

A STUDY OF THE
HOLY
SPIRIT

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Let's Get Started

“And it happened while Apollos was at Corinth that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” So they said to him, “We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit,” Acts 19:1-2.

Like these disciples, many disciples today are not that familiar with the Holy Spirit. What about you? I have been a part of four congregations throughout the years. I really didn't begin to hear much about the Spirit until I moved to Texas. I've heard others say that not enough teaching is done on the Spirit.

Sadly, the things that people hear concerning the Holy Spirit (like miracles, tongues, Holy Spirit baptism) are often false. That's because two major movements (Calvinism and Pentecostalism) have caused a tremendous amount of confusion with respect to who the Spirit is, what He has done, what He does, and Christians' relationship with Him.

Over the next quarter we are going to study the Holy Spirit. Our approach might be different compared to other workbooks concerning the Holy Spirit. Many workbooks are often broken up into different topics regarding the Spirit. There is nothing wrong with that method.

Our study this quarter is going to take us through the book of Acts. The book of Acts refers to the actions of the apostles. And yet at the same time it also helps us to see the Holy Spirit in action. It was the apostles who were guided in all truth by the Holy Spirit, John 16:12-13. It was the apostles who were promised and received Holy Spirit baptism, Acts 1-2. While we see the apostles in action, we also see the Holy Spirit in action.

This study is important for at least three reasons.

- First, we will have a better understanding of the Spirit.
- Second, it will help us to defend God's truth.
- Third, it will help us to teach others.

Where We Go from Here

In this class we will address a variety of topics regarding the Holy Spirit from the book of Acts. What do you think we might be able to learn about the Spirit from Acts?

Write your answers below.

What questions quickly come to your mind that you would like for us to explore in this study regarding the Spirit?

As we go throughout the study this quarter, we will walk through the book of Acts. From time to time there may be a little overlap, but I believe you will enjoy seeing the Holy Spirit in action. I believe that this study will be extremely beneficial to you.

Confusion regarding the Holy Spirit

I stated earlier in the introduction how there is so much confusion regarding the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that has given us His word, and yet there are so many different views and thoughts concerning who He is and what He does. Sadly, many have been deceived by false teachers when it comes to the Holy Spirit.

Digging into the Past

In order to understand why there's so much confusion regarding the Holy Spirit, it's important to know the past. Pentecostalism is a major reason why there is so much confusion regarding the Holy Spirit. But how much do you know about this movement?

- Pentecostalism began around 1900. Charismatic historians trace the movement's modern origins to a small Bible college in Topeka, Kansas run by Charles Fox Parham.
- "Parham was a member of the Holiness movement, which teaches that entire sanctification, a spiritual state amounting to sinless perfection in this life, is obtainable by Christians through a "second blessing," a dramatic post-salvation experience of transformation." *Charismatic Movement, page 32*
- Parham founded the College of Bethel in 1900, and the school went out of business a year later. But something happened at the school on January 1, 1901, that continues to impact us today.
- The school's approach to studying was to use the "chain reference" approach. Topics would be studied by following consecutive readings on the subject as they appeared in scripture. Topics were studied by using a concordance to trace key terms. Therefore, books were not studied as a whole. Context was often ignored. When the school opened, Parham wanted his students to study the major tenets of the Holiness movement.

Charismatic historian Vinson Synan records, "For some years, Parham had been especially interested in the differing views on the question of receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. By the 1890s, most Holiness people were equating the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the reception of the sanctification experience. The fire of the Holy Ghost was taught, cleansed the heart from inbred sin and empowered the recipient to witness to others and live an overcoming life. Yet from the days of John Wesley, who had first emphasized the second blessing, there had been no commonly accepted evidence of receiving such a blessing. In presenting this problem to the students, Parham explained that Holiness people differed in their teachings on evidences of receiving the baptism. "Some," he noted for example, "claim blessings or demonstrations, such as shouting or jumping." At the same time, Parham had for years been impressed with the possibility that glossolalia (speaking in tongues) might be restored in the form of foreign language facility granted to missionaries who would no longer have to take the time for normal language studies." *Charismatic Chaos, page 33.*

- In December 1900, Parham gave his students an assignment. He told them, "The gifts are in the Holy Spirit, and with the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the gifts, as well as the graces, should be manifested. Now, students, while I am gone, see if there is not some evidence given of the baptism so there may be no doubt on the subject." When he returned the students concluded that "while there were different things (that) occurred when the Pentecostal blessing fell...the indisputable proof on each occasion was that they spake with other tongues." In the light of this conclusion, the entire school agreed to seek for a restoration of Pentecostal power with the evidence of speaking in tongues, *Charismatic Chaos, p34.*
- On New Year's Day in 1901, a small group of students in Topeka commenced their prayer meeting. For hours nothing happened until a 30-year student named Agnes Ozman requested the laying on of hands so that she might receive the Holy Spirit with the apostle's sign of speaking in tongues. She then supposedly began to speak in tongues. Shortly, thereafter many others began to do the same thing.
- Pentecostalism was born that day.

Digging into the Past (continued)

As stated earlier, Pentecostalism has created a great deal of confusion. And so has Calvinism. How familiar are you with Calvinism? Let's consider some facts regarding this teaching.

- This doctrine is named after John Calvin. He was a very religious man. He lived from 1509-1564. In 1550 he broke away from the Catholic church.
- He wrote the "Institutes of the Christian Religion (Protestant Handbook) in 1536. One of the basic premises was that of predestination and God's Sovereignty in man's salvation.

His teaching is often described or referenced by the acronym T.U.L.I.P.

- **Total Heredity Depravity:** All babies are born completely guilty and with a sinful nature. We are powerless, from birth, to be good or ever choose righteousness.
- **Unconditional Election:** Also called, "Predestination." God has chosen certain ones to save. His choice for salvation in no way includes the mind or actions of any person.
- **Limited Atonement:** Christ's blood was not shed for all men, but to purchase the elect. If Christ died for all, then all would be saved. So the Shepherd only died for His Sheep.
- **Irresistible Grace:** If God chose to save someone, then His grace can't be resisted. So the saved are saved whether they choose to be or not. This is 100% God.
- **Perseverance of the Saints:** Once saved, always saved. Since this is all God, the elect can't choose hell.

From Calvinism also arises the idea that without special guidance from the Spirit of God, a person can't read and understand the Bible.

Calvinism also claims a direct and personal indwelling where the Holy Spirit is inside a person's body. This view is widespread, and most believe it.

Concluding Thoughts

Based off what we have learned regarding Pentecostalism and Calvinism, do you see how people can be confused regarding the Holy Spirit?

There are many other views that are floating around in our society with respect to the Holy Spirit. Therefore, it's critical for us to know what the Bible has to say.

How much do you know about the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts? Let's take a quiz.

1. What chapter is Holy Spirit baptism first mentioned?
2. What chapter do we find someone else other than the apostles performing miracles?
3. Why did the apostles speak in tongues?
4. What does it mean to be "filled with the Spirit?"
5. Was Cornelius saved when he received Holy Spirit baptism? Explain.
6. What attributes of the Holy Spirit do we see in the book of Acts?
7. Who wrote the book of Acts and approximately when was it written?
8. What promise did Jesus receive from the Spirit, Acts 2?

Some Examples

Here is a listing of scriptures where some of the various terms used to describe the Holy Spirit are found. All references are from the New Testament. A similar list could be made from the Old Testament scriptures.

1. Mark 1:10: "The Spirit"
2. Luke 11:13: "Holy Spirit"
3. Matthew 1:18: "Holy Ghost" (KJV)
4. John 14:16, 17: "Helper" or "Comforter" "Spirit of Truth"
5. Hebrews 9:14: "Eternal Spirit"
6. Matthew 3:16: "Spirit of God"
7. Matthew 10:20: "Spirit of your Father"
8. Luke 4:18: "Spirit of the Lord"
9. Ephesians 4:30: "Holy Spirit of God"
10. 2 Corinthians 3:3: "Spirit of the living God"
11. Hebrews 10:29: "Spirit of grace"

As we study the Holy Spirit, it will be important to note that every passage that has the word "spirit" may not be referring to the Holy Spirit. Consider the following passages and identify who is being referred to.

1. John 4:24
2. 1 Corinthians 15:45
3. Hebrews 1:13-14
4. Matthew 8:16
5. James 2:26
6. 2 Timothy 1:7
7. Matthew 26:41
8. 2 Corinthians 3:6
9. Romans 1:4
10. Romans 2:29
11. Romans 8:9

Considering the Old Testament

It is wise for us to consider the Old Testament and what we can learn about the Holy Spirit. A proper understanding about the Spirit in the Old Testament, will help us as we dive into the New Testament. Write out references about the Holy Spirit that you know of in the Old Testament.

1. **The Seventy Elders** (Numbers 11:16-17, 24-26). Why do you think the elders only prophesied for one day?
2. **Isaiah 32:13-18**: How would the Jews understand the pouring out of the Holy Spirit?
3. **Isaiah 44:3-5**: How would the Jews understand the pouring out of the Holy Spirit?
4. **Ezekiel 37:13-14**: What would the Spirit do?
5. **Ezekiel 39:28-29**: How would the Jews understand the pouring out of the Holy Spirit?
6. **Joel 2:28-3:1**: How would Israel know when the Spirit would be poured out?
7. **Isaiah 66:15-16**: We see judgment language here. What do you see that's repeated?
8. **Ezekiel 22:20-22**: We see judgment language here. What do you see that's repeated?
9. Read **Matthew 3:7-12**: What similar language do we see John the Baptist using in his ministry that we've seen from the Old Testament?

The 4 Gospels Prepare Us for the Holy Spirit in Acts

Before we dive into the book of Acts it is critical that we consider the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). When Jesus was on earth, He spoke a lot about the Holy Spirit to His apostles and what the Spirit would do for them.

The gospels provide a sneak preview of the Spirit in action in Acts. They also demonstrate the importance of the apostles and their authoritative role in the church. Many today think that they have the same authority of the apostles. That is false! The twelve apostles (and Mathias and Paul) were chosen by Jesus for a special office in the church. There are no apostles on earth today. Without a proper understanding of the apostles, one will not have a good understanding of the Holy Spirit.

This lesson will demonstrate what the gospels say regarding the work of the Spirit through the apostles. The following passages will help set up the book of Acts. Jesus addressed the apostles in all of these and their special position.

The Holy Spirit in the Book of Matthew

1. Read Matthew 10:1-5. What is it that Jesus did?
2. Read Matthew 10:16-18. What did Jesus warn them that would happen to them?
3. Who would help them according to verses 19-20?
4. Where would the words of the apostles come from? Why is this important to understand?

The Holy Spirit in the Book of Mark

1. Read Mark 16:17-20. What was it the apostles would be able to do?
2. What was the purpose of the signs?
3. What do these verses teach us about the authority of the apostles?

The Holy Spirit in the Book of Luke

1. Read Luke 24:44-49. What was it that the apostles were to do?
2. According to Luke 24:49, what was it that the apostles would receive?
3. What was the promise from on high the apostles would receive?

The Holy Spirit in the Book of John

1. What was it that the Holy Spirit would assist the apostles in according to John 14:26?
2. According to John 16:1-7, when would the apostles receive the Holy Spirit?
3. Read John 16:12-13. What is it that Holy Spirit would provide for the apostles?

The Holy Spirit's Outline for the Book of Acts

Our focus this quarter will be on the Holy Spirit in Action in the book of Acts. Before we discuss the Spirit in detail, we need to have a good overview of the book of Acts.

Witnesses in Jerusalem

1. What exactly were the apostles witnesses of regarding Jesus? Why was that so important?
2. Where was it that the gospel would first be preached?
3. Beginning in Acts 2-7 we find that the gospel was preached in the city of Jerusalem. Read the following passages that demonstrate this, Acts 2:1-5, 3:1, 4:5-8, 5:12-16, 6:1-7.

Witnesses in all Judea and Samaria

1. Beginning in Acts 8 we find that the gospel was spread to Judea and Samaria, Acts 8:1-4 and Acts 10:1-5. What happened that caused the gospel to be spread? Read Acts 8:1-4 for assistance.
2. According to Acts 8:1-4, where did the apostles remain?
3. We find occasions where the apostles did go to Judea and Samaria. Read Acts 8:14-17. Why did Peter and John go to Samaria? Read Acts 10:24-29. Why did Peter go to Caesarea?

Witnesses to the End of the Earth

1. Read Acts 11:19-22. Where do we see that the gospel had spread?
2. Read Acts 13:4-13. Where did the apostle Paul travel to spread the gospel?
3. We began by considering Acts 1:8. Did the apostles accomplish their mission from Jesus? Why is this important?

More Facts about the Book of Acts

1. While Jesus appointed 12 apostles, which apostles are focused on the most?
2. How many missionary journeys of the apostle Paul are recorded in the book of Acts?
3. Why is it important for us to have a good working knowledge of this book?
4. What other questions do you have concerning the book of Acts?

1 The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

2 until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen,

3 to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me;

5 "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

8 "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,

11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey.

13 And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas;

Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James.

14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said,

16 "Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus;

17 "for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry."

18 (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out.

19 And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it'; and, 'Let another take his office.'

21 "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

22 "beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

23 And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

24 And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen

25 "to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."

26 And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.

7 Then they were all amazed and marveled, saying to one another, "Look, are not all these who speak Galileans?"

8 "And how is it that we hear, each in our own language in which we were born?"

9 "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, those dwelling in Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

10 "Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya adjoining Cyrene, visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

11 "Cretans and Arabs--we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God."

12 So they were all amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "Whatever could this mean?"

13 Others mocking said, "They are full of new wine."

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.

15 "For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

16 "But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.

18 And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.

19 I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.

21 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'

22 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know--

23 "Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;

24 "whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.

25 "For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.

26 Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.

27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

28 You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.'

29 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

30 "Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,

31 "he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.

32 "This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

33 "Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand,

35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'"

36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,

45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

1 Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.

2 And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms from those who entered the temple;

3 who, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked for alms

4 And fixing his eyes on him, with John, Peter said, "Look at us."

5 So he gave them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

6 Then Peter said, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk."

7 And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.

8 So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them--walking, leaping, and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God.

10 Then they knew that it was he who sat begging alms at the Beautiful Gate of the temple; and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

11 Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.

12 So when Peter saw it, he responded to the people: "Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?"

13 "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of our fathers, glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let Him go.

14 "But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,

15 "and killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses.

16 "And His name, through faith in His name, has made this man strong, whom you see and know. Yes, the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.

17 "Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers.

18 "But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

19 "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord

20 "and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,

21 "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

22 "For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.

23-26 'And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. "Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. "You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'" To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities."

Cooperation between the Spirit and the Son

In Acts 1:1-2, the Bible says, “The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen...”

The first words of Luke recorded in Acts help us to see that the Holy Spirit and Jesus worked together. Jesus operated in conjunction with the Holy Spirit.

In fact, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all work in conjunction with each other. These three persons make up the Godhead. The term “Godhead” or “Godhood” refers to the divine nature, Acts 17:29. While they are three distinct personalities, they are one. They are one in the sense of agreement, purpose, and action, as believers should be, John 17:20-21. There are three persons in the one Godhead. There are not three gods. There is one God!

In this lesson we will learn about some of the attributes of the Holy Spirit. We will also see how the Spirit works in conjunction with the Father and the Son.

The Individuality of the Holy Spirit

1. Many believe that there is no distinction between the Father, Son, and Spirit. Is that true? Read the following verses. Do you see a distinction between the Spirit and Jesus or between the Spirit and the Father? Write yes or no.

- Acts 1:2:
- Acts 1:7-8:
- Acts 5:32:
- Acts 7:51-53:
- Acts 9:31:
- Acts 10:38:
- Acts 13:2:
- Acts 15:8:

2. Why is it that many say that there is no distinction between the Spirit, Father, and Son?

The Spirit Is a Divine Person

1. The Spirit possesses the quality of Deity and individuality as the Father and Son do. He is not something mystical in nature. Attributes that can only be ascribed to a person are attributed to the Holy Spirit. The following passages demonstrate this. Record what you learn regarding the Spirit below.

a. Acts 5:1-5:

b. Acts 13:1-5:

c. Acts 15:28:

d. Acts 16:6-10:

2. Are there any other passages in the book of Acts that help us to learn more of the attributes of the Holy Spirit?

3. While many recognize the attributes of the Father and Son, why do some struggle with respect to the attributes of the Spirit, which we saw in the previous question?

The Father, Son, and Spirit Work Together as One

1. Read Acts 2:23. The Father, Son, and Spirit played a role with respect to saving mankind. What role did each of them play?

2. Why is this lesson important as we consider the Holy Spirit?

Holy Spirit Baptism

As we journey through the book of Acts, we quickly read about Holy Spirit baptism, Acts 1:5-9. In this lesson we will consider what is taught in the book of Acts concerning Holy Spirit baptism.

Acts 1

1. What did Jesus say to the apostles in Acts 1:5-8?
2. What had John preached concerning Holy Spirit Baptism?
3. Prior to Holy Spirit baptism, what had to happen with Jesus?
4. What is it that the apostles had to do to receive this power from on high?

Acts 2

1. Where did the day of Pentecost take place?
2. Why did they receive it in that city?
3. How can we know they received it in Acts 2:1-4?
4. Which baptism was necessary for people to have their sins forgiven in Acts 2?
5. We find another case of Holy Spirit baptism in Acts 10:44-48. Why did Cornelius and his household receive this baptism?
6. When was Cornelius saved? When he received Holy Spirit baptism or when he was baptized in water?
7. Are people receiving Holy Spirit baptism today? Explain.

Tongues: Setting the Record Straight

There is a lot of confusion about what it means to “speak in tongues.” And, some of the most confused are those who profess to have this miraculous spiritual gift today.

Lots of religious people today claim to be able to do exactly what the apostles did in Acts 2. Yet, when we carefully study this chapter, we will see that the claims of men today do not line up with this chapter at all.

In setting the record straight, we need to say in the outset that speaking in tongues was a miraculous gift given by the Holy Spirit that empowered a person to be able to speak a foreign language that he had never learned. It was not gibberish; it was an actual language that could be easily understood by those who knew that language. The record in Acts 2 will prove this fact.

Tongues: Setting the Context

1. Jesus addressed speaking in tongues in Mark 16:17. To whom did He say this applied? Read Mark 16:9-20 for help. Be careful to look at these other verses.
2. Look at Mark 16:20. What purpose did speaking in tongues serve?
3. What is the significance of the phrase “new tongues” in Mark 16:17?
4. In Acts 2:1-4, what group of people spoke in tongues?
5. What other miracles accompanied speaking in tongues in Acts 2:1-4?
6. Did the people in Acts 2:5-12 actually hear the apostles speak, or did they hear something else?

Tongues: Setting Forth the Truth

1. Where did the miracle of speaking in tongues take place? Was it at the mouth of the speaker or at the ear of the hearer?
2. Were the languages spoken on this day actual foreign languages, or was it gibberish of some sort?
3. In verses 12 and 13, we find two different reactions. What are those reactions?
4. Read Acts 10:44-48 and Acts 11:12-18. What sign was given at Cornelius’ house to prove Gentiles could be saved?
5. Some disciples in Acts 19:6 spoke in tongues. Where did they get this power? (See also Acts 8:18.)
6. Do people have this power today? Explain.

Joel: An Old Testament Prophet

As Peter begins his sermon in [Acts 2:16-21](#), the first Old Testament text that he introduces is from the Book of Joel.

He opens with these words in verse 16:

“But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel...”

These words are contrasted with Peter’s explanation that these men are not drunk. (Remember the accusation of the mockers in verse 13.) Rather than being drunk, the apostles are being used by God to fulfill a prophecy made by Joel in the Old Testament (Joel 2:28-32).

It is important to note that Peter is not giving a new prophecy, but rather is repeating a prophecy made hundreds of years beforehand. This is important because some folks treat Peter’s words—not as fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost—but looking to a far distant time from then.

The KJV is well-worded in verse 16.

“But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel...”

Peter says Joel’s word are being fulfilled. The reason some folks do not agree with that is because of the use of the phrase “the last days” in verse 17. Most people think “last days” refers to the time just before Jesus’ returns. We will address that in this lesson.

We also need to address another statement of Joel’s prophecy where he said, “That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh...?” What did that mean? And what does it mean for us today? Let’s find out.

Why was Joel written? Take a few minutes and read the book of Joel. In the space below, write out the theme of this book. Identify the places where you see the Spirit.

Fulfillment of Joel’s Prophecy

“...As the Spirit Gave Them Utterance”

There is an important point to be made in Acts 2:4 that affects how we view the rest of the chapter, the book, and the Bible as a whole. The point has to do with inspiration.

The apostles spoke in tongues by the power of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:4-11. What they said about Jesus, about the Old Testament prophets, about judgment and about salvation was all guided by the Holy Spirit. Before we begin, how would you define the term “inspiration”? Why is a good understanding of inspiration so important?

Inspiration: Getting Some Background

1. According to John 16:12-15, what did Jesus say that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles into?
2. According to John 14:26, what did Jesus say the Holy Spirit would do for the apostles?
3. In Matthew 10:19-20, Jesus told the apostles that someone would speak through them. Who was it?
4. According to 1 Corinthians 2:12-13, what did Paul say he (and others) had received from the Spirit?

Inspiration: Demonstrated in Acts 1-2

1. Read Acts 1:16-17, 4:25. What do we learn about inspiration in this text? To whom did Peter attribute the words of David?
2. What other passages in Peter’s talk in this section (Acts 1:15-22) show that he believed the Old Testament Scripture was authoritative?
3. Read Acts 2. Identify the Old Testament passages that Peter referenced as he preached.
4. Why was it important that the apostles use the Old Testament Scriptures as they preached to the Jews about the Messiah?
5. Read Acts 2:11. The apostles spoke the wonderful works of God. Yet, what they spoke of was not recorded for us. How concerned should we be that we don’t have this information recorded for us?
6. Read Acts 2:40. Peter used many other words to convince the Jews to obey Jesus. Yet those words of inspiration were not recorded for us. How concerned should we be that we don’t have those words?
7. Does the Holy Spirit continue to speak through people today? How would you answer this question?

Did Jesus Receive the Spirit or Something from the Spirit?

While we are still in Acts 2, don't panic. We will eventually move forward. We are spending so much time in this chapter because there is so much said of the Holy Spirit. While much time has been given regarding the prophecy of Joel, there's a verse in Acts 2 that's often overlooked concerning the Spirit.

That verse is Acts 2:33. What we find in this particular verse is a work of the Holy Spirit. People often want to know, "What is it that the Holy Spirit does, or has done in the past?" This verse will help us to know.

Many are confused regarding what it is that Jesus received from the Holy Spirit. Some folks say, "It is simple. He received the Holy Spirit!" But is that what the text really says? Let's make a careful examination. Let's also bring in some other passages where Peter speaks of the Holy Spirit and His work.

Before we consider Acts 2:33, let's be sure to consider the context of the previous verses.

Diving into the Context

1. Read Acts 2:22-24. Who is Peter speaking about to the Jewish audience?
2. Read Acts 2:25-28. What argument is Peter trying to make in these verses? Where is he quoting from?
3. Read Acts 2:29-32. What argument is Peter trying to make to the Jews concerning Jesus?
4. What was Christ to sit on after His resurrection?

Having Received from the Father the Promise of the Holy Spirit

Reading Acts 2:33, we are forced to ask, "What did Jesus receive when He returned to heaven?" Let's find out.

Choose the correct answer and be ready to explain.

- a. Jesus received the Holy Spirit as a promise.
- b. Jesus received what the Holy Spirit promised.

What had the Holy Spirit promised that Jesus had received? (For help see Acts 2:30).

In Acts 2:34-35 Peter quotes Psalms 110:1. Peter says Jesus is at God's right hand. For how long will He reign? Also, according to 1 Corinthians 15:24-27, how long must He reign?

What do we learn about the Holy Spirit from this lesson?

Addressing the Issue

The “gift of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 2:38 is the subject of controversy. There are a variety of answers given.

- It is power to perform miracles.
- A literal indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
- The promised Gift of Salvation.
- It is synonymous with the “promise of the spirit” and the “baptism of the Holy Spirit.”

The Gift of God

Read the following texts and identify what “the gift of God” is in each. In which of these verses is God the gift?

- Ecclesiastes 3:13
- John 4:10
- Romans 6:23
- 1 Corinthians 7:7
- Ephesians 2:8

Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is said to dwell within us, [Romans 8:9](#).

Also consider [1 Corinthians 6:19](#).

The Spirit dwells in us when we allow the word of God to rule our lives. The Spirit of God dwells in us when we submit our lives to the rule of Jesus Christ. This is not something mystical.

Who else is said to dwell within us? Read [Romans 8:10](#); [Galatians 2:20](#).

The Gift of the Holy Spirit

1 Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,

2 being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.

4 However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

5 And it came to pass, on the next day, that their rulers, elders, and scribes,

6 as well as Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the family of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, "By what power or by what name have you done this?"

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel:

9 "If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well,

10 "let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

11 "This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.'

12 "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it.

15 But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves,

16 saying, "What shall we do to these men? For, indeed, that a notable miracle has been done through them is evident to all who dwell in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

17 "But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name."

18 And they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge.

20 "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

21 So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding no way of punishing them, because of the people, since they all glorified God for what had been done.

22 For the man was over forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

23 And being let go, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them.

24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them,

25 "who by the mouth of Your servant David have said: 'Why did the nations rage, And the people plot vain things?

26 The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the LORD and against His Christ.'

27 "For truly against Your holy Servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together

28 "to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose determined before to be done.

29 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,

30 "by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus."

31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.

33 And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.

34 Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold,

35 and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

36 And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus,

37 having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet.

3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?

4 "While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

5 Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things.

6 And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

7 Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

8 And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much."

9 Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out."

10 Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband.

11 So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

12 And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch.

13 Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly.

14 And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,

15 so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them.

16 Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed

17 Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation,

18 and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison.

19 But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said,

20 "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."

21 And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

22 But when the officers came and did not find them in the prison, they returned and reported,

23 saying, "Indeed we found the prison shut securely, and the guards standing outside before the doors; but when we opened them, we found no one inside!"

24 Now when the high priest, the captain of the temple, and the chief priests heard these things, they wondered what the outcome would be.

25 So one came and told them, saying, "Look, the men whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people!"

26 Then the captain went with the officers and brought them without violence, for they feared the people, lest they should be stoned.

27 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest asked them,

28 saying, "Did we not strictly command you not to teach in this name? And look, you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"

29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men.

30 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus whom you murdered by hanging on a tree.

31 "Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

32 "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."

33 When they heard this, they were furious and plotted to kill them.

34 Then one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law held in respect by all the people, and commanded them to put the apostles outside for a little while.

35 And he said to them: "Men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do regarding these men.

36 "For some time ago Theudas rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, joined him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were scattered and came to nothing.

37 "After this man, Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were dispersed.

38 "And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing;

39 "but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to fight against God."

40 And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Convicting the World

Before Jesus died He spoke to His apostles about the Holy Spirit, [John 16:5-11](#). It was necessary for Jesus to leave, so that the Holy Spirit might come. We learn from this passage some of the work of the Holy Spirit. He would convict the world of sin, of judgment, and of righteousness.

But how would He do this? The answer is found in the book of Acts. Throughout the book we see the Holy Spirit in action with respect to convicting the world of sin, judgment, and of righteousness. It's important that we understand how He does this.

Does the Spirit overrule our free will? Can we reject or resist what He does? Let's find out.

He Will Convict the World of Sin, and of Righteousness, and of the Judgment

1. Read [Acts 2:36-37](#). What caused the Jews to be pricked in their hearts?
2. Read [Acts 7:51-54](#). What caused the Jews to be pricked in their hearts?
3. Read [Acts 11:13-14](#). How was Cornelius' heart pricked in Acts 10?
4. Read [Acts 16:11-14](#). How was Lydia's heart opened?
5. Read [Acts 24:22-25](#). How was Felix's heart pricked?
6. How is it that the Holy Spirit convicted men of sin?
7. Go back and read [Acts 7:51-54](#). Although the Jews hearts were pricked, how did they respond? What can we learn about how people can respond to the Spirit's teaching?

Convicting the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment is a work of the Holy Spirit. It's something He did in the first century, and something that continues today.

Understanding how He works in this manner will help us to understand how He works in other ways.

The Work of the Spirit and Conversion

1. Read [Acts 2:36-38](#). How were these people converted?
2. Read [Acts 3:17-19, 4:4, 6:7, 8:12-13, 19:1-6](#).
3. After reading these passages, is there anything that a person needs to be saved that's lacking from the gospel message?
4. After reading these passages, does the Holy Spirit influence people in some other way than through the gospel?

Is There Another Way the Spirit Convicts and Converts?

From what we have read so far, we have seen how the Spirit works through His revealed word with respect to convicting men of sin and conversion. But does He work in any other ways? Sometimes people think giving the answer of "Through The Word" is limiting the Spirit.

1. Can you find the Spirit working in another way with respect to convicting men and conversion in the book of Acts in another way?
2. Read [Acts 10](#). How many miracles can you identify? Despite all of these miracles, what was necessary for Cornelius to be convicted and converted, [Acts 10:6, 11:14](#)?
3. Why do you think that some claim that the Spirit will work in some other way with respect to convicting men and conversion other than through His word

The Apostles Were Filled with the Spirit

On the Day of Pentecost, we find that the apostles were filled with the Spirit, Acts 2:1-4. Throughout the rest of the book, we see the idea of being “Filled with the Spirit”. But what does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? Is it appropriate for us to say that we are filled with the Spirit?

There's a lot of confusion regarding this idea. Some believe that to be filled with the Spirit means that the Spirit is literally dwelling inside of our bodies. Others may attribute miraculous spiritual gifts with this idea or Holy Spirit baptism.

In this lesson, we will consider a number of passages that will help us to get a better understanding of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Use of the Word “Filled” in the Book of Luke

It was Luke who wrote the book of Acts. Before we dive into the passages in Acts that speak of being filled with the Spirit, let's consider how the word is used in the gospel of Luke. This will give us some further insight. Read the passages below. How is the word filled used?

1. Luke 1:15, 41, 53, 67:
2. Luke 2:40:
3. Luke 4:1, 28::
4. Luke 5:7, 26:
5. Luke 6:11,21:
6. What conclusion can be made regarding how we should understand the use of the term “filled” particularly when it comes to the Holy Spirit?

The Use of the Word “Filled” in the Book of Acts

Read the following passages. How is the word “filled” used? Does it mean that a person literally has the Spirit dwelling inside of them? Identify how the word is being used in the text and write out your answer with the space provided.

1. Acts 2:2,4:
2. Acts 3:10:
3. Acts 4:8, 31(Some believe that in verse 31 that the apostles received Holy Spirit baptism again. How would you answer that?):
4. Acts 5:3,17,28:
5. Acts 9:17:
6. Acts 13:9, 49, 52:
7. Acts 19:29:

Are We Filled with the Spirit?

To be filled with the Holy Spirit is not referring to a literal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Nor is it referring to supernatural spiritual gifts. Rather it's the idea of influence and control. We are to be filled with the Spirit, Ephesians 5:18.

1. How can a Christian be filled with the Holy Spirit? Read Ephesians 5:16-18 to help answer this question.
2. Read Colossians 1:9-11. What can we learn from these verses with respect to being filled with the Spirit?

We Are His Witnesses

The Church of Christ was established on the Day of Pentecost. As Peter proclaimed the message of Jesus, he emphasized the fact that the apostles were eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Jesus, Acts 2:32.

In fact, this is what the apostles would emphasize all throughout their preaching. Notice the following verses throughout the book of Acts, Acts 3:15, 5:32, 10:34-41, 13:30-31.

Yet, notice again what Peter said in Acts 5:31-32. Peter referenced the Holy Spirit as also being a witness. In what way was the Holy Spirit a witness?

Go back and read Acts 3-5:32. The context in chapter 5 goes back to chapter three when Peter and John healed the man at the temple. Now they were on trial because of what they had done.

What did Peter mean when he said that the Holy Spirit was a witness of Jesus and the Resurrection? And who are the people that Peter is referring to when he said that the Spirit would be given to those who obey Him? This is what we will discuss in this lesson.

The Apostles and the Holy Spirit

The apostles hold a special position in the book of Acts throughout the first century, and even for us today. They were the men Jesus chose to proclaim the gospel, Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8.

They were with Jesus throughout His ministry, Acts 10:39.

1. What would be the significance of the apostles as eyewitnesses of the resurrection of Jesus?
2. Why is their witness so important for us today?

The Apostles and the Holy Spirit continued

1. In what way was the Holy Spirit a witness?
2. In Acts 5:32, Peter said "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." Who was Peter referring to in this verse? Hint: Read verse 29 to help answer this question.
3. Why was it important that the Holy Spirit be a witness during the ministry of Paul?
4. Read Acts 5:33-39. After Peter and the apostles spoke, how did the Jews respond? Why was that significant?

The Holy Spirit continues to be a witness for Jesus

1. In what way does the Holy Spirit continue to be a witness of Jesus and His resurrection?
2. Is there any other way that the Holy Spirit might witness the events concerning Jesus today?
3. Because we have the words and miracles of the apostles recorded for us by the Holy Spirit, how should we respond? Read John 20:28 to help answer.

1 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.

3 "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business;

4 "but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,

6 whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

7 Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

8 And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.

9 Then there arose some from what is called the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and those from Cilicia and Asia), disputing with Stephen.

10 And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke.

11 Then they secretly induced men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God."

12 And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon him, seized him, and brought him to the council.

13 They also set up false witnesses who said, "This man does not cease to speak blasphemous words against this holy place and the law;

14 "for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us."

15 And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel.

1 Then the high priest said, "Are these things so?"

2 And he said, "Brethren and fathers, listen: The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran,

3 "and said to him, 'Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.'

4 "Then he came out of the land of the Chaldeans and dwelt in Haran. And from there, when his father was dead, He moved him to this land in which you now dwell.

5 "And God gave him no inheritance in it, not even enough to set his foot on. But even when Abraham had no child, He promised to give it to him for a possession, and to his descendants after him.

6 "But God spoke in this way: that his descendants would dwell in a foreign land, and that they would bring them into bondage and oppress them four hundred years.

7 'And the nation to whom they will be in bondage I will judge,' said God, 'and after that they shall come out and serve Me in this place.'

8 "Then He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham begot Isaac and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot the twelve patriarchs.

9 "And the patriarchs, becoming envious, sold Joseph into Egypt. But God was with him

10 "and delivered him out of all his troubles, and gave him favor and wisdom in the presence of Pharaoh, king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.

11 "Now a famine and great trouble came over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and our fathers found no sustenance.

12 "But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first.

13 "And the second time Joseph was made known to his brothers, and Joseph's family became known to the Pharaoh.

14 "Then Joseph sent and called his father Jacob and all his relatives to him, seventy-five people.

15 "So Jacob went down to Egypt; and he died, he and our fathers.

16 "And they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem.

17 "But when the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt

18 "till another king arose who did not know Joseph.

19 "This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, making them expose their babies, so that they might not live.

20 "At this time Moses was born, and was well pleasing to God; and he was brought up in his father's house for three months.

21 "But when he was set out, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son.

22 "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.

23 "Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel.

24 "And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian.

25 "For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand.

26 "And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another?'

27 "But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?'

28 'Do you want to kill me as you did the Egyptian yesterday?'

29 "Then, at this saying, Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian, where he had two sons.

30 "And when forty years had passed, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai.

31 "When Moses saw it, he marveled at the sight; and as he drew near to observe, the voice of the Lord came to him,

32 "saying, 'I am the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses trembled and dared not look.

33 'Then the LORD said to him, "Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.

34 "I have surely seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt."

35 "This Moses whom they rejected, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?' is the one God sent to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the Angel who appeared to him in the bush.

36 "He brought them out, after he had shown wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and in the Red Sea, and in the wilderness forty years.

37 "This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.'

38 "This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give to us,

39 "whom our fathers would not obey, but rejected. And in their hearts they turned back to Egypt,

40 "saying to Aaron, 'Make us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.'

41 "And they made a calf in those days, offered sacrifices to the idol, and rejoiced in the works of their own hands.

42 "Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: 'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?'

43 You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, And the star of your god Remphan, Images which you made to worship; And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.'

44 "Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness, as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen,

45 "which our fathers, having received it in turn, also brought with Joshua into the land possessed by the Gentiles, whom God drove out before the face of our fathers until the days of David,

46 "who found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob.

47 "But Solomon built Him a house.

48 "However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says:

49 'Heaven is My throne, And earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the LORD, Or what is the place of My rest?'

50 Has My hand not made all these things?'

51 "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears!
You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.

52 "Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute?
And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers,

53 "who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it."

54 When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth.

55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,

56 and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord;

58 and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.

59 And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

60 Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

1 Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.

3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

4 Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.

6 And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.

9 But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great,

10 to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God."

11 And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time.

12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

13 Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

14 Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them,

15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

18 And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money,

19 saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

20 But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!

21 "You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for your heart is not right in the sight of God.

22 "Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.

23 "For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity."

24 Then Simon answered and said, "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me."

25 So when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.

26 Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert.

27 So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship,

28 was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet.

29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot."

30 So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

31 And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him.

32 The place in the Scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, So He opened not His mouth.

33 In His humiliation His justice was taken away, And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth."

34 So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?"

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.

36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"

37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

39 Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.

40 But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

The Old Testament Story Found in the Book of Acts

How familiar are you with the Old Testament? Did you know that there's one chapter in the book of Acts that provides us with a nice summary of it? If you didn't, now you do. I'm referring to [Acts 7](#).

[Acts 7](#) is a continuation from [Acts 6](#). Read [Acts 6](#).

1. Who is the main character from verses 6-15?
2. What is it that this man was doing?
3. Why were the Jews upset with him?

In [Acts 7](#), Stephen begins to do a quick history lesson of the Old Testament. On the surface this discourse from Stephen may seem a little odd. What point was he trying to make? The answer is found in [Acts 7:54](#). Stephen wanted his listeners to know that they had been resisting the Holy Spirit as their fathers did throughout the Old Testament. But in what way had they resisted the Holy Spirit? And how did the Jews in the Old Testament resist Him? And how might we resist Him today? Let's find out.

Stephen's Sermon

Read [Acts 7:1-50](#) and answer the following questions.

1. Who did Stephen discuss in verses 1-8?
2. Who did Stephen discuss in verses 9-16?
3. Who did Stephen discuss in verses 17-34?
4. Read verses 35-50. How did the Jews respond to the one that God had sent them?

Stephen's Application

1. Read [Acts 7:35-50](#). How had the Jews in the Old Testament responded to the one that was sent to them?
2. After going through the sermon of Stephen, what point, or application was he trying to make to his audience? Read [Acts 7:51-54](#)?
3. In what way had the Jews in the Old Testament resisted the Spirit? How had Stephen's audience resisted the Spirit?
4. What was their response after hearing the words of Stephen, [Acts 7:54-60](#)?

Are We Resisting the Spirit?

1. How might we resist the Spirit? Provide details.
2. What was the result of the Jews in the Old Testament who resisted the Spirit, [Acts 7:42-43](#)?
3. What would be the result of the Jews in the first century who resisted the words of the Spirit?
4. What will be the result for us when we reject the Holy Spirit? Read [Hebrews 10:26-31](#) to help answer this question.
5. People want to know about speaking against the Spirit and the unforgivable sin in [Matthew 12:31-32](#). How might what we have learned in Acts 7 help us answer this question?

Let's Talk a Little Bit about Miracles

So far in our study we have covered a lot of ground. We have seen a lot of things with respect to the Holy Spirit. One of the suggestions I have given you is to mark when you see miracles being performed or recorded in our readings. But we haven't really spent a lot of time talking about miracles in an entire lesson.

This is that lesson! Before we consider what we can learn about the Holy Spirit and miracles, let's first define some terms.

Define the word miracle.

Let's take a quick look at the chapters we have covered so far and see what we can learn regarding miracles. Identify what you find in the chapters below with respect to miracles.

1. Acts 1-2;

2. Acts 3-4;

3. Acts 5-6;

3. Acts 7;

We've only touched the surface when it comes to miracles found in the book of Acts. List other examples of miracles found in the book below.

Miracles (continued)

1. Why did the Spirit give the apostles the power to perform miracles? What purpose did they serve? Read Hebrews 2:1-4 for assistance.
2. Why did the Holy Spirit allow the apostles to impart miraculous gifts to others like in Acts 6:1-7?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. List the miraculous gifts mentioned in the text below.
4. See if you can categorize these gifts. For example, which gifts assisted when it came to revealing God's word?
5. Which of these gifts can you find demonstrated in the book of Acts?
6. Which miracle of Jesus did the apostles constantly remind people of in their preaching? Why?
7. What evidence in the book of Acts helps us to see when miracles would cease?
8. Do we need miracles today? Explain.
9. Does your answer above mean that the Holy Spirit is any less powerful than He was in the first century?

Philip Performing Miracles in Samaria

The words of Jesus were being fulfilled. The gospel had begun in Jerusalem and was spreading, Acts 1:8. The gospel would be preached in Samaria. Men like Philip and others were scattered due to persecution, Acts 8:1-4.

As Philip was in Samaria he performed miracles, Acts 8:5-8. But how was Philip able to perform miracles? He was not one of the apostles? And how was Stephen able to perform miracles, Acts 6?

The answer is found in Acts 8. Much discussion is made about how people outside of the apostles were able to receive power from the Holy Spirit to perform miracles. Was it only for a select few? Did they have to pray for the power to come? Or could it be bought?

Simon the Sorcerer

As we talk about how others than the apostles received power from the Holy Spirit, we have to discuss Simon the Sorcerer. Read Acts 8: 9-13.

1. Did Simon have any real power?
2. How was he able to convince so many people?
3. Do you think that there are people like Simon today? Explain.
4. Read Acts 13:6-12. What do we learn about the man now Bar-Jesus? How was he similar to Simon?
5. Did Bar-Jesus have any real power?
6. How did Sergius Paulus respond to Paul?

Receiving the Spirit from the Apostles

1. When the church began, it was only the apostles who were able to perform miracles, Acts 2:44. That would change beginning in Acts 6. Read Acts 6:1-8. What in the text might explain how Stephen and Philip were able to perform miracles?
2. Read Acts 8:14-15. Why were Peter and John sent to Samaria?
3. What baptism had the people in Samaria received?
4. Read Acts 8:17. How did the people receive the Holy Spirit? Why couldn't Philip who was already in Samaria provide this power to them?
5. Read Acts 8:18-19. What did Simon recognize was happening?
6. Read Acts 19:1-6. What do you think Paul meant when he asked them that question in verse 2?
7. Read Acts 19:1-6. How were the saints in Ephesus able to speak in tongues?

Is This Power Available for Us Today?

1. Many believe that people still have the power to perform miracles? Based on what we have learned, how would you answer them?
2. Why was it that the apostles imparted these spiritual gifts? What purpose did they serve? Read Romans 1:11 to help answer.
3. Do we need spiritual gifts today?

1 Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest

2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

3 As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven.

4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads."

6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

7 And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no one.

8 Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus.

9 And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

10 Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord."

Ac 22:12

11 So the Lord said to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying.

12 "And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him, so that he might receive his sight."

13 Then Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.

14 "And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."

15 But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.

16 "For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake."

17 And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.

19 So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.

20 Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.

21 Then all who heard were amazed, and said, "Is this not he who destroyed those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?"

22 But Saul increased all the more in strength, and confounded the Jews who dwelt in Damascus, proving that this Jesus is the Christ.

23 Now after many days were past, the Jews plotted to kill him.

24 But their plot became known to Saul. And they watched the gates day and night, to kill him.

25 Then the disciples took him by night and let him down through the wall in a large basket.

26 And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple.

27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.

28 So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out.

29 And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him.

30 When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus.

31 Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied.

33 There he found a certain man named Aeneas, who had been bedridden eight years and was paralyzed.

34 And Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus the Christ heals you. Arise and make your bed." Then he arose immediately.

35 So all who dwelt at Lydda and Sharon saw him and turned to the Lord.

36 At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did.

37 But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room.

38 And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them.

39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.

40 But Peter put them all out, and knelt down and prayed. And turning to the body he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up.

41 Then he gave her his hand and lifted her up; and when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.

42 And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed on the Lord.

43 So it was that he stayed many days in Joppa with Simon, a tanner.

1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment,

2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.

3 About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!"

4 And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?" So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God.

5 "Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter.

6 "He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do."

7 And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually.

8 So when he had explained all these things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

9 The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour.

10 Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance

11 and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth.

12 In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air.

13 And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."

14 But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean."

15 And a voice spoke to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common."

16 This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

17 Now while Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant, behold, the men who had been sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and stood before the gate.

18 And they called and asked whether Simon, whose surname was Peter, was lodging there.

19 While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you.

20 "Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."

21 Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?"

22 And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you."

23 Then he invited them in and lodged them. On the next day Peter went away with them, and some brethren from Joppa accompanied him.

24 And the following day they entered Caesarea. Now Cornelius was waiting for them, and had called together his relatives and close friends.

25 As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him.

26 But Peter lifted him up, saying, "Stand up; I myself am also a man."

27 And as he talked with him, he went in and found many who had come together.

28 Then he said to them, "You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.

29 "Therefore I came without objection as soon as I was sent for. I ask, then, for what reason have you sent for me?"

30 So Cornelius said, "Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing,

31 "and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer has been heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of God.

32 'Send therefore to Joppa and call Simon here, whose surname is Peter. He is lodging in the house of Simon, a tanner, by the sea. When he comes, he will speak to you.'

33 "So I sent to you immediately, and you have done well to come. Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God."

34 Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.

35 "But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him.

36 "The word which God sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ--He is Lord of all--

37 "that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached:

38 "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

39 "And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree.

Ac 10:40 "Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly,

41 "not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, even to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead.

42 "And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.

43 "To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."

44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.

45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered,

47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

The Holy Spirit Spoke to Philip

In our last lesson we considered some of the events that took place in Acts 8. This chapter provides us with a lot of information concerning the work of the Spirit in the first century. There's an interesting event that took place in Acts 8:26-28. We find that the Holy Spirit spoke to Philip. He told Philip to "Go near and overtake this chariot."

Philip would find a man described as the Ethiopian Eunuch. They would study the scriptures together and eventually the Eunuch would be baptized.

The Holy Spirit played a pivotal role guiding Philip to this man. Why do you think the Spirit wanted Philip to talk to this man? Write your answer below.

Other Cases of the Holy Spirit Speaking in Acts

Let's consider a few of these examples.

1. Read Acts 10:19-20, 11:12. Who did the Spirit speak to? Why did He have to speak to this man?
2. Read Acts 13:1-3. Who did the Spirit speak to? What did He instruct them to do? Why were these men given these instructions?
3. There is no denying that the Holy Spirit spoke directly to men in the first century. Why did He work in this manner?

How Does the Spirit Speak to Us Today?

There are many who assume that the Spirit continues to personally speak to us as He did to others in the first century. It is true that the Spirit speaks to us. There is no denying that. BUT, the question is HOW?

Certainly, the first century was unique. It was filled with miracles. The Holy Spirit spoke directly to men, as did Jesus (see Acts 9:1-16, 10:9-15). The apostles and prophets were inspired. They were inspired for a reason. What we find is that they recorded their words and events for mankind, Ephesians 3:1-5.

This helps us to understand how the Spirit speaks to us today. Let's be clear: The Spirit gets to decide how He speaks to us today. He has the power to do that. But let's also understand, that however He decides to do that, we must be satisfied.

1. When people say, "The Holy Spirit speaks to me..." what do they often mean by that?
2. If someone asked you, "Does the Spirit speak to you?" how would you reply?
3. Many say that the Spirit speaks to them. Yet what they claim to have received from the Spirit is actually contrary with what the Spirit has recorded for us in the scriptures. What can we learn from this?

A Revisit of the Events in Acts

At the beginning of the quarter, we discussed the outline of the book of Acts. Acts 1:8 is an important verse for us to remember. The apostles went out and proclaimed the gospel message. It began in Jerusalem and would continue to spread to other areas.

God's will was being done. Yet we also learn that the church went through some difficult days. The work of God was not always easy for them.

- The apostles quickly faced opposition, Acts 4:5-7, 17,5:40.
- There was internal conflict, Acts 6:1-6.
- Brethren began to lose their lives, Acts 7:59.
- A great persecution arose, Acts 8:1-4.
- The apostle James would die, Acts 12:1-5.
- But despite all of this, there were times where the Christians had peace! There's a passage that we may quickly glance over that we shouldn't. It's found in Acts 9:31. Luke recorded these words: "Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied."

Why was this recorded for us? And what is it that we can learn regarding the Holy Spirit?

Looking at Acts 9:31

1. Why do you think that there was peace among the brethren? Name at least one contributing factor.
2. How were the saints walking in the fear of the Lord?

Looking at Acts 9:31 (continued)

3. How is the Spirit described? Is He described as some mystical force or is viewed as a person like the Lord? Why is this important?
4. What do you think it means that the saints were walking in the comfort of the Holy Spirit?
5. We've already seen that James the apostle would die in Acts 12:1-5. Can you identify other occasions after Acts 12 where we find the saints facing persecution? List them below.
6. What good may have come from the intense persecution God's people faced?
7. What good would have come from the peace they enjoyed from time to time?

Are We Walking in the Fear of the Lord and Comfort of the Holy Spirit?

1. What does it look like for us to walk in the fear of the Lord?
2. How do we walk in the comfort of the Holy Spirit?
3. The result of God's people fearing Him was that they multiplied. This is a common theme throughout Acts. What's interesting is that even in the midst of persecution, God's people still multiplied. What can we learn from this?

Hebrews 2:1-4

In Hebrews 2:1-4 we learn something about the Holy Spirit. Notice what the passage says.

“Therefore, we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.

For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward,

How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?”

What is it that we can learn from these verses concerning the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit and His Will

We find throughout the book of Acts the Spirit in Action. It's clear that the Spirit is part of the Godhead. It's also clear that the Spirit has a will.

The word “will” is referring to the Spirit's power of making a reasoned choice, to determine something, or to choose. We find the Spirit demonstrating intent, or volition.

In this lesson we will be able to learn more about the Spirit and how He worked in the first century.

1. Read Acts 10:19-20. What happened in this chapter? Why did the Spirit make it clear to Peter that he needed to follow these men?
2. Read Acts 13:1-4. What is it that the Holy Spirit wanted the people to do?

The Holy Spirit and His Will (continued)

3. Read Acts 16:6-15. Why do you think the Holy Spirit did not allow Paul and Silas to go to certain places? You may also want to read Acts 18:19,19:10,20:31 to help answer this question.
4. Read Acts 20:17-31. What can we learn about the Holy Spirit with respect to His will concerning local churches and shepherds?

The Holy Spirit and His Will Today

1. How is it that we can understand the will of the Spirit today?
2. The Spirit was concerned about evangelism in the first century. Is He concerned about it today? How should this affect us?
3. The Spirit was concerned about shepherds in local congregations in the first century. Is He concerned about this important position today? How should this affect us?

Understanding the Providence of God

People often have questions about miracles. But it's often the case that people really have questions when it comes to the providence of God. Have you heard people speak of God and His providence?

Over the last quarter we have discussed a tremendous amount of information concerning the Holy Spirit. As we draw our study to a close, we need to consider this important topic.

A lot of the stuff we have covered has been in the early part of the book. And yet throughout the entire book of Acts, we can continue to learn about the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit works with the Father and the Son. Therefore, it's appropriate for us to consider the Spirit and His providence.

What Does "Providence" Mean?

To get a good understanding about the providence of God, we need to quickly revisit the topic of miracles. A miracle is a supernatural act; the intervention of God in a way that is above natural law; it transcends and is contrary to natural law. There are numerous examples of miracles found in the book of Acts, Acts 3:1-11, 9:36-41.

Providence, however, is the idea of "to see-before." It involves seeing a need or a desired outcome and arranging things to meet that need or produce that outcome. God can work through nature, men, and other natural means to produce a desired outcome, Daniel 2:20-21.

The Providence of God

1. Read Acts 16:10-13. What did the Spirit do? Do you think this is an example of God's providence?
2. Do we know exactly how God acted?

The Providence of God (continued)

4. Read Acts 19:23-41. What was taking place?
5. How was Paul delivered by God?
6. Do we know exactly how Paul acted?
7. Read Acts 23:11-35. What was happening with Paul?
8. Did God use a miracle or His providence to deliver Paul?
9. Read Acts 27:21-44. What was happening with Paul?
10. How was Paul and the others delivered?
11. Did God use a miracle, or do we see His providence in action?

God and His Providence Today

12. Is it appropriate for us to believe in the providence of God today? Explain
13. Are we always going to know how God is working? Should this be a concern for us?

