

**WOMEN IN THE WORD
OF
FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH**

THE HOLY SPIRIT REVEALED
Exploring the Father's Promise to Believers

Scripture Reference Notes

Lesson SEVEN

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

February 28, 2023

The book of Acts is a big deal. The appearance of the Holy Spirit happens. The beginning of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ is launched. The gospel is being spread all over the region.

The book of Acts is a perfect complement to the Gospels, the story of the life of Christ on earth on the one side, and the Epistles which are letters to the churches in the New Testament era regarding their walk with the Lord on the other side.

Acts is an inspired account of the first 30 years of the church of Jesus Christ and of the beginning of the what is called the "church age".

Just as there is prominence given to the ministry of Christ in the Gospel accounts, in the book of Acts there is prominence given to the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

THE BEGINNING (ACTS 1:1-5)

The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me;

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

Jesus stayed with His disciples for forty days after His resurrection. He comforted them and continued to teach them and remind them of all that He had told them during His ministry and about the future Kingdom.

He gave them a command, "DO NOT LEAVE JERUSALEM". They were to wait for the fulfillment of the promise of the Father.....the Holy Spirit.

"They all joined together constantly in prayer." (Acts 1:14) There were about a hundred and twenty believers in that room together waiting as Jesus had instructed according to Acts 1:15.

While they were waiting they appointed Mathias to replace Judas among the 12 apostles. (Acts 1:16-26)

THE DAY OF PENTACOST (ACTS 2:1-13)

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together, and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language. They were amazed and astonished, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? "And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs--we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God. And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, "What does this mean?" But others were mocking and saying, "They are full of sweet wine."

There are different interpretations of what the tongues did. One is “rested on” also “sat on” and “settled on”. Whatever versions you are using we can see that these “seemed to be tongues of fire” (NIV) were upon those 120 believers that were in the room.

I count over 18 different dialects or languages that were being spoken out by people who did NOT know that language.

PETER’S SERMON (ACTS 2:14-41)

But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: "Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words.

"For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day; but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS; EVEN ON MY BONDSLAVES, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN, I WILL IN THOSE DAYS POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT And they shall prophesy. 'AND I WILL GRANT WONDERS IN THE SKY ABOVE AND SIGNS ON THE EARTH BELOW, BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOR OF SMOKE. 'THE SUN WILL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THE GREAT AND GLORIOUS DAY OF THE LORD SHALL COME. 'AND IT SHALL BE THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.'

"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know--this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. "But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.

"For David says of Him, 'I SAW THE LORD ALWAYS IN MY PRESENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, SO THAT I WILL NOT BE SHAKEN. 'THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL LIVE IN

HOPE; BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW YOUR HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.

'YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; YOU WILL MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH YOUR PRESENCE.'

"Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

"And so, because he was a prophet and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS ON HIS THRONE, He looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY.

"This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

"Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. "For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, "SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'" Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ--this Jesus whom you crucified." Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. "For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

This sermon was delivered to some of the same people who had called for Jesus' to be crucified. That is why Peter said "repent". They needed to acknowledge their sin of rejecting Jesus. The people responded.

This powerful sermon was preached by the same man who denied Jesus in the court yard in front of many people. Now Peter is proclaiming the Christ.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE BELIEVERS (ACTS 2:42-47)

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved."

Please notice the components of the believers' gathering: apostles' teaching and fellowship and communion and prayer. This was likely more than a once-a-week occurrence. This sets an example for us when we come together.

Also note the verbiage "the Lord was adding". We are added to the body of Christ because we are being drawn there by the truth of His Word and the conviction of the Holy Spirit. We don't join up. John 6:44--"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him....."

There are over 50 references to the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. We won't be able to talk about all of them but here is a sampling:

1. Acts 4:8-10--Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people, if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead--by this name this man stands here before you in good health."

Peter and John had healed the crippled beggar in Acts chapter 3 and now they were being questioned. Peter responded as the Spirit was directing him.

I want you to take note of the response of the powers that be...Acts 4:13—
"Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that

they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.”

They had “BEEN WITH JESUS”. What an fantastic statement.

2. Acts 4:31--And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

Let’s notice that their being filled with the Holy Spirit brought forth boldness but it was preceded by prayer. Their boldness was for the purpose of proclaim the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The terminology “filled with the Holy Spirit” refers to “being consumed by” or “under the influence of”. We will talk much more about this in lessons to come.

3. In Acts chapter 5, the account of Ananias and Sapphira, we see characteristics of the Holy Spirit being revealed.

- a. The Holy Spirit can be lied to—Acts 5:3--But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land?"
- b. The Holy Spirit can be tested---Acts 5: Then Peter said to her, "Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out as well."
- c. The Holy Spirit is a witness—Acts 5:32--And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.

We also see in verse 32 that the Holy Spirit has been given to believers.

4. In Acts chapter 6 when the apostles were choosing the seven deacons to take care of the flock, one of the criteria was that they be “filled with the Spirit”.

Verse 3--"Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task."

5. The Holy Spirit can be resisted. Acts 7:51--You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did."

6. Acts 8:14-17---Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For He had not yet fallen upon any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.

7. In chapter 9, Saul's conversion in becoming Paul, we see Ananias being obedient to the Lord's instructions to go to Saul. Acts 9:17-19--So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized; and he took food and was strengthened. Now for several days he was with the disciples who were at Damascus,"

8. The Holy Spirit is a strengthener and encourager. Acts 9:31—"Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers."

9. The Spirit is given to Gentiles. Acts 10:44-45--While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. All the circumcised believers (Jews) who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also."

10. Acts 11:15-18--"And as I (Peter) began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. "And I remembered the word of the Lord, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' Therefore if God gave to them the

same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life."

11. Acts:13:2—the Holy Spirit speaks: “While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

In verses 4, 9 and 52 of chapter 13, we see the Holy Spirit filling those who were spreading the Gospel.

12. Acts 19:1-7--It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying. There were in all about twelve men.”

13. Acts 20:28 gives instructions for shepherding the family of believers. "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

14. The Spirit has always been the Spirit of Truth. Acts 28:25--And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, saying, 'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY, "YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES; OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'"

"Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also listen."

Obviously we only scratched the surface of the over 50 mentions of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts. I encourage you to study this further on your own.

SO WHAT?

Acts 4:13--Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

Acts 17:6—"But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here,"

Do people in our sphere of influence know that we "have been with Jesus"?

Could it be said of us that we "have turned the world upside down" for Jesus?

II Corinthians 13:14....."The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all."

TO GOD BE THE GLORY!

HOLY SPIRIT REVEALED

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LESSON SEVEN

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

Some commentators say the book of Acts should be named "ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT". When we have finished this lesson perhaps you will have an opinion on this.

1---What were Jesus' instructions to His disciples before His ascension in Acts 1:4?

2---Describe the scene in the upper room where the disciples were waiting in Acts 1:12-2:13?

3---Contrast this scene of "waiting" to the scene of the disciples right after Jesus's death. Use these references: Matt 27:45-56, Mark 15:33-41, Luke 23:44-49, John 19:28-37.

4---What made the difference?

5---In your own words tell the story of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in this story?

6---In Acts 8:26-40 how did the Holy Spirit direct Phillip? What happened? Tell the story in your own words.

7---Describe Saul's encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus in Acts 9.

8---In Acts 9:17-22 describe the work of the Holy Spirit in Paul. What did the Holy Spirit enable Paul to do?

9---In Acts 10, the Holy Spirit is given to Gentiles (vs 44-48). Why is this so significant?

10---What do Stephen (Acts 6:5) and Barnabas (Acts 11:23-24) have in common?

11---How would you summarize the role of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts and the establishment of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ during this period?

12—So What? Are you able to see the thread of the Holy Spirit being revealing in scripture? We perhaps can ask...”What does this have to do with me today?” Do you have an answer to t