

# ***“What Did YOU Get?”***

Acts 19:1-7

December 27, 2015

## ***Acts 19:1-7 (NASB)***

*<sup>1</sup> It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples.*

*<sup>2</sup> 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."*

*<sup>3</sup> And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism."*

*<sup>4</sup> 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."*

*<sup>5</sup> When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.*

*<sup>6</sup> And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.*

*<sup>7</sup> There were in all about twelve men.*

The Ephesian Pentecost...

This passage is an extended illustration of Apollos' need...

## Paul's Witness to the Disciples of John

### 19:1-7

**19:1** Verse 1 completes the travel narrative begun in 18:23.

From Phrygia the most natural route to Ephesus would have led Paul through the Lycus Valley. Here Pauline churches were later established at Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. At this point Paul did not seem to have stopped for any witness. Judging from Col 1:7, the churches were established by Paul's coworker Epaphras, probably during the course of Paul's Ephesian ministry.

**When Paul arrived at Ephesus, he encountered "some disciples." We learn from v. 7 that there were "about twelve" of them.**

**Evidently they were not at this point strictly Christian disciples but rather disciples of John the Baptist.**

**Elsewhere Luke used the term "disciples" for followers of John the Baptist (cf. Luke 5:33; 7:18f.).**

**He might have found a fine distinction between Baptist and Christian disciples strained. For him a true disciple of John, a *completed* disciple of John, was a Christian. That is the whole point of the present narrative.**

**19:2 Paul's interrogation of the disciples revealed that at no point had they advanced beyond John the Baptist's initial preaching of repentance in preparation for the coming Messiah.**

The NIV translation of their reply to Paul's question "Did you receive the Holy Spirit?" (v. 2) is literal, "**We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.**"

**John's disciples would surely have been acquainted with the Spirit and especially with his teaching that with the coming of the Messiah the Spirit would be poured out** (cf. [Luke 3:16](#)).

***What they would not be aware of, if they had not heard of Jesus' death and resurrection and of the event at Pentecost, was that this proclamation of John had been fulfilled in Christ.***

**Evidently that was the case with this group. They had not heard that the Spirit had been poured out.**

**They were unaware of Pentecost.**

**19:3** Their reply to Paul's second question only confirms the impression that their understanding had not progressed beyond John's ministry. The only baptism they were aware of was John's baptism. They knew nothing of baptism in the name of Jesus.

**19:4** **Paul's statement in v. 4 is the critical point.**

**John's baptism was a baptism of repentance, preparatory to the coming of the Messiah. John's entire role as forerunner was to prepare the people for the Messiah's coming.**

**The Messiah had indeed come,  
and he is Jesus.**

**Thus, to be a true disciple of John was to confess Jesus, for he is the one whom John had heralded.**

***The real deficiency of these twelve or so was not their baptism. It was much more serious. They failed to recognize Jesus as the one whom John had proclaimed, as the promised Messiah.***

**19:5–6** Unlike Apollos, who had already been instructed in “the way” and who accurately taught about Jesus, this group was totally unacquainted with the gospel.

**They knew only John’s preparatory message. But John had prepared them well, and they immediately responded to Paul’s good news that Christ the Messiah had come;** they were baptized in his name (v. 5).

Paul then **laid his hands on them**, and they received the Spirit.

Some argue on the basis of this text that the gesture of hand-laying accompanied early Christian baptism. **This, however, is the only instance in Acts where hand-laying directly follows baptism; and there is no evidence it was associated with baptism as a regular practice before A.D. 200.** In this instance the gesture is closely associated with the disciples’ receiving the Spirit, much as with the case of the Samaritan disciples in 8:15–17. In both instances the reality of their experience was demonstrated in an ecstatic manifestation, with this group speaking in tongues and prophesying.

***Throughout Acts, there is no set pattern.  
The Spirit came at various times and in  
various ways.***

*What is consistent is that the Spirit is always a vital part of one's initial commitment to Christ and a mark of every believer.*

**19:7** Luke ended the narrative with the note that **there were “about twelve” of these disciples** (v. [7](#)). One could be **tempted to see a symbolism here**, such as that they were the apostolic nucleus of the Ephesian church. **It is unlikely** that any special sense should be attached to their number. **Luke certainly made nothing of it.**

- New American Commentary

*The Completion of Twelve Ephesians ([19:1-7](#))*

**PAUL HAD WANTED to come to Ephesus for major ministry for quite some time, but he had to wait for God's time (16:6; 18:21), which had now come.**

**It was an important place because from here he could reach the entire province of Asia (19:10).**

He took the most direct "interior" route from Phry-gia-Galatia over mountainous terrain rather than the more customary route closer to the coast (19:1).

This enabled him to visit Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch.

**There were believers in Ephesus when he arrived (18:27).**  
They had probably become Christians during Paul's earlier short ministry here, through Priscilla and Aquila, or through someone else (cf. [2:9](#)).

**Paul also found some people who are called "disciples" but who were seriously deficient in their beliefs, even though they are said to have "believed" (19:1-2).**

**The debate will continue as to whether or not they were true believers.**

What is significant is that Paul specifically asked them whether they received the Holy Spirit when they believed (19:2).

**\*\*\* Defining the Debate: (JDP) \*\*\***

**1. Either Paul is questioning the quality of their belief**

**OR**

**2. Paul is advocating two-tiers of “belief”**

**a. HIGH tier: “Biblical Belief WITH the Spirit”**

**b. LOW tier: “Biblical Belief withOUT the Spirit”**

**CONCLUSION:**

**Because “option 2b” is inconsistent with other biblical descriptions and definitions it must be excluded from the pool of viable, valid options (see 2 Timothy 3:16-17). Consequently, option 2a is subsequently disqualified as well, thereby leaving “option 1” (questioning the quality/validity of the men’s belief), as the only acceptable, biblical, answer.**

**This suggests that people can really know when they receive the Holy Spirit. The response of these disciples was that they had not even heard that there was a Holy Spirit.**

Stott is probably correct that they would have known about the Holy Spirit through the Old Testament and John's prophecy, but that they did not know that John's prophecy had been fulfilled. "They were ignorant of Pentecost."

**F.F. Bruce translates their answer,** "We never even heard that the Holy Spirit is available."

The problem was that they had only received John's baptism (19:3). **Unlike Apollos, they had not progressed much beyond John's teaching. Hence they needed to be told about believing in Jesus, which led to baptism in his name (19:4-5). This suggests that they were not true believers until then.** How then could Luke call them "disciples" (v. 1), and how could Paul refer to them as having "believed" (v. 2)? **Longenecker says, "Luke's practice is to portray the spiritual condition of his characters by their actions without always evaluating it."** Note how Luke speaks of Simon of Samaria as having "believed" (cf. 8:13), of the Judaizers as "believers" (cf. 15:5), of the seven sons of Sceva as exorcising demons "in the name of Jesus," and of Sceva their father as "a Jewish chief priest" (cf. 19:13-14)... Here it seems, both from their own statements and from how Paul deals with them, that we should consider these men as sectarians with no real commitment to Jesus at all.

Verses 5-6 suggest that it was after they were baptized that "Paul placed his hands on them," resulting in the Spirit's coming on them accompanied by tongues and prophecy.

### **Interpreting the Ephesian Pentecost.**

What can we make of the Ephesian Pentecost ([19:6](#))? It seems clear that the special experience of the Holy Spirit came to these former disciples of John. The experience of the Spirit was a clearly distinguishable experience, not something that was accepted by faith without being felt. Through that experience they felt the fullness of the Spirit. This agrees with our conclusion presented earlier that **baptism with the Holy Spirit implies a fullness, a subjective experience of the Spirit.**

But whether the baptism with the Spirit and the subjective experience of him implied in that baptism always take place at the same time or at different times is uncertain. **What we insist on is that the Spirit must be experienced.** Those who say that the baptism with the Spirit takes place at initiation, that it is only an objective initiation, and that it is not necessarily a subjective experience of the Spirit are missing the point behind the descriptions of the baptism with the Spirit in the Bible. We showed earlier that **the baptism implies a fullness and that those who are not experiencing this are having a sub-biblical experience.**

What should we make of tongues and prophecy?

*They are certainly the normal signs of the coming of the Spirit in the instances described in Acts. As such we can expect them to be common phenomena today. But to insist on them as normative and essential is going beyond what Scripture permits us to say.*

*What is important is that we have what the baptism implies: an immediacy and fullness of the Spirit, which gives power to witness and live the Christian life.*

**- NIV Application Commentary**

## **Old Testament Saints in Transition**

After the interlude describing Apollos's conversion and ministry, Luke returns to the story of Paul for his final example of transition. He notes **that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul (on his third missionary journey) having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus.**

**The beloved apostle was making good on his promise to return to Ephesus (18:21), with the hope that the Jews would still be eager to hear.**

**He arrived there by way of the upper country. By doing so, Paul took the more direct route, not the regular trade route** on the lower level through the Lycus and Maender valleys. He thus approached Ephesus from the north, where he had been ministering ([18:23](#)).

*Once in Ephesus, Paul found some disciples. Much **controversy** surrounds the spiritual status of these men.*

**Those who insist they were already Christians use this passage as a proof text for their view that receiving the Holy Spirit is a subsequent, postsalvation, or "second blessing," experience.**

**Such an interpretation, however, is untenable.**

First, it commits the methodological error of failing to consider the transitional nature of Acts, which means that the experiences and phenomena described in Acts are not normative for today.

\*\*\* NOT a biblically defensible argument/position. \*\*\* (JDP)

Second, this is a faulty interpretation because it commits the comparative scriptural error.

*Other texts make obvious that this passage cannot be used to teach that some Christians today may not have the Holy Spirit. That would contradict the explicit teaching of the New Testament epistles, which declare unequivocally that every Christian receives the Spirit at salvation ([1 Cor. 6:19](#); [12:13](#); [2 Cor. 6:16](#); [Eph. 1:13](#)), and define those without the Spirit as *unsaved* ([Rom. 8:9](#); [Jude 19](#)).*

1 Cor. 6:19 =

1 Cor. 12:13 =

2 Cor. 6:16 =

Eph. 1:13 =

Rom. 8:9 =

Jude 19 =

Nor does Luke's description of them as *disciples* prove that these men were Christians.

*Mathētēs* ("disciple") simply means "learner" or "follower" and does not always in the New Testament refer to Christians (although every Christian is a disciple of Jesus Christ).

*The Bible speaks of the disciples of the Pharisees ([Mark 2:18](#); [Luke 5:33](#)) and of John the Baptist ([Matt. 9:14](#); [11:2](#); [Luke 5:33](#); [7:18-19](#); [11:1](#); [John 1:35](#); [3:25](#)). Even all those called disciples of Jesus Christ were not saved.*

[John 6:66](#) says, "As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew, and were not walking with Him anymore."

**Paul certainly did not assume these twelve disciples were Christians.**

**His question, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" [sought to determine their status.](#)**

**Commentator David Williams explains** the significance of Paul's question:

**His [Paul's] criterion for what distinguished the Christian is significant.** So, too, is the way in which his question is framed. It implies that the Holy Spirit is received at a definite point in time and that that time is the moment of initial belief (the aorist participle, *pisteusantes*, being construed here as coincidental with the verb, *elabete*). **The same thought is expressed, for example, in Ephesians 1:13: "Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (cf. Acts 11:17). No space of time is envisaged between the two events; nor is the possibility entertained of believing without also receiving the "seal of the Spirit."** (*New International Biblical Commentary: Acts* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1990], 329)

*Their answer "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit" **confirmed to the apostle that they were not yet Christians.***

That they were unacquainted with the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost showed that they were in fact Old Testament saints.

\*\*\* "saints" is very questionable... unlike Apollos... \*\*\* (JDP)

Their response to Paul's next question, "**Into what then were you baptized?**" further clarified their status. They responded, "Into John's baptism," showing that they were disciples of John the Baptist. That Paul would encounter followers of John the Baptist nearly a quarter of a century after his death is not unusual. J. B. Lightfoot notes that such groups still existed in the second century (*Saint Paul's Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* [reprint of the 1879 edition; Grand Rapids: Zondervan], 402ff.). And **had these twelve already believed in Jesus Christ, they would have been baptized into His name.**

Having learned that they were Old Testament saints, Paul explained that "**John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus.**"

The apostle's statement offers further proof that these disciples were not Christians; they apparently did not know that Jesus was the promised Messiah whom John proclaimed.

*Significantly, Paul did not instruct them about how to receive the Spirit, but about Jesus.*

The light of truth dawned in their hearts **when they heard Paul's teaching, and they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, signifying their spiritual union with Him by faith.**

Immediately, in a gesture of apostolic affirmation, **Paul laid his hands upon them.** Some of the apostles had been present at each new phase of the church ([Acts 2](#), [8](#), [10](#)) so that they would be authoritative witnesses to the reality that all who believed in Jesus Christ were one in Him. I. Howard Marshall notes that

laying on of hands should be understood as a special act of fellowship, incorporating the people concerned into the fellowship of the church. This was necessary in the case of the Samaritan converts in [chapter 8](#) to make it quite clear that they were accepted fully into the Jewish church centred on Jerusalem; and it was necessary in the present instance to make it clear to **these members of a semi-Christian group that they were now becoming part of the universal church.** (*The Acts of the Apostles* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992], 308)

As Paul made this gesture, **the Holy Spirit came upon them** and, as had others before them (cf. [2:1-4](#); [8:14-17](#)), **they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.** That was a further indication that they were now a part of the one true church (cf. [11:15](#), [17](#)). And since they had not even heard that the Spirit had come, they needed tangible proof that He had indeed come into their lives.

These **twelve men**, like Paul and Apollos before them, illustrate the transitional nature of Acts. The church, which had embraced Jews, Gentiles, and Samaritans, now gathered in the last group:

Old Testament saints. And the same miraculous gifts were present, so that all would know what was said of the Gentiles in [Acts 11:17-18](#):

*If God therefore 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? And 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."*

So all the groups were gathered in. And in each case apostles were present to verify that all received the same Holy Spirit in the same way.

***That having been completed, Paul could write to the Ephesians:***

***"There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism"***

**- Ephesians 4:4-5**

**From then on, the Holy Spirit would come to every heart at salvation, as the epistles teach.**

**- MacArthur New Testament Commentary**

## Twelve Men with an Inconsistent Witness (Acts 19:1-10)

When Paul arrived back in Ephesus, he met twelve men who professed to be Christian "disciples" but whose lives gave evidence that something was lacking. Paul asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" ([Acts 19:2](#), NIV, NASB, NKJV)

*The question was important because the witness of the Spirit is the indispensable proof that a person is truly born again*  
([Rom. 8:9, 16](#); [1 John 5:9-13](#))

...and you receive the Spirit when you believe on Jesus Christ  
([Eph. 1:13](#)).

Their reply revealed the vagueness and uncertainty of their faith, for they did not even know that the Holy Spirit had been given! As disciples of John the Baptist, they knew that there was a Holy Spirit, and that the Spirit would one day baptize God's people ([Matt. 3:11](#); [Luke 3:16](#); [John 1:32-33](#)). It is possible that these men were Apollos' early "converts" and therefore did not fully understand what Christ had done.

Why did Paul ask about their baptism? Because in the Book of Acts, a person's baptismal experience is an indication of his or her spiritual experience. [Acts 1-10](#) records a transition period in the history of the church, from the Apostles' ministry to the Jews to their ministry to the Gentiles. During this transition period,

Peter used "the keys of the kingdom" ([Matt. 16:19](#)) and opened the door of faith to the Jews ([Acts 2](#)), the Samaritans ([Acts 8:14ff](#)), and finally to the Gentiles ([Acts 10](#)).

*It is important to note that God's pattern for today is given in [Acts 10:43-48](#):*

*sinners hear the Word, they believe on Jesus Christ, they immediately receive the Spirit, and then they are baptized.*

The Gentiles in [Acts 10](#) did not receive the Spirit by means of water baptism or by the laying on of the Apostles' hands ([Acts 8:14-17](#)).

*The fact that these men did not have the Spirit dwelling within was proof that they had never truly been born again.*

But they had been baptized by John's baptism, the same baptism that the Apostles had received! (see [Acts 1:21-22](#)) What was wrong with them?

Some people say that these men were already saved, but they lacked the fullness of the Spirit in their lives. So Paul explained

how to be "baptized in the Spirit," and this led to a new life of victory. But that's not what the record says.

**Paul sensed that these men did not have the witness of the Spirit in their lives, and therefore they were not converted men.** He certainly would not discuss the fullness of the Spirit with unsaved people! No.

*These twelve men had been baptized and were seeking to be religious, but something was missing. Alas, we have people just like them in our churches today!*

### **QUOTE:**

**Paul explained to them that John's baptism was a baptism of repentance that *looked forward* to the coming of the promised Messiah, while Christian baptism is a baptism that *looks back* to the finished work of Christ on the cross and His victorious resurrection.**

John's baptism was on "the other side" of Calvary and Pentecost. It was correct for its day, but now that day was ended.

Keep in mind that John the Baptist was a prophet who ministered under the old dispensation ([Matt. 11:7-14](#)).

*The Old Covenant was ended, not by John at the Jordan, but by Jesus Christ at Calvary ([Heb. 10:1-18](#)).*

The baptism of John was important to the Jews of that time ([Matt. 21:23-32](#)), but it is no longer valid for the church today. In a very real sense, these twelve men were like "Old Testament believers" who were anticipating the coming of the Messiah. Certainly Paul explained to the men many basic truths that Luke did not record. Then he baptized them, for their first "baptism" was not truly Christian baptism.

Why was it necessary for Paul to lay hands on these men before they could receive the Spirit? Didn't this contradict the experience of Peter recorded in [Acts 10:44-48](#)? Not if you keep in mind that this was a special group of men who would help form the nucleus of a great church in Ephesus.

**By using Paul to convey the gift of the Spirit, God affirmed Paul's apostolic authority and united the Ephesian church to the other churches as well as to the "mother church" in Jerusalem.**

**When Peter and John laid hands on the believing Samaritans, it united them to the Jerusalem church and healed a breach between Jews and Samaritans that had existed for centuries.**

What God did through Paul for these twelve men was not normative for the church today. How do we know? Because it was not repeated.

*The people who were converted in Ephesus under Paul's ministry all received the gift of the Holy Spirit when they trusted the Saviour. Paul makes this clear in Ephesians 1:13-14, and this is the pattern for us today.*

In [Acts 19:6](#), we have the last instance of the gift of tongues in the Book of Acts. The believers spoke in tongues at Pentecost and praised God, and their listeners recognized these tongues as known languages ([Acts 2:4-11](#)) and not as some "heavenly speech." The Gentile believers in the house of Cornelius also spoke in tongues ([Acts 10:44-46](#)), and their experience was identical to that of the Jews in [Acts 2](#) (see [Acts 11:15](#)). This was of historic significance since the Spirit was baptizing Jews ([Acts 2](#)) and Gentiles ([Acts 10](#)) into the body of Christ (see [1 Cor. 12:13](#)).

**Today, the gift of tongues is not an evidence of the baptism of the Spirit or the fullness of the Spirit. Paul asked, "Do all speak with tongues?" (1 Cor. 12:30) and the Greek construction demands no as an answer. When Paul wrote to his Ephesian friends about the filling of the Holy Spirit, he said nothing about tongues (Eph. 5:18ff). Nowhere in Scripture are we admonished to seek a baptism of the Holy Spirit, or to speak in tongues, but we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit.**

Read Paul's letter to the Ephesian church and note the many references to the Holy Spirit of God and His work in the believer.

## - Bible Exposition Commentary

### *Paul Instructs the Disciples of John at Ephesus (19:1-7)*

Paul, at Ephesus, found some religious persons, who looked to Jesus as the Messiah. They had not been led to expect the miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost, nor were they informed that the gospel was especially the ministration of the Spirit. But they spake as ready to welcome the notice of it. **Paul shows them that John never design that those he baptized should rest there, but told them that they should believe on Him who should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.**

They thankfully accepted the discovery, and were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. The Holy Ghost came upon them in a surprising, overpowering manner; they spake with tongues, and prophesied, as the apostles and the first Gentile converts did.

**QUOTE:** Though we do not now expect miraculous powers, yet all who profess to be disciples of Christ, should be called on to examine whether they have received the seal of the Holy Ghost, in his sanctifying influences, to the sincerity of their faith.

*Many seem not to have heard that there is a Holy Ghost, and many deem all that is spoken concerning his graces and comforts, to be delusion. Of such it may properly be inquired, "Unto what, then, were ye baptized?" for they evidently know not the meaning of that outward sign on which they place great dependence.*

- Matthew Henry Concise Bible Commentary.

#### Acts XIX : 1–7.

Having sketched briefly the visit of Apollos to Ephesus, and thus prepared the way for an account of Paul's labors in the same city, **the historian now reaches the point for which he had so hurriedly passed over the apostle's journey from Antioch through Galatia and Phrygia and around to Ephesus. The appointment which he left in Ephesus, as he passed through on his way to Jerusalem, is now to be fulfilled.**

- A Commentary on Acts of Apostles

## Acts Chapter 19

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**Verse 1.** *While Apollos was at Corinth.* It is probable that he remained there a considerable time.

*Paul having passed through the upper coasts.* The upper, or more elevated regions of Asia Minor. The writer refers here particularly to the provinces of **Phrygia and Galatia, Acts 18:23. These regions were called upper, because they were situated on the high table-land in the interior of Asia Minor;** while Ephesus was in the low maritime regions, and called the low country.

*Came to Ephesus.* Agreeably to his promise, [Acts 18:21](#).

*And finding certain disciples.* Certain persons who had been baptized into John's baptism, and who had embraced John's doctrine, that the Messiah was soon to appear, [Acts 19:3,4](#). **It is very clear that they had not yet heard that the Holy Spirit had come, or that the Holy Ghost was given.** They were evidently in the same situation as Apollos. [Acts 18:25](#).

(\*) "Apollos" [1 Corinthians 3:5,6](#)

(\*) "certain disciples" "Some"

**Verse 2.** *Have ye received the Holy Ghost?* Have ye received the extraordinary effusions and miraculous influences of the Holy Ghost **Paul would not doubt that, if they had "believed," they had received the ordinary converting influences of the Holy Spirit-for it was one of his favourite doctrines, that the Holy Spirit renews the heart.** But, besides this, the miraculous influences of the Spirit were conferred on most societies of believers. The power of speaking with tongues, or of working miracles, was imparted as an evidence of the presence of God, and of their acceptance with him, [Acts 10:45,46](#) [1 Corinthians 15](#). It was natural for Paul to ask whether this evidence of the Divine favour had been granted to them.

*Since ye believed.* Since you embraced the doctrine of John, that the Messiah was soon to come.

*We have not so much as heard,* etc. This seems to be a very remarkable and strange answer. Yet we are to **remember,**

(1.) that **these were mere disciples of John's doctrine, and that his preaching related particularly to the Messiah, and not to the Holy Ghost.**

(2.) It does not even appear that they had heard that the Messiah *had* come, or had heard of Jesus of Nazareth, [Acts 19:4,5](#).

(3.) It is not remarkable, therefore, that they had no clear conceptions of the character and operations of the Holy Ghost. Yet,

(4.) they were just in that state of mind, that they were willing to embrace the doctrine when it was proclaimed to them; thus showing that they were *really* under the influence of the Holy Spirit. **God may often produce important changes in the hearts and lives of sinners**, even where they have no clear and systematic views of religious doctrines. **In all such cases, however, as in this, there will be readiness of heart to embrace the truth where it is made known.**

(\* "not so" [Acts 8:16](#), [1 Samuel 3:7](#) 'given')

**Verse 3.** *Unto what.* Unto what faith, or doctrine. What did you profess to believe when you were baptized.

*Unto John's baptism.* [Acts 18:25](#).

(\*) "Unto" "Into"

(\*) "John's Baptism" [Acts 18:25](#)

**Verse 4.** *John verily baptized.* John did indeed baptize.

*With the baptism of repentance.* Having special relation to repentance, or as a profession that they did repent of their sins.  
[Matthew 3:6](#).

**Saying unto the people. The design of his coming was to turn the people from their sins, and to prepare them for the coming of the Messiah. He therefore directed their attention principally to him that was to come,**  
[John 1:15, 22-27](#).

***That is, on Christ Jesus.*** These are the words of Paul, explaining what John taught. He taught them to believe in the Messiah, and that the Messiah was Jesus of Nazareth. The argument of Paul is, that it was highly proper for them now to profess publicly that Saviour to whom John had borne such explicit testimony.

*"Jesus is the Messiah for whom John came to prepare the way; and as you have embraced John's doctrine, you ought now publicly to acknowledge that Redeemer by baptism in his name."*

(\* ) "John" [Matthew 3:11](#) ([John 1:15,27,30](#))

**Verse 5.** *When they heard this.* When they heard what Paul had said respecting the nature of John's baptism.

*They were baptized, etc.* As there is no other instance in the New Testament of any persons having been rebaptized, it has been made a question by some critics whether it was done here; and they have supposed that all this is the narrative of Luke respecting what took place under the ministry of John; to wit, that he told them to believe on Christ Jesus, and then baptized them in his name. But this is a most forced construction;

and

**it is evident that these persons were *rebaptized* by the direction of Paul.**

For:

(1.) this is the *obvious* interpretation of the passage-that which would strike all persons as correct, unless there were some previous theory to support.

(2.) It was not a matter of fact that John baptized in the name of Christ Jesus. His was the baptism of repentance; and there is not the slightest evidence that he ever used the name of Jesus in the form of baptism.

(3.) If this be the sense of the passage, that John baptized them in the name of Jesus, then this verse is a mere repetition of [Acts 19:4](#)-a tautology of which the sacred writers would not be guilty.

(4.) It is evident that the persons on whom Paul laid his hands, [Acts 19:6](#), and those who were baptized, were the same. But these were the persons who heard [Acts 19:5](#) what was said. The narrative is continuous, all parts of it cohering together as relating to a transaction that occurred at the same time. **If the *obvious* interpretation of the passage be the true one, it follows that the baptism of John was not strictly Christian baptism. It was the baptism of repentance; a baptism designed to prepare the way for the introduction of the kingdom of the Messiah.**

It will *not* follow however, from this, that Christian baptism is now ever to be repeated. For this there is no warrant, no example in the New Testament. There is no command to repeat it, as in the case of the Lord's Supper; and the nature and design of the ordinance evidently supposes that it is to be performed but once. The disciples of John were rebaptized, not because baptism is designed to be repeated, but because they never had been, in fact, baptized in the manner prescribed by the Lord Jesus.

*In the name of the Lord Jesus.* [Acts 2:38](#).

(\* "Unto" "into"

(\* "name of the Lord Jesus" [1 Corinthians 1:13](#)

**[Verse 6](#)**. *And when Paul had laid his hands, etc.* [Acts 2:17](#); [Acts 11:27](#)

(\* "laid his hands" [Acts 8:17](#) (++) "Holy Ghost" "Spirit"

(\* "them" [Acts 2:4](#), [10:46](#)

(\* "prophesied" [1 Corinthians 14:1](#)

**[Verse 7](#)**. *And all the men.* The whole number.

**- Barnes' Notes on the New Testament.**

## Verse 1

**1 tn** *Grk* “It happened that while.” The introductory phrase ἐγένετο (*egeneto*, “it happened that”), common in Luke (69 times) and Acts (54 times), is redundant in contemporary English and has not been translated.

**2 map** For location see [JP1-C2](#); [JP2-C2](#); [JP3-C2](#); [JP4-C2](#).

**3 tn** Or “interior.”

**4 tn** BDAG 92 s.v. ἀνωτερικός has “*upper τὰ ἄ. μέρη the upper (i.e. inland) country, the interior [Ac 19:1](#).*”

**5 map** For location see [JP1-D2](#); [JP2-D2](#); [JP3-D2](#); [JP4-D2](#).

**6 tn** *Grk* “and found.” Because of the length of the Greek sentence and the sequencing with the following verse the conjunction καί (*kai*) has not been translated here. Instead a new English sentence is begun.

**7 tn** The word “there” is not in the Greek text but is implied.

## Verse 2

**8 tn** The participle πιστεύσαντες (*pisteusantes*) is taken temporally.

**9 tn** *Grk* “they [said] to him” (the word “said” is implied in the Greek text).

**10 tn** This use of ἀλλά (*alla*) is ascensive and involves an ellipsis (BDAG 45 s.v. ἀλλά 3): “No, [not only did we not receive the Spirit,] but also we have not heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” However, this is lengthy and somewhat awkward in English, and the ascensive meaning can be much more easily represented by including the word “even” after the negation. **Apparently these disciples were unaware of the provision of the Spirit that is represented in baptism. The language sounds like they did not know about a Holy Spirit, but this seems to be only linguistic shorthand for not knowing about the Spirit's presence ([Luke 3:15-18](#)).**

*The situation is parallel to that of Apollos. Apollos and these disciples represent those who “complete” their transition to messianic faith as Jews.*

### **Verse 3**

**11 tn** *Grk* “he”; the referent (Paul) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

**12 tn** *Grk* “they said.”

### **Verse 4**

**13 sn** **These disciples may have had their contact with John early on in the Baptist's ministry before Jesus had emerged.**

**This is the fifth time Luke links John the Baptist and Jesus (Acts 1:5; 11:16; 13:25; 18:25).**

## **Verse 6**

**14 tn** Or “laid.”

**15 sn:**

*The coming of the Holy Spirit here is another case where the Spirit comes and prophecy results in Acts (see Acts 2). Paul's action parallels that of Peter (Acts 8) and not just with Gentiles.*

**16 tn** The imperfect verb ἐλάλουν (*elaloun*) has been translated as an ingressive imperfect.

**17 tn** The imperfect verb ἐπροφήτευον (*eprophēteuon*) has been translated as an ingressive imperfect.

## **Verse 7**

**18 sn** This is a parenthetical note by the author.

**- NET Bible.**

## Baptized into Christ

[Acts 19](#) is the starting point of Paul's third missionary journey.

*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?" ([vv. 1-2](#)).*

Throughout the book of Acts we have seen the empowerment of the Holy Spirit upon the Christian community. On the day of Pentecost God had poured out His Spirit as He had promised in the Old Testament, and those who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit manifested it by speaking in tongues. Those assembled were all Jewish believers, and all who were there received the baptism. When we studied that, I mentioned that Luke follows the outline of the Great Commission, in which Jesus had said that the disciples should tarry in Jerusalem until they received the Holy Spirit. Afterward they were to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth. **We have followed the Apostle Paul on the missionary enterprise set forth by Jesus. All told, we have seen four separate occasions in which the Spirit was poured out—first to the Jews, then to the God-fearers in Cornelius's household, then to the Samaritans, and now to the Gentiles in Ephesus.** The membership in the body of Christ of all four groups was questioned in the first century, and each individually received the outpouring of the Spirit.

By this time, the Samaritans were approved as full citizens in the kingdom. The God-fearers were in the kingdom. The Jewish

believers were in the kingdom and in the New Testament church.

Then Paul came to Ephesus and found twelve believers there. He asked them if they had received the Holy Spirit, but **they didn't know anything about the Holy Spirit and obviously had not received the baptism of the Spirit.**

*Paul asked them an interesting question: “Into what then were you baptized?” (v. 3). The implication was that had they been baptized into Christ, they would have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit already.*

They responded, “**Into John's baptism**” (v. 3). The only baptism they had received to date had been the baptism of John the Baptist.

*There is a clear difference between the baptism of John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus.*

Although John the Baptist appears in the New Testament, he lived and died before the new covenant was inaugurated.

*The New Testament period did not begin until Jesus inaugurated it in the upper room on the night before His death, when He spoke of the new covenant shed in His blood.*

The new covenant was ratified the next day by His blood on the cross. **All of history up to that point belonged to the old covenant of redemption**, so John's baptism must not be confused with the sign of the new covenant, which was inaugurated by Christ.

John's baptism was directed to the Jews and those who heard of John's message. John had disciples who went around baptizing, and their message was one of repentance because of the historical crisis then at hand.

*John's message was this:*

*“The Messiah is coming...*

*Your Savior is at the door, and you are not ready. You are still unclean, so you need to undergo a rite of cleansing to prepare yourself for the coming of the king, and after He comes, He will baptize you with the Spirit.”*

John pointed ahead to one whose baptism was superior to his own.

All of that is involved here in Paul's discussion with those who had come to Christ as a result of John's witness but had not yet undergone New Testament baptism.

*When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied (vv. 5-6).*

So we see Pentecost coming in full measure to the Gentiles. The loop is complete. That is why the modern revival of Pentecostalism that seeks a new baptism and tongues represents, in my view, a low view of Pentecost, not a high view.

It postulates the idea that there are Christians who have received the Spirit and regeneration but who have not received the Spirit in terms of baptism. It is a complete antithesis of what Acts teaches about Spirit baptism and what Paul himself teaches in 1 Corinthians about the Spirit's being distributed to every Christian. So even though there was a time in church history, at the very beginning, when there may have been a gap between conversion and Spirit baptism, that time had passed. Once the baptism was established in church history, it then accompanied conversion for every Christian.

**Every true believer has received the Holy Spirit and has been empowered from on high to be a participant in the ministry of Christ.**

**- St. Andrew's Expository Commentary**

**19:1** Ephesus was the capital and leading business center of the Roman province of Asia (part of present-day Turkey). A hub of sea and land transportation, it ranked with Antioch of Syria and Alexandria in Egypt as one of the great cities on the Mediterranean Sea.

**Paul stayed in Ephesus for a little over two years. There he wrote his first letter to the Corinthians to counter several problems the church in Corinth was facing.** Later, while imprisoned in Rome, Paul wrote a letter to the Ephesian church (the book of Ephesians).

**19:2-4**

***John's baptism was a sign of repentance from sin only, not a sign of new life in Christ.***

Like Apollos ([18:24-26](#)), these Ephesian believers needed further instruction about the message and ministry of Jesus Christ.

*They believed in Jesus as the Messiah, but they did not understand the significance of the work of the Holy Spirit. Becoming a Christian involves turning from sin (repentance) and turning to Christ (faith). These believers were incomplete.*

In the book of Acts, believers received the Holy Spirit in a variety of ways. Usually the Holy Spirit would fill a person as soon as he or she professed faith in Christ. Here that filling happened later because these disciples' knowledge was incomplete. God was confirming to these believers, who did not initially know about the Holy Spirit, that they were a part of the church. The Holy Spirit's filling endorsed them as believers.

Pentecost was the formal outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the church. The other outpourings in the book of Acts were God's way of uniting new believers to the church.

*The mark of the true church is not merely right doctrine but right actions, the true evidence of the Holy Spirit's work.*

**19:6** When Paul laid his hands on these disciples, they received the Holy Spirit, just as the disciples had at Pentecost, resulting in outward, visible signs of the Holy Spirit's presence. This also had happened when the Holy Spirit had come on the Gentiles (non-Jews, see [10:45-47](#)).

Much has been made about this passage and others in Acts that depict believers speaking in tongues. Some have uncomfortably downplayed or dismissed these historical events. Others have tried to duplicate them. Few issues have prompted more argument and confusion or split more churches. We should remember that tongues-speaking is not the central theme of the book of Acts. The point of Luke's history is the faithful communication of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

**GREAT Application-oriented QUOTE:**

*If we want to be doers of the Word (James 1:22), we will faithfully be involved in the same process of evangelism. Seek to share your faith in the power of the Holy Spirit (1:8) and leave it up to God to give you whatever experiences he thinks you need.*

## *Paul Takes a Third Journey*

What prompted Paul's third journey may have been the need to correct any misunderstandings in the churches Paul had planted. So he hurried north, then west, returning to many of the cities he had previously visited. This time, however, he stayed on a more direct westward route toward Ephesus.

**- Life Application Study Bible.**

**19:1-6** The **disciples** whom **Paul** encountered in **Ephesus** had never heard of the **Holy Spirit** or **baptism** into Christ (cp. [18:25](#)).

**This is one of the most difficult NT passages to interpret.**

**The basic question is whether these disciples were genuine Christians when Paul first met them.**

Some argue that they were not since they had neither received the Holy Spirit nor been baptized into Christ. Others insist that they were genuine Christians who had not yet received full knowledge of the faith.

*Numerous incomplete forms of Christianity were being spread in the early years of the church.*

The apostles obviously felt that it was important to check the progress of such strains and correct them, bringing the full and complete gospel message to would-be disciples.

**19:4** By John's own confession his baptism was incomplete. He urged those whom he baptized **to believe in the One who would come after him** (see [Mt 3:11](#) and note).

**19:5-6** The order of conversion here follows the typical pattern in Acts except for the laying on of **hands** and the mention of **other languages** and the ability to prophesy as immediate results of the Spirit's coming.

- HCSB Study Bible.

**19:1-10 Paul Encounters Disciples of John.** At Ephesus Paul led some disciples of John the Baptist to Christ ([vv. 1-7](#)). His Ephesian ministry then extended throughout the entire Asian province ([vv. 8-10](#)).

**19:1** while Apollos was at Corinth. See [18:27](#). Inland country refers to the main highway that went westward through the mountainous region from Phrygia into Asia and on to Ephesus on the coast. **Disciples** here refers to followers of John the Baptist; they did not know of Jesus ([19:4](#)).

**19:2** That they had **not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit** indicates **they had not heard of the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost (ch. 2), and therefore they probably had not heard much of Jesus' life and ministry, and certainly not of his death and resurrection. (Cf. note on [18:25](#).)**

**They had evidently relocated from Palestine to Ephesus before Jesus' own ministry began.**

*As followers of John they would have known his message that the Messiah would bring the Spirit ([Luke 3:16](#)).*

**19:5** Having learned how Jesus had fulfilled the message of John the Baptist, these disciples of John submitted to baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus (in contrast to their former baptism of “repentance” only, [v. 4](#)).

On baptism in the name of Jesus, see note on [10:48](#).

**19:6** The Holy Spirit came on them means they received the new covenant fullness and power of the Holy Spirit, something that happened to Jesus' disciples for the first time on the day of Pentecost (see notes on [1:8](#); [2:4](#); [8:17](#)). They had not previously known about Jesus' death and resurrection, so their earlier belief ([19:2](#)) was one of looking forward to the Messiah to come, a state similar to that of OT believers.

Their **speaking in tongues and prophesying** was an outward demonstration and verification of their receiving the Spirit. (See discussion of these gifts in note on [1 Cor. 12:10](#) and notes elsewhere on [1 Corinthians 12-14](#).)

**- ESV Study Bible**

**HOLY SPIRIT** The mysterious third Person of the Trinity through whom God acts, reveals His will, empowers individuals, and discloses His personal presence in the Old and New Testament.

**Old Testament** The term "Holy Spirit" in the Old Testament is found only in [Psalm 51:11](#); [Isaiah 63:10-11](#). References to the spirit of God, however, are abundant. In one sense the Spirit of God is depicted as a mighty wind, Hebrew using the same word *ruach* for wind, breath, and spirit. During the time of the Exodus, God deployed this wind to part the sea thus enabling the

Israelites to pass through safely and elude Pharaoh and his army ([Ex. 14:21](#)). God used this agent in two ways: as a destructive force that dries up the waters ([Hos. 13:15](#)), or as the power of God in gathering clouds to bring the refreshing rain ([1 Kings 18:45](#)). The spirit exercised control over the chaotic waters at the beginning of creation ([Gen. 1:2](#); [8:1](#); Compare [Ps. 33:6](#); [Job 26:13](#)). Of the eighty-seven times that the Spirit is described as wind, thirty-seven describe the wind as the agent of God, mostly baneful, and ever strong and intense. This property of the Spirit clearly reflects the power of God. An additional quality of the Spirit is that of mysteriousness. [Psalm 104:3](#) demonstrates that the Spirit as wind is able to transport God on its wings to the outer limits of the earth. No one can tell where He has been or where He is going. Power and mystery state the nature of God.

God's Spirit can be expressed as an impersonal force, or it can manifest itself in individuals. The Old Testament has numerous examples when God inspired the prophets indirectly by the Spirit. The prime revelation of the Spirit in the Old Testament, in the personal sense, is by means of prophecy. Joseph's dreams are perceived to be divinely inspired ([Gen. 41:38](#)); King David, as a mouthpiece for God, proclaimed that "the Spirit of the Lord speaks" ([2 Sam. 23:2](#)); and Zechariah announced the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit,' saith the Lord of Hosts" ([Zech. 4:6](#)). Much like the power of the wind, the Spirit equipped the heroes of Israel with extraordinary strength ([Judg. 14:6](#)). The judges are described as being Spirit-possessed individuals as in the case of Othniel ([Judg. 3:10](#)). Sometimes, The Spirit came upon individuals mightily, so as to alter their normal behavior ([1 Sam. 10:16](#); [19:23-24](#)).

The Spirit is also the ultimate origin of all mental and spiritual gifts, as it is in the underlying inspiration of the men of wisdom ([Ex. 31:1-6](#); [Isa. 11:2](#); [Job 4:15](#); [32:8](#)). Not only did the prophets benefit from the influence of the Spirit, but also the Spirit will be shed upon the people of God ([Isa. 44:3](#)) and upon all the people ([Joel 2:28](#)). Ezekiel and Isaiah express the idea of the Spirit more than any other Old Testament source. Many of Ezekiel's allusions to the Spirit are in regard to Israel's restoration in the future. The reception of the new Spirit, prophesied in Ezekiel and Jeremiah, is dependent upon repentance ([Ezek. 18:31](#)) and is associated with the creation of a new heart ([Jer. 31:31-34](#)). This prophetic foreshadowing, in light of the individual, sporadic, and temporary manifestation of the Spirit in the Old Testament, looked forward to a time when the Spirit of God would revitalize His chosen people, empower the Messiah, and be lavishly poured out on all humankind.

**New Testament** When John the Baptist burst on the scene proclaiming the advent of the kingdom of God, the spirit-inspired prophetic voice returned after a 400-year absence. Zechariah and Elizabeth, John's parents, were informed that their son will "be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb" ([Luke 1:15](#)). Similarly, the angel Gabriel visited Mary with the news that "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest will overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee will be called the Son of God" ([1:35](#)).

A watershed in biblical history occurred at the event of Jesus' baptism when He was anointed by the Spirit of God ([3:22](#)). The Holy Spirit was then responsible for thrusting Jesus out into the

wilderness to undergo temptation ([4:1-13](#)). Luke has many more references to the Holy Spirit than do the other synoptic accounts. This can be accounted for by Luke's theological interests which are extended in the Acts of the Apostles, which has been rightly named "The Acts of the Holy Spirit" because of the prominence given to the Spirit.

All apostolic writers witnessed to the reality of the Spirit in the church; however, the apostle Paul, who wrote more than any other author, offers the most theological reflection on the subject. The main chapters to consult are [Romans 8](#); [1 Corinthians 2](#); [12-14](#); [2 Corinthians 3](#); and [Galatians 5](#).

Johannine theology is rich in its doctrine of the Spirit. In the Gospel of John, the Spirit possesses Christ ([1:32-33](#)); is indicative of the new birth ([3:1-16](#)); will come upon Jesus' departure ([16:7-11](#)); and will endow the believer after the resurrection ([20:22](#)). The Christian community is anointed by the Spirit ([1 John 2:20](#)); and the Spirit assures the believer of the indwelling presence of Jesus ([1 John 3:24](#)). In the prophetic Book of Revelation, John, in Old Testament fashion, depicted himself as a prophet inspired by the Spirit.

**- Holman Bible Dictionary.**

**Biblical Cross-References:**

- **2 Corinthians 3:17 = *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.***
  
- **John 16:7 & 14 = <sup>7</sup> *"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.***  
**&**  
**<sup>14</sup> *"He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.***
  
- **John 4:24 = *"God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."***
  
- **1 John 5:6 = *This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.***

- **Colossians 1:27** = *to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*
  
- **Ephesians 1:13-14** = *In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.*
  
- **Ephesians 3:14-19** = *For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, <sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, <sup>19</sup> and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.*

➤ **Romans 8:1-17** = *Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. <sup>3</sup> For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, <sup>4</sup> so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. <sup>5</sup> For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. <sup>6</sup> For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, <sup>7</sup> because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, <sup>8</sup> and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. <sup>9</sup> However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. <sup>10</sup> If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. <sup>11</sup> But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in*

*you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.<sup>12</sup> So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—<sup>13</sup> for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.<sup>14</sup> For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.<sup>15</sup> For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"<sup>16</sup> The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,<sup>17</sup> and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.*

- **Romans 10:9 = that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;**

**See also...**

➤ **1 John 4: 1-3; 6; 9; 13-14**

*<sup>1</sup> Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*

*<sup>2</sup> By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; <sup>3</sup> and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.*

*<sup>6</sup> We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*

*<sup>9</sup> By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him.*

*<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.*

*<sup>14</sup> We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.*

**Intro:** What's the most repeated question in church & the culture at large for the first few days after Christmas?

Answer: "What did YOU get?"

As "wrong" as that question sounds, what would you say if I told you that the question was not only "acceptable" it's BIBLICAL! (right out of the book of Acts!)

More importantly, it's not only an acceptable-biblical question, it's a personal & eternal question as well... a question that far too many contemporary, popular churches of our day are not asking in the proper context, or, in many cases, there is gospel centered inspections at all.

### **Keys in the Text:**

- \*v.1 = 5 Whys (Christian Contextualization)
- v.1. "It happened" = real/remember, Why?
- v.1. "while Apollos was in Corinth" = Why?
- v.1. Paul takes unusual route = again, Why?
- v.1. "Paul came to Ephesus" = again, Why?
- v.1. Divine disciples define disciples...Why?

\*v.2 = Critical Q&A (Christian Definition)

- v.2 NOTE: Paul asks them... Why?

- v.2. "Did you receive the H.S.?" (\*Acts 1:8\*)

YES = Christian (see biblical support)

NO = not/pre Christian (see texts)

Examples of "No":

A. Nic @ night: John 3:36

B. Rich Young Ruler

C. Pharisee vs. Tax Collector

D. Judas (wolves in sheep's...)

E. 9 out of 10 cleansed lepers

F. End of Sermon on Mount:

- Great religious resumes...

- Sand castle dwellers...

- v.2 "when you believed"

**CRITICAL Contextual Distinction:**

1. We MUST get the QUESTION right

2. If we want to get the answer right!

- NOTE: not everyone is truly

interested in getting God's answer

(let alone, getting it/them "right")

**Right context of the question:**

1. Is your "belief" biblical belief?

2. Is your "belief" born-again belief?

3. Is your belief Because of Holy Spirit?

## WRONG context of the question:

1. Spirit-in OR Spirit-out Christianity?
2. Did God fulfill promise This time?
3. Assume no-Spirit Christianity...

- v.2 "No" (do not jump over this!)

No means NO! (Plain and simple.)

No Spirit = No Jesus... the Christ!

No Spirit, No Salvation (see 1 John 4)

No Spirit = YOU need Jesus!

- v.2 "...not even HEARD there is a H.Spirit"

[See link back to missional "Why?" Q's](#)

[See link to modern:](#)

### 1. Missional Loving

- It is by your love... you are Mine
- John 17... Koinonia calling cards
- this is love: Obey My Commands

### 2. Missional Living

- Acts 1:8
- Matthew 28-18-20
- John 20:21

### 3. Missional Giving (Lottie Moon)

- Begins w/ Obedience (Mt. 23:23)
- Becomes an Opportunity (Acts 5)
- Belongs Over-arching/Over-ALL

## MANY in OUR context have not heard

1. Kent Island
2. St. Johnsbury
3. Kampala, Uganda

## We/YOU must be clear in contrast:

1. THE Spirit differs from "spiritual"
2. Spirit IN you vs. Spirit around you  
\*\*\* Eternal Illustration \*\*\* (Sun)
3. Knowing the Spirit v. studying Him
4. Spirit-walk vs. Spirit-talk  
\*\*\* Application Illustration \*\*\*
  - Real-time commentary (Skype)
  - Hotair about "somewhere/day"
  - A lot of people miss the plane
5. Spirit-owned vs Spirit-rented...
6. Holy Spirit v heretically spirit-filled
7. Spirit led/fed v self led/fed & dead

## \* vv.3-4=10 Distinguish/Defining Differences

- vv.3-4 Paul probes & asks deeper Q's...
- vv.3-4 Paul IS "on a mission!" (Get it?!?!)
- vv.3-4 Paul explains/reasons with... (again)
- vv.3-4 Paul meets them where they are...
- vv.3-4 Paul is NOT politically correct...
- vv.3-4 Paul risks receiving > persecution
- vv.3-4 Paul loves enough to risk "like"
- vv.3-4 Paul becomes their bridge from j2J

- vv.3-4 Paul is ALWAYS proclaiming Jesus!
- vv.3-4 Paul puts Paul last (Jesus, others...)
- \*\*\* JOY Lawn Care \*\*\*
- Christian business that actually reveals Christ in & through their business
- Let me explain...
- They truly put the "care" in lawn care!

\* v.5 = Personal Response Required

- v.5 See the Spirit at work:

See the Trinity here...

Spirit led Paul to them...

Spirit has been leading them...

Spirit fulfilling John 6:44

- v.5 See the "saved" expressing worship
- Surrender to Victory is for all of us...
- Saving grace is always carried on the wings of Spirit-gifted faith... (Eph. 2)
- Biblical baptism = biblical belief...
- Biblical believers believe/receive Lord
- There is no saving w/out surrendering

\* v.6 = Holy Spirit Authorized/Authenticated

- v.6 Key to focus on is "Means vs Methods"
- Hands-on vs. Hands-off

1. Don't ever negate what God says...
2. Don't ever put words in God's mouth
3. Don't confuse God's periods/comma
4. Don't confuse God's use of:
  - Sometimes
  - Always
  - Never
5. Don't assume upon the Lord...
  - Sometimes He comes in this way...
  - The Spirit Always comes at "birth"
  - Never accept a Spirit-less witness

\*\*\* Acts 1:8 \*\*\*

- v.6 "the Holy Spirit came on them"

**NOW they are Christians!**

**Acts 1:8 = pre-Spirit = pre-witness...**

- Every C is a witness
- Thus, every true witness is a C
- Therefore... No w = No Christian

**Saving relationships begin, therefore,  
when the Holy Spirit takes residence  
IN a saved soul**

**Until such time, in our context, (vs. days of O.T. faith-saved saints) each person God deems to be at the age & place of accountability, must be treated & talked to as a lost soul, headed to hell, unless**

until the Spirit of God draws & indwells them.  
May it be so... Amen!

- v.6 "...speaking in tongues & prophesying"

Remember: some, always, never...

### Beware the cessationists...

1. An argument from silence (bad)
  - Forces unsupported assumption
  - Forces dismissal of God's Word
2. Argument from bad hermeneutics
  - "when the perfect comes"
  - "the Perfect" is clearly Christ
  - Ignoring/forcing context is wrong
  - Bad presumptions = build bad assumptions

### Beware the sensationalists...

1. There is only One biblical Spirit...
2. There is only one eternal change...
3. There are countless sanctifying, Spirit-empowered, daily changes
4. There are also many counterfeit & evil, demonic spirits
  - "come down disguised as angels"
  - 7 sons of Sceva
  - legion of spirits go into the pigs
  - Satan entered "churchy" Judas!
5. Sensationalists champion what

Christ cursed... they lift up what  
He put down:

- Demonic & disorderly behavior
- Pride & self-aggrandizing
- Carnival atmospheres in church
- Christ-less consumerism
- Cross-less Christianity... (neither  
Christ's nor the alleged  
Christian's cross is seen as  
defining components of genuine  
Christianity)

- v.6 While speaking in tongues & prophesying were/are biblical expressions of the Spirit's power & presence in SOME of saved souls....so are, according to God's Word, the multitude of other "Spirit-given gifts" we have listed in the Bible (see 1 Cor. 12 & Romans 12). Moreover, beware those who seek the gifts vs. the Giver! (See Simon the sorcerer on Cypress)

Also, beware those with spiritual "ladders" of giftedness...

The "always" of the Spirit's power is found in the "fruit" of the Spirit

- Squeeze the fruit & check the juice
- The Spirit's fruit-seeds are in every Spirit-saved soul

- Fruit in the heart that is not seen in the hands... It can be like home... you know you have some but it might be in the cold refrigerator... **Let's PRAY!**