

No fire, no power, no one rescued?
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On April 14, 1912, signals of distress pierced the dark night of the North Atlantic in all directions from the ill-fated ship, Titanic. The S.S. Californian, the nearest ship to the scene of the accident, could have reached the Titanic before it sank. But the Californian never reached the place where the Titanic sank.

At the investigation of the sinking of the Titanic, Senator William Smith of Michigan asked the commanding officer why the Californian didn't sail immediately to the scene of the accident when the wireless reached her.

The officer shifted uncomfortably, then explained that they had feared icebergs, so they were lying motionless in the water. Even more importantly, he explained, they had extinguished their fires and had no steam up.

Such was the explanation given as to why the Californian, which could have reached the Titanic before it sank, never got there and never rescued a single soul. No fire, no power, no one rescued!

Could that be said about us that we have the form of religion, but not its power? "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8)

Sunday is Pentecost, the celebration of the gift of God's outpouring of the Spirit to the church and to us. Is this a gift we have received? Are we filled with the Spirit?

The word "filled" was a word used of the wind filling up a sail and carrying a ship along in the water. To be filled with the spirit is to allow the ship of your life to be guided by the wind of the Holy spirit of God.

When we are filled with the Holy spirit, we set the sail of our heart toward God and let the wind of God, which is the Holy Spirit, take our ship wherever He wants it to go. This is how we get the fire and power in our lives that God promises us – the fire and power to fulfill our calling as witnesses and rescue the perishing.

Those gathered at Pentecost experienced the power of God's spirit in their midst. Might I suggest that we wait like those faithful Jews in Jerusalem and that we gather expecting the Spirit to come to us? Might I suggest that we daily invite the Spirit of God to help us embody the Fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control)? The Spirit comes if we invite Him. If we want to be Spirit filled, we must learn to pray and we must learn to gather expectantly and we must learn to invite.