

**Christian Students @ SAC**  
**Bible Study - Spring 2022**  
**Week 14**

**THE NORMAL CHRISTIAN LIFE**  
**Chapter 8**

**THE HOLY SPIRIT**  
**(2)**

**Scripture Reading: Acts 2:38-39; Mark 16:16**

**Acts 2:38** And Peter said to them, Repent and each one of you be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 2:39** For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God calls to Himself.

**Mark 16:16** He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned.

**Faith Is Again The Key**

As for forgiveness, so equally for the coming upon us of the Holy Spirit, the whole question is one of faith. As soon as we see the Lord Jesus on the Cross, we know our sins are forgiven; and as soon as we see the Lord Jesus on the Throne, we know the Holy Spirit has been poured out upon us. The basis upon which we receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is not our praying and fasting and waiting, but the exaltation of Christ. The Spirit has been poured out to prove *His* goodness and greatness, not ours. Christ has been crucified, therefore we have been forgiven: Christ has been glorified, therefore we have received the power from on high. It is all because of Him.

Suppose an unbeliever expresses the desire to be saved, and you explain to him the way of salvation and pray with him. Suppose then he prays after this

fashion: “Lord Jesus, I believe You have died for me, and that You can cleanse all my sins. I truly believe that You will forgive me.” Have you any confidence that that man is saved? When will you rest assured that he has really been born again? Not when he prays: “Lord, I believe You *will* forgive my sins,” but when he says: “Lord, I thank You that You *have* forgiven my sins. You have died for me; therefore my sins *are* cleansed.” You believe a person is saved when prayer yields to praise, and from asking the Lord to forgive him, he turns to praising Him that He has already done so because the Blood of the Lamb has already been shed.

In the same way, you can pray and wait for years and never experience the Spirit's power; but when you cease to plead with the Lord to pour out His Spirit upon you, and when instead you trustfully praise Him that the Spirit *has been* poured out because the Lord Jesus *has been* glorified, you will find that your problem is solved. Praise God! No single child of His need agonize, nor even wait, for the Spirit to be given. Jesus is *not going to be made* Lord; He *is* Lord. Therefore *I am not going* to receive the Spirit; I *have received* the Spirit. It is all a question of the faith which comes by revelation. When our eyes are opened to see that the Spirit has already been poured out because Jesus has already been glorified, then prayer turns to praise in our hearts.

All spiritual blessings are given on a definite basis. God's gifts are freely given, but there are conditions which must be fulfilled on our part before the reception of them is possible. There is a passage in God's Word which states the conditions of receiving the outpoured Spirit: “Repent and each one of you be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise and to your children, and to all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God calls to Himself.” (Acts 2:38-39).

Four things are mentioned in this passage: Repentance, Baptism, Forgiveness, and the Holy Spirit. The first two are conditions, the second two are gifts. What are the conditions to be fulfilled if we are to have forgiveness of sins? According to this Scripture they are two: repentance and baptism.

First is repentance, which means a change of mind! Formerly I thought sin a pleasant thing, but now I have changed my mind about it; formerly I thought the

world an attractive place, but now I know better; formerly I regarded it a miserable business to be a Christian, but now I think differently. Once I thought certain things delightful, now I think them vile; once I thought other things utterly worthless, now I think them most precious. That is a change of mind, and that is repentance. No life can be truly changed apart from such a change of mind.

The second condition is baptism. Baptism is an outward expression of an inward faith. When in my heart I truly believe that I have died, have been buried, and have risen with Christ, then I ask for baptism. I thereby declare publicly what I believe privately. Baptism is faith in action.

Here then are two divinely appointed conditions of forgiveness—repentance, and faith publicly expressed. Have you repented? Have you testified publicly to your union with your Lord? Then have you received remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit? You say you have only received the first gift, not the second. But, my friend, God offered you two things if you fulfilled two conditions! Why have you only taken one? What are you doing about the second?

Suppose I went into a bookshop, selected a two-volume book, priced at ten dollars, and, having put down a ten dollar bill, walked out of the shop, carelessly leaving one volume on the counter. When I reached home and discovered the oversight, what do you think I should do? I should go straight back to the shop to get the forgotten book, but I should not dream of paying anything for it. I should simply explain to the shopkeeper that both volumes were duly paid for, and ask him if he would therefore kindly let me have the second one; and without any further payment I should march happily out of the shop with my possession under my arm. Would you not do the same under the same circumstances?

But you are under the same circumstances. If you have fulfilled the conditions you are entitled to two gifts, not just one. You have already taken the one; why not just come and take the other now? Say to the Lord, “Lord, I have complied with the conditions for receiving remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit, but I have foolishly only taken the former. Now I have come back to take the gift of the Holy Spirit, and I praise You for it.”

## Questions

1. Explain what the brother meant by “You believe a person is saved when prayer yields to praise”
2. Explain the two conditions and the two gifts as presented in Acts 2:38-39 and the reading.