

Accelerate

Transcript:

Dr. Billy Wilson: Welcome to *World Impact*. I'm Billy Wilson, and today *World Impact* is on the campus of Oral Roberts University. In fact, I'm sitting right now in our newly remodeled College of Business. It is a beautiful space, and it's here to remind us that our world is advancing rapidly.

Today, we're going to be talking about being accelerated by the Holy Spirit—how your life can go from where it is now into God's future and purpose and destiny for you at an accelerated pace. I know you're going to be blessed on this particular program. We're going to hear from one of our amazing staff people today who is working on new technologies and new concepts of reality in the 21st century. It's gonna blow your mind and help you realize that our world is moving fast. We can't stay where we used to be. We've gotta move into the future, and the only way to do that, I believe, is to let the Holy Spirit carry us forward for the glory of God.

Today, during this program, I'm gonna be preaching from a passage in the book of **Acts 8** that is one of the great miracles of the New Testament. You're gonna be blessed as you realize how we can position our lives to be accelerated by God and how he can take us further and faster than we ever dreamed that we could go.

You know, years ago, I wrote a book called *Fasting Forward*, and I learned in the discipline of fasting that many times when you settle down, when you quiet your spirit—even when you slow down and focus on what's important to God—it accelerates you in a way that is unimaginable. You know, Christianity is so different than the world. Many times, we slow down to go fast, or many times we go down to go up, or we die so we can live. This is true about being accelerated, and today you'll learn that one of the ways that Philip was accelerated so much was focusing simply on what was important to God's heart and saying yes to the hard commands.

So, I want you to stay with me. As God ministers to you during this program, write me at **worldimpact.tv** and tell me. Say, "Billy, I just want to share with you what God's doing in my life and how I need to move from where I am to get on into my destiny." Stay with us. I'll be back in just a moment. We're here at the campus of ORU talking about being accelerated by the Spirit.

Computer: I was the best computerized voice in 1990 before the Internet existed. The following was written by a modern artificial intelligence with information it learns on its own from the web. It will be read by a computer, too—a much newer one than me.

Artificial announcer 1: The world is undergoing rapid changes like never before.

Artificial announcer 2: With advancements in technology, communication has become faster and more accessible.

Artificial announcer 3: The rise of the gig economy and remote work has disrupted traditional employment patterns.

Artificial announcer 4: Climate change is a pressing issue, leading to shifts in the way we produce and consume energy.

Artificial announcer 5: And the geopolitical landscape is changing, with new powers emerging on the world stage.

Artificial announcer 6: All of these changes have profound implications for the future, and it's important that we stay informed and adapt to them as they happen.

Artificial announcer 7: The rapid pace of change can be overwhelming, but faith can provide a source of purpose, stability, and strength to accelerate into your future.

Billy: Today on *World Impact*, we're talking about how you can be accelerated by the Holy Spirit into your future, your purpose, and your destiny. God has great things for you, and he wants you to move at his speed into your future.

You know, for many years I lived in east Tennessee—in Cleveland, Tennessee—and I traveled all over the world for 30 years. During that time, I flew through the Atlanta airport over and over and over again. I got to know Atlanta very well. We called it my home away from home at times.

Well, in the Atlanta airport—it's a massive airport, the busiest airport in the world—it has seven different terminals where planes come in and go out of. Those seven terminals are separated by tarmac, by large areas of concrete. So, to get from one terminal to another, you have to go underground. And in Atlanta, there are three ways to travel between the terminals.

Now, it seemed like every time I went through Atlanta, I had to switch terminals. Many times I would go three terminals over, and at times, for exercise, I would simply walk, and it was great exercise, but it was pretty slow. They also have a moving sidewalk—sort of an escalator flattened out—where you get on it, and it moves as you walk, and it accelerates your pace some. But then in Atlanta, they have a thing called the plane train. Well, in the plane train, you get in, stand up or sit down, and it whisks you away to another terminal.

Now, over the years, I've tried experiments of outpacing the plane train. I would walk as fast as I could, and every time, the plane train would beat me. Or I'd walk on the moving sidewalk as fast as I could, but the plane train was faster. Why? Because it was an accelerated mode of

transportation. It was able to go faster than I could go in my own strength. So, if I wanted to get there quickly, I simply got on the plane train.

Well, today, I'm gonna be talking about how you can get on God's plane train of the Holy Spirit—that he can move you quickly to your destination in God. We're going to be looking today at one of the most unusual miracles, really, in the New Testament. It's a miracle I've never seen in my ministry, but I've studied it over and over again in **Acts 8**, and I believe it is verified that this is exactly what happened.

I want to read to you out of **Acts 8:39–40**: *“When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.”*

Now, this is an astounding miracle when you realize what happened. Philip was in the Gaza desert. This was about 20 miles away from the village of Azotus, and in an instant he's carried from where he baptizes the Ethiopian eunuch to this city Azotus—supernaturally, miraculously by the Holy Spirit. God accelerates him in a way that is amazing and astounding.

Today, I want to talk about not how you can experience this miracle of transportation and get from one city to another supernaturally, but how you can get from one place in your walk with God to where he's taking you in an accelerated way.

Now, we're living in a world that is filled with accelerated things. In fact, knowledge is accelerating around us all the time. In the 19th century, it took 100 years to double the knowledge base of the world. By mid-20th century, every 25 years knowledge would double. A few years ago, it took less than 12 months for knowledge to double. And by some estimates, now it takes only 12 hours for knowledge to double in the world. So, twice every day, what the world could know in knowledge doubles. Wow—what an acceleration that's going on.

Technology is accelerating. We have augmented reality, virtual reality. We have artificial intelligence, and all of this technology in our world that we're trying to cope with as humans. And in the middle of it all, we now have 8 billion people on planet Earth, and the church is relatively stagnant in its percentage of Christianity in the world. This means, in order to cope with our society, reach the world that is growing at an exponential speed, the church must find a way to be accelerated in reaching the ends of the earth with the gospel of Jesus Christ, and God wants to accelerate you into your future.

So today, I want to talk about four things that happened in Philip's life that positioned him for this supernatural acceleration by the Holy Spirit.

First, Philip focused on what was important to God. And in this instance, one man was important to God. Now, Philip learned what Jesus taught us over and over again, and that is when we focus on one, many times masses are unlocked and can be reached. So, Jesus focuses on one woman at the well in Samaria, and Samaria is touched with the gospel of Jesus. Jesus focuses on one demoniac man in Gadara, and the entire region of Decapolis is opened for the

gospel. Jesus focuses on one thief on the cross, and forever multitudes of people on their deathbed have hope in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This principle continues in the New Testament church. Saul of Tarsus then becomes the Apostle Paul. Jesus focuses attention on this one man, meets him on the road to Damascus, and unlocks the potential in Paul to be the greatest missionary that ever lived. He uses a vision of one man—a Macedonian—calling to Paul’s team to come to Europe, and the entire continent of Europe is unlocked for the gospel.

Well, the same is true here. As Philip hears God’s heart for one person, he’s called to leave the greatest revival in his entire ministry. It was the apex of Philip’s ministry in Samaria. People were being saved, and healed, and filled with the Holy Spirit. God was moving powerfully. It was a dream come true for a Christian believer to see how God was touching Samaria. But in the middle of it all, God called Philip to go to the desert of Gaza to find one lost person.

He was an Ethiopian eunuch. He worked in the queen’s court as the treasurer. He was a man of prominence. He was sitting in a chariot reading Scripture in what we would know as **Isaiah 53** about the suffering servant that Isaiah describes. He couldn’t understand if Isaiah was talking about himself or someone that was to come. So, Philip, at the prompting of the Holy Spirit, runs to the chariot and ministers to this man, and he received Jesus Christ as his Savior. They stopped the chariot at a place where there’s water, and the Ethiopian eunuch is baptized in water and becomes the first African convert in the New Testament church.

Now, we know today that Africa has more Christians than any place on planet Earth or any other continent, and the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch unlocks the potential of an entire continent, because Philip focused on what was important to God. The first step in being accelerated into your future, into your purpose, into your destiny is to focus your heart on what’s important to God. What’s really important to God? Well, your relationship is important to God, but people are important to God. That’s why Jesus said we’re to love him with all of our heart, our soul, our mind, our strength, and we’re to love others as ourself. God loves us, but he also loves everyone on Earth, and he wants your heart to focus on loving him and loving others. When you do so, you’re positioning yourself to be accelerated by the Spirit into your destiny and your purpose.

I want you to stay with me. I’ll be back in just a moment, as we continue talking about being accelerated by the Holy Spirit.

Billy: Mike Mathews is Vice President of Innovation and Global Learning at Oral Roberts University. He is on the cutting edge of technology around the world, especially in higher education. We’re going now, and our hosts Allie and Augustine Mendoza are going to interview him for a few minutes and find out some things of what’s happening in the 21st-century world, so you and I can get our hearts ready to be accelerated by the Spirit.

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Mike Mathews: Hey, Allie, good to see you.

Augustine Mendoza: Hey, Mike.

Allie: Hey, nice glasses.

Mike: Augustine. Oh, yeah—welcome to the Oral Roberts University virtual reality lab, where we have accelerated the learning experience for students around the world. Imagine 150 programs that we offer, and we can immerse people into anything: engines, nursing schools, simulators. Why? Because the world's accelerating in the field of education.

Augustine: So, you spent 12 years at Cray Research, which is a supercomputer company, and you've seen all sorts of acceleration and research. Would you tell us more about that?

Mike: Oh, absolutely. Last year, the supercomputer by Cray Research calculates eight quintillion calculations per second. Putting that in perspective is: one quintillion by itself is one billion billions. So, a lot of people fear technology. It's natural. But what bothers me the most is people are fearing, "It's gonna take away my job." And when you really think how primitive that is—that people are more concerned about their job than what God may be up to in the universe. And so time has now proven Y2K wasn't the end of the world, 2012 wasn't the end of the world, but I'm amazed at how many people build these cynical plot theories that this is gonna bring an end to everything.

Allie: So, all of that is super interesting, but I'm a really practical person. So, what does that mean for me practically on a day-to-day basis?

Mike: You know, I get in trouble with my wife because I forgot the insurance payment, or I forgot something important to her—all because it's mundane. But—oh—faith, hope, and love. What if I practiced those and let AI take care of all those mundane things? That's exactly what it does, and that's all AI can do. It will never, ever possess faith, hope, or agape love, and those three attributes are what Christians are supposed to be specializing in.

Augustine: Mike, thank you so much for taking the time just to show us around this room, talk to us about technology, and really encourage us and inspire us—and, I hope everyone watching—to accelerate into what God has for them by embracing technology.

Mike: You're welcome.

Billy: Today on *World Impact*, we're talking about being accelerated by the Spirit—how God can accelerate your life in ways you could never imagine, beyond your own strength, beyond your own capacity or ability. I talked in the first part of this message about one of the great miracles of the New Testament—how Philip was transported 20 miles instantly by the Holy Spirit—and what happened before that time that positioned him to be accelerated by God; how

you and I, in the 21st century, need to find something that speeds us up in God's will to get the gospel to the ends of the earth.

The first thing Philip did was he focused on what God's heart was focused on—people. And as he ministered to one person, he was positioning his life to be accelerated by the Holy Spirit.

The second thing that Philip did was: Philip was willing to be flexible. You know, some of the greatest times of acceleration in my life—when God has been moving me from one place to another place, or from one area of fruitfulness in my life to another level of fruitfulness in my life—it's been because I've been very flexible with God.

Philip had to be quite flexible. He started out—we first hear of him in **Acts 6**. He starts out as a deacon, waiting on tables. In the middle of that, he finds himself cast out of Jerusalem by the persecution and becomes an evangelist. And then God calls him to move from a great crusade to personal evangelism. Over and over again, Philip was willing to move with the Holy Spirit. He was flexible. He never put his tent pegs down too deeply. He understood he was a pilgrim and a stranger like Abraham before, and he was being moved by God. If we're going to see God move us—accelerate us into the future—we've gotta remain flexible and nimble.

There's an account in the Old Testament about David. David—of course, anointed by Samuel to be the next king—finds himself on the battlefield hearing Goliath's taunts. He goes to King Saul. He says, "I'll take this giant on." Saul says, finally, after some convincing, "Okay, I'll let you go out and fight him, but I want you to wear my armor." Now, Saul was the tallest man in Israel, and David was small and ruddy, the Scripture says—sort of a blushing-looking young man, very small, a young teenager at the time. And Saul puts his big, heavy armor on this young man, and David can't move very well.

David says to Saul, "I haven't proven these," plus he couldn't hardly hold it up. It was very heavy, and he was small. He said, "Would you just let me go to the battlefield with what I've proven—my sling and stones?" So, when David gets on the battlefield, Goliath starts toward him, and the Scripture says David begins to run toward Goliath. He picks up five stones, and he hurls one of them, running at the giant. Now, as he ran toward him, it added momentum to what he could produce with the sling, and the stone hits Goliath in the head and knocks him down. I'm convinced if David had been in the inflexible armor of the past generation—of Saul—he would've never brought the giant down. He had to be flexible. He had to be nimble, if that stone was going to be accelerated enough to bring down a giant.

One of the things you must do to position yourself to be used of God is to remain flexible. I hear people set limitations on God all around me all the time. They say to God, "I'm not gonna move out of this city," or, "I'm not gonna do that job," or, "I'm not gonna do that job." You're just putting your stakes down too deep. Remember, you're a pilgrim, you're a stranger. Say to the Holy Spirit, "Whatever you want from me, wherever you want me, I'm ready to go."

Many years ago, I would've never dreamed I would be President of Oral Roberts University. It's required extreme flexibility in my life. My plans, my wife's plans have all been upset. We're

delighted in it. When you're in God's will, it's wonderful—but it requires that you remain flexible. You must be nimble if you're going to see God accelerate you.

Number three, Philip also obeyed the difficult command. If you're going to be accelerated by the Holy Spirit, you've gotta be willing to say yes when it's tough. Now, Philip was in a great revival. The Holy Spirit said, "I want you to go to the desert—to an empty place." He was in a place of fullness. He was in a place of abundance. God says, "I want you to go to emptiness, where it's austere, where it's not so great." This was a hard command to obey. I would've said, "Wait a minute, God. I think you got confused. I'm in the greatest revival of my life, and you're calling me to the desert?" But Philip said yes, even when the command was difficult. And because he did, it positioned him for the supernatural acceleration he would experience.

All the easy jobs in God's kingdom are taken. Many of the commands we're going to get in the 21st century are going to be difficult. Don't be afraid to say yes to the difficult command of God. When he whispers to you, say, "Yes, sir," and do what God calls you to do. Now, it may look like a desert to you, but I promise you—if you'll obey his voice—the desert will blossom and bloom, and some of the greatest miracles in your life will happen in the desert. The truth is: Philip's greatest miracle happened when that Ethiopian eunuch was saved, and Philip contributed to the evangelization of the entire continent of Africa that day. But it looked tough when he said yes. Don't be afraid to say yes to God.

And, finally, depend on the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit was poured out in **Acts 2**, he propelled the early church to the world. It was like a supernatural accelerant had been poured on them—a fire from heaven that pushed them to the ends of the earth. Jesus had promised them that, and he says in **Luke 24:49**, *"I'm going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."* In many ways, they wrapped themselves in the power of the Holy Spirit—in a supernatural clothing, almost like becoming a super Christian, super clothing that propelled them forward to the ends of the earth.

You can become a supernatural Christian if you're willing to not depend on yourself, but depend on the Holy Spirit. I believe we need an increased reliance on the Holy Spirit in the 21st century. We're in a world that's accelerating at such a rapid speed—it blows your mind. But if you're willing to simply focus on what God's heart is focused on—people—and if you're willing to be flexible and say yes to the hard commands, and be dependent on the Holy Spirit, you are positioning yourself to be accelerated forward.

In many ways, when you depend on the Holy Spirit, you get on God's plane train, and that train of the Holy Spirit will take you faster and further than you could ever go on your own. When I received the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a 16-year-old, I never dreamed of all the places God would take me around the world and all the things he would allow me to do. But some way, some way, I got on God's plane train. I've had to say yes to some really difficult assignments over the years, and every time what I've realized is: what looked so difficult—such a desert—wasn't that at all. It was Satan trying to keep me from God's will. And when I said yes, it opened up and bloomed, and it was fruitful, and it was awesome.

So today, wherever you're at—even if you feel very stuck—if you're willing to hear God's voice and say yes to his command, and depend on the Holy Spirit, focusing on his heart and what's important to heaven, he will accelerate you by his Spirit.

Billy: Today on *World Impact*, we've been talking about being accelerated by the Spirit—how you can position your life so that the Holy Spirit takes you faster and further than you ever dreamed. This happened to Philip in the desert of Gaza, as God transported him 20 miles instantly. Well, that may not happen exactly like that to you, but God can move your life forward toward your destiny and purpose in him if you'll position your heart correctly.

So today, I want to encourage you to listen to the whispers of the Holy Spirit. Depend on God. Say yes to the difficult commands—even when it doesn't make sense, even when it's irrational. Just say yes to him and do what he asks you to do. He knows what he's doing in moving your life toward your future and your destiny. And at all times, keep your heart focused on what's important to heaven. God wants to move your life.

Now, some of you watching this show today feel like you're stuck—that you're going so slow, you'll never get to where God is taking you. Well, I want to say to you: God does things in his timing, and he does them perfectly. And if you'll say yes to him, listen to his voice, he'll take you where you're going faster than you can believe. So today, I challenge you to hear him and obey him fully.

If you'd like to know more about how to do that, you can write me at **worldimpact.tv**. I'd love to hear from you. I'd love to hear your story and what's happening in your life. Even if you feel like you've been stuck for years right where you are, I believe the Holy Spirit's gonna help you get unstuck, get on the plane train of heaven, and move to where God wants you to be. So write me right now—**worldimpact.tv**. Tell me your story. We're excited to hear from you today. The Holy Spirit is with you, and if you'll let him, he will accelerate your life in the 21st century. So, not only can we keep up with what's going on in the world—we will exceed it, and the church will outgrow the population of the earth, and we will see this world touched for Jesus Christ.

I want to thank you for joining me today on *World Impact*. I'm on the campus of Oral Roberts University. We've been sharing Jesus with you and with the world, and we ask God to touch your life and accelerate you by his Spirit.

Announcer: This has been *World Impact*, with Dr. Billy Wilson, President of Oral Roberts University. Watch more episodes of *World Impact* at **worldimpact.tv**.

