000 years**, whenever the church has succeeded in gaining political power – it has been *disastrous* both for the **church** and the **culture**.
3. **Did you know that over the last 2000 years**, whenever the church has picked up the **sword**, it ended up laying down the **cross**?
4. **Did you know that** the church was established to **serve** the world with *Christ-like love*, **not** to **rule over** the world?
5. **Did you know that** those who not only *believe like Jesus* but also *live like Jesus*, have *no sides nor enemies*, **but** we are called to **embrace** and **accept** and **love everyone** (as Jesus did those who *reviled* or *crucified him*. Think: *thief & centurion*)

6. **Believers**, yes alot is at stake **this election**. **But** please do not **polarize or lose** family members, **or** friends, **or** church friends, **or** your witness, **over your** political bias. ***Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable.***
7. **I'm asking us...** Can **we** be even more impassioned about **the kingdom of the God you serve**, **more than** you are, **the kingdom of this world?**

E. **Wrap up:** there are 3 kinds of people in our church: **non-Christians**, **committed Christians**, **and Christians who used to believe**. (Kent Hughes, pg.251,252)

1. **Non-Christians** - individuals who have not received Christ or the HS, **though** they may have some degree of intellectual belief. They may even have a desire to repent, **but they have not yet met the resurrected Christ**.
2. **Committed Christians** - who need to **keep on believing and keep on receiving** the Holy Spirit's **grace and power and filling**.
3. **Christians who used to believe** - this group needs the same advice given by Jesus to the church of the Ephesians when they **left their first love**, **Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. Remember - Repent - Return**.

F. **Communion:**

1. You've heard, **The ground is level at the foot of the cross** [meaning, there is **none too good** to need Jesus, **none too sinful** to be saved]
2. **Communion is similar for all believers. It's a leveler.**
 - a) **Jesus invites this morning strong believers & stumbling believers to His table.**
 - b) He invites **democrat believers, republican believers & other political party believers to His table.**
 - c) He invites **believers of every ethnicity & every race to His table.**
 - d) He invites **believers to come & dine with him**. To experience cleansing and wholeness. **Sin washed away & shame chased away**. To come face-to-face

with your God. To know forgiveness & feel His peace. To be bathed in His companionship & drenched in His love.

3. 1) We come out of **obedience**. 2) We come as a **gathered family**.
3) We come in this **physical act** of a simple meal, eating bread & drinking the cup. 4) We come with a **mental act** of remembering how Jesus lived and died and rose for us. 5) And we come at an even deeper level than remembering, *The bread we break is it not a **participation in the body of Christ?*** Literally, we are sharing his body and blood. We are experiencing a **partnership** in his death. 6) And we come with a **sacred seriousness**.