

7-21-2024, COTR Texarkana

Title: The God Connection, pt-10

Purpose: Provoke people to expect the Holy Spirit to communicate to them and provoke them to do what He says.

Truth for Today: The Holy Spirit wants to communicate with us.

Text: Acts chapter 9

Topic: Holy Spirit, Divine Communication, Visions, Prophecy, Obedience, Supernatural

Series Title: Series Title: The God Connection...The Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

Series Purpose:Provoke people to (1) Develop a vital relationship with the Holy Spirit, (2) Allow Him to work in us, (3) Have faith to let Him work through us supernaturally using spiritual gifts.

## The God Connection, pt-10

### I. Introduction

A. Review Series: The God Connection...The Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.

Today is part 10. We're studying the Book of Acts as a handbook to teach us how the believers in the early church used spiritual gifts to accomplish the Great Commission.

I hope you'll be inspired to have faith and believe He can do the same through us.

Afterall, the same Holy Spirit who lived in the early Christians lives in us today.

Biblically, there is no convincing reason why we shouldn't expect Him to give us the same spiritual gifts to do the same supernatural works they did?

1. Today we will focus how on how the Holy Spirit communicates with us in ch.9.

### II. Background: A supernatural visitation and conversion

A. Context: persecution in Jerusalem sent Philip the deacon to Samaria, miracles, salvations and the baptism of the Holy Spirit happened. [Acts 9:1 (NLT) Saul was... eager to kill the Lord's followers...<sup>3</sup> As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, **a light from heaven** suddenly shone down around him. <sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and **heard a voice** saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?" <sup>5</sup> "Who are you, lord?" Saul asked. And **the voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!** <sup>6</sup> **Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.**"...<sup>8</sup>...when he opened his eyes he was blind...

1. Observations: (1) God communicated to an unbeliever with a light, a voice and divine instructions. (2) God can control any person, anytime, anywhere, (Saul) e.g., Cyrus pagan king rebuild the temple, Pharaoh's daughter found and saved Moses, the high priest unknowingly prophesied about Jesus' Messianic role, "1 man must die for the people." (3) God periodically invades the natural world with supernatural acts, (a light and a voice) E.g., Book of Daniel: SMA God stopped fire from harming them, and God caused hungry lions to leave Daniel alone. (4) I believe we witnessed divine intervention last week when **President Trump** was spared from a sniper's bullet by 1 millimeter. The ER Doctor called it a miracle.

### III. The Holy Spirit wants to communicate with us (Saul is blind and waiting)

A. [Vs. 10] Now there was a believer...named **Ananias**. **The Lord spoke to him in a vision...**"**Yes, Lord!**" he replied. <sup>11</sup> **The Lord said,** "Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is

- praying to me right now. <sup>12</sup> **I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again.”]**
1. Observations: (1) Ananias wasn't an apostle, prophet or elder. He was an ordinary believer, filled with the Holy Spirit just like us.
  2. (2) A vision is subjective, it's like a movie. God spoke, Ananias recognized it as God and talked back to God. Often the only way to know if a vision was from God and not pizza is if it comes to pass. God used a man willing to risk his life to minister to the future greatest apostle who ever lived.
  3. (3) God communicated very specifically, “Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul”. **I remember** when the Lord spoke to me to come to Texarkana, Hwy. 155, cross bridge cypress trees. God communicated to Ananias and Saul, He communicated to me, so shouldn't ever believer expect the same? **Do it in me Lord**
- B. How does God speak to us?
1. (1) 1<sup>st</sup> and foremost God speaks through His written Word, the Bible, [2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NLT) **All Scripture is inspired by God** and is useful to teach us what is true...It corrects us when we are **wrong** and teaches us to do what is **right**. <sup>17</sup> **God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.**]
  2. (2) Visions, prophecy, and dreams, [Acts 2:16–17 (NLT) No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel: <sup>17</sup> ‘In the **last days**,’ God says, ‘**I will pour out my Spirit upon all people**. Your sons and daughters will **prophecy**. Your young men will see **visions**, and your old men will dream **dreams.**] Predictive prophecy, Agabus famine is rare. [1 Cor. 14:3 (NLT) But one who prophesies strengthens others, encourages them, and comforts them.] common
  3. (3) The Holy Spirit speaks to us personally, Peter [Acts 10:16–20 (NLT) The same **vision** was repeated three times...<sup>17</sup> Peter was very perplexed. What could the vision mean? ...<sup>19</sup>...as Peter was puzzling over the vision, **the Holy Spirit said to him**, “Three men have come looking for you. <sup>20</sup> Get up, go downstairs, and go with them...for I have sent them.”]
- C. How do we know God is speaking to us and avoid deception? (1) Does it align with Scripture? If not, ignore it, e.g., ‘Divorce your wife, God wants you to be happy.’ (2) Prayer, fasting and the agreement of godly counsel. [Acts 13:1–3 (NLT) ...prophets and teachers of the church at Antioch...<sup>2</sup> One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, **the Holy Spirit said**, “Appoint Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.”<sup>3</sup> So **after more fasting and prayer**, the men **laid their hands on them and sent them** on their way.] [1 Thes. 5:19–21 (NCV) **Do not hold back (ESV quench) the work of the Holy Spirit.** <sup>20</sup> **Do not treat prophecy as if it were unimportant.** <sup>21</sup> **But test everything. Keep what is good...**] **melon seeds**
- D. (3) Do you have peace in your heart about it? [2 Cor. 2:12–13 (NLT) When I came to the city of Troas to preach...the Lord opened a door of opportunity for me. <sup>13</sup> But **I had no peace of mind** because my dear brother Titus hadn't yet arrived...So I said good-bye and went on to Macedonia to find him.]

- E. **Vs 13** “**But Lord,**” exclaimed Ananias, “I’ve heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem!<sup>15</sup> **But the Lord said, “Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles ...So Ananias went...]**
1. Observations: (1) Sometimes there is a risk to obey God, a cost we must be willing to pay. We have the same fears about doing ministry today: adopt/ foster a child, Graupners planting a church in Omaha, lead a Life Group this fall or open your home (spill on the couch), giving a large sum of money to the Lord’s work.
  2. (2) “*So Ananias went*”, i.e., he obeyed in spite of the potential cost. There’s a key to being used by God in a significant way, say yes! It does no good to hear the Holy Spirit but not do what He says.
- F. **[Vs 17 So Ananias...found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said...the Lord Jesus...has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.”** <sup>18</sup> **Instantly...he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized...<sup>20</sup> And immediately he began preaching about Jesus...]**
1. Observations: (1) This is the 3rd time people are baptized/ filled with the Holy Spirit, i.e., the Holy Spirit comes upon a believer to give them spiritual power to witness, after saving them. **[Acts 1:8 (NLT)** But you will receive **power** when the **Holy Spirit comes upon you**. And you will be **my witnesses**, telling people about me everywhere...]
  2. (2) The spiritual gift of healing operated through an ordinary believer. **[1 Cor. 12:9–10 (NLT)** The same **Spirit gives great faith** to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the **gift of healing**. <sup>10</sup> He gives one person the **power to perform miracles...**] We don’t know if he had this gift before he prayed for Saul
  3. (3) Water baptism followed quickly after conversion.
  4. (4) Paul’s preaching, writing Scripture, raising up disciples and planting churches changed the world. His ministry began with a supernatural encounter with God and an ordinary believer named Ananias who heard the Holy Spirit speak to him, took a risk, and did what the Holy Spirit told him to do.

#### IV. Conclusion: The gift of healing still works today.

- A. **Video David Jones,** M COTR, testimony of the Holy Spirit directing a believer to exercise the gift of healing

#### V. Response

- A. Prayer: (1) Desire spiritual Gifts, 1 Cor. 14:1, (2) Holy Spirit help me hear your voice and (3) Have the courage to obey.

#### B. Souls

#### VI. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

#### VII. Supplemental Material

- A. Acts 8:26–40 (NLT) As for Philip, **an angel of the Lord said to him,** “Go south down the desert road that runs from Jerusalem to Gaza.” <sup>27</sup> So he started out, and he met the treasurer of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under the Kandake, the

queen of Ethiopia. The eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship,<sup>28</sup> and he was now returning. Seated in his carriage, he was reading aloud from the book of the prophet Isaiah.<sup>29</sup> **The Holy Spirit said to Philip,** “Go over and walk along beside the carriage.”<sup>30</sup> Philip ran over and heard the man reading from the prophet Isaiah. Philip asked, “Do you understand what you are reading?”<sup>31</sup> The man replied, “How can I, unless someone instructs me?” And he urged Philip to come up into the carriage and sit with him.<sup>32</sup> The passage of Scripture he had been reading was this: “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter. And as a lamb is silent before the shearers, he did not open his mouth.”<sup>33</sup> He was humiliated and received no justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.”<sup>34</sup> The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, was the prophet talking about himself or someone else?”<sup>35</sup> So beginning with this same Scripture, **Philip told him the Good News about Jesus.**<sup>36</sup> As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look! **There’s some water! Why can’t I be baptized?**”<sup>38</sup> He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.<sup>39</sup> **When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away.** The eunuch never saw him again but went on his way rejoicing.<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile, **Philip found himself farther north at the town of Azotus. He preached the Good News there and in every town along the way until he came to Caesarea.**

1. Enoch, Elijah, rapture,
  2. If there is a word that describes the early church, it is supernatural acts of the Holy Spirit through Spirit filled believers.
- B. Visions, heavenly voices and the voice of the Holy Spirit. Acts 10. Peter went up on the flat roof to pray. It was about noon,<sup>10</sup> and he was hungry. But while a meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance.<sup>11</sup> He saw the sky open, and something like a large sheet was let down by its four corners.<sup>12</sup> In the sheet were all sorts of animals, reptiles, and birds.<sup>13</sup> Then a voice said to him, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat them.”<sup>14</sup> “No, Lord,” Peter declared. “I have never eaten anything that our Jewish laws have declared impure and unclean.”<sup>15</sup> But the voice spoke again: “Do not call something unclean if God has made it clean.”<sup>16</sup> The same vision was repeated three times. as Peter was puzzling over the vision, the Holy Spirit said to him, “Three men have come looking for you.<sup>20</sup> Get up, go downstairs, and go with them without hesitation. Don’t worry, for I have sent them.”
- C. The Holy Spirit will help us endure difficulty with peace and encouragement
1. After Saul was converted (and the demons who were influencing him lost their power over him), [Vs 31 The church then had **peace** throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it became **stronger** as the believers lived in the fear of the Lord. And with the **encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it also grew in numbers.**]
  2. Observations: (1) The Christian life is not trouble free. We will face persecution and demonically inspired trouble because we follow Jesus. (2) The Holy Spirit gave them peace, spiritual strength, and numerical growth. (3) The Holy Spirit will be there to help us whenever we face difficulties as we serve the Lord.