



Questions On
Receiving
The Holy Spirit



by
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Some people have asked the question, "Does the Bible state or teach anywhere that you receive the Holy Spirit when you accept Christ as your Savior?" Let us read **Romans 8:9-11**. It does NOT say that the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God are the same, but it does say that *"IF the Spirit of HIM (referring to the Holy Spirit, NOT the spirit of Christ) that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He (the Holy Spirit) that raised Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit (the Holy Spirit) that dwelleth in you (you Roman Christians)."*

Galatians 4:6 declares that the Galatians were sons of God because God had sent forth the spirit of His Son (Christ's spirit, not the Holy Spirit) into their hearts. We receive Christ's spirit when we receive Christ into our hearts. **Romans 8:9b** says, *"Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, (has not received Christ into His heart) he is none of his."*

John 4:14 tells us that Jesus offered the Samaritan woman a well of water springing up into everlasting life. He was offering her only

salvation and not the Holy Spirit—that is plain and that is all she received. The expression "*water of life*" is nowhere used in the Scripture to refer to the Holy Spirit.

John 7:38, 39 tells us that it is only the believer who can receive the Holy Spirit. And **John 14:16, 17** tells us the same truth: "*Even the Spirit of truth; whom the WORLD CAN NOT RECEIVE:*" Look up these references.

Our Lord Jesus saves sinners through the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, but He never gives sinners the Holy Spirit. Dr. R. A. Torrey said that the Holy Spirit fills only the believer. Jesus is the Savior, the Holy Spirit is the baptizer. Receiving the Holy Spirit is a definite and an additional experience after salvation.

No doubt another question on one's mind is: "*What is the scriptural sign that you have received the Holy Spirit?*" Three times the Bible informs us that speaking in tongues is the sign that you have received the Holy Spirit. In **1 Corinthians 14:21, 22** we have this statement: "*wherefore tongues are for a sign.*" **Mark 16:17** states that speaking with tongues is one of the signs to follow believers. In **Isaiah 28:12** you will find the first mention of this sign. Then you will also see that this question is answered by ALL the experiences of Christians in the Acts of the Apostles and in **1 Corinthians**.

When my mother was a young lady praying at an altar for the Holy Spirit, someone said, "Lillian, get up, don't pray any more; you might receive the wrong spirit." No, God doesn't do business that way. Jesus said, *"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"* **Luke 11:13**

Well, you ask, "How does one receive the Holy Spirit?" Jesus told His disciples in **Luke 24:49** to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Then the **53rd verse** tells us how they tarried— they *"were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God."* - and that is how we receive the Holy Spirit.

Again in **Acts 1:4** they were commanded to tarry in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit: So this they did for ten days. Then on the Day of Pentecost they received the Holy Spirit.

On the Day of Pentecost what was the evidence that they had received the Holy Spirit? **Acts 2:4** reads: *"They were filled with the Holy Ghost and BEGAN to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."* Notice that it said that they began to speak with other tongues; so this experience of speaking in other tongues must have continued afterwards. Here is what W. Gramham Scroggie, who was not a Pentecostal preacher, said:

“It is clear that the tongues of *1 Corinthians 14* were not known languages. Secondly, these Christians were not preaching the Gospel. They did not speak because the crowd was there; the crowd came there because they were speaking. The utterance was one of adoration, and such will always be variously interpreted.” —The Unfolding Drama of Redemption, vol. 2, p. 206.

Remember that before the crowd came to see what happened, they were speaking in other tongues ONLY to GOD and NOT TO MAN—and that there was no one there THEN to interpret what they were saying. Neither do we find anyone exercising the gift of interpretation in the *Acts of the Apostles*; interpretation of tongues is necessary only under certain circumstances as explained in *1 Corinthians 14*.

According to *Acts 2:38*, repentance and water baptism occurred before receiving the Holy Spirit. But in *Acts 10:44-48* the Gentiles received the Holy Spirit before baptism; so one may be baptized before or after receiving the Holy Spirit.

Notice that in *Acts 8:12-18* when the Samaritan believers received the Holy Spirit that they evidently spoke in tongues, for otherwise, Simon would not have known that they had received the Holy Spirit. Notice also that the apostles prayed for them and laid hands upon them, and THEN they received the Holy Spirit.

Turn now and examine the Apostle Paul's experience in receiving the Holy Spirit in **Acts 9:17**. Ananias went to Saul and putting his hands on him, said, "*Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight.*" He called him a brother, so he was already saved. He, therefore, was telling him to receive the Holy Spirit. Paul in **1 Corinthians 14:18** tells us that he spoke in tongues, so he must have started speaking in tongues at this time.

Turning to **Acts 19:2** some say that this verse should be translated "*received ye the Holy Ghost when (not since) ye believed?*" I notice that Matthew Henry does not accept this change in his comment on this verse and also says that "the Holy Ghost is promised to all believers." Even if the word "since" should be used here instead of "when", it still would not change the truth that only believers can receive the Holy Spirit, Paul is saying to these Christian, Ephesian disciples, "Have you received the Holy Spirit?" It is evident that when Paul prayed for these disciples they did not receive salvation but the Holy Spirit, for they spake with tongues and prophesied.

Next, look at **1 Corinthians 1:7** where it says of the Corinthians that "*ye come behind in no gift,*" and he names these nine GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT in **1 Corinthians chapter 12**. Reading the **12th, 13th and 14th chapters** of this book, it is plain that the Corinthians had ALREADY

RECEIVED the Holy Spirit, as was the common experience of all believers in the New Testament Church. So Paul in the **12th and 14th chapters** of this book is not talking about the evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit, but the gifts of the Spirit AFTER one is filled with the Spirit.

Now, turn to a scripture that puzzles some people—**1 Corinthians 12:30**: "*Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*" In other words Paul is saying, "Do all have the GIFT of tongues?" He is not speaking about the evidence that one receives when he is filled with the Spirit. Paul in this chapter is speaking about the nine gifts of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit, as he says, gives only certain gifts to certain believers, and He does not give the gift of tongues to every believer. Taking this scripture as referring to the initial infilling of the Spirit is taking this scripture completely out of context of this whole chapter.

But someone will object to anyone wanting the gift of tongues because it is mentioned next to the last gift of these nine gifts. Does this make it unimportant? I think not. I am sure that it was not to the Apostle Paul because he said in the **14th chapter** that he spoke in tongues more than they all.

Preacher, "What are you going to do with **1 Corinthians 13:18** where it says that tongues shall cease?" When are they to cease? Read all of

this verse. Tongues will cease when prophecies and knowledge shall vanish away. When will that be? Paul answers this question in **verse 10**: "*But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*" Then in **verses 12 and 13** he makes it clear that he is speaking of when we will get to heaven—that is when that which is perfect is come. Then prophecies will cease, then our earthly knowledge will vanish away, then tongues will cease. We certainly won't need to be speaking in tongues in heaven.

What about the **14th chapter**? Let us go there. Notice that all Paul says in the regulation of the gift of tongues he says in reference of using this gift **IN the CHURCH**. Notice **verse 19**: "*Yet IN the CHURCH I had rather speak five words...*" Notice **verse 23**: "*If the WHOLE CHURCH BE COME TOGETHER INTO ONE PLACE...*" **Verse 28** reads: "*But if there be no interpreter, let him KEEP SILENCE IN the CHURCH: and LET HIM SPEAK TO HIMSELF, and to God.*" Only when one keeps these statements in mind can he really understand this chapter. If this be not true, why then did Paul say that he thanked God in tongues more than they all?

Anyone can see that he was not against speaking in tongues, but in saints putting tongues before prophecy **IN the church**, which is the point

that he is endeavoring to get across to the Corinthians in this chapter. Why did he conclude this chapter by saying, "*Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophecy, and FORBID NOT TO SPEAK WITH TONGUES?*"

If the Christian lawyer, John Sherrill, after making a thorough study of the Scripture on this subject that I am writing was convinced that he should receive the Holy Spirit and did receive the Holy Spirit according to *Acts 2:4*, why shouldn't we want to receive the Holy Spirit? Read his book, *They Speak With Other Tongues*. I believe that you will find that he said that there are 15,000,000 people in the world today, that is, counting Catholics and people of all denominations, who have received this experience.

Some say that the fruit of the Spirit is the evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit. This is not what the Scripture says. The fruit of the Spirit comes after receiving the Holy Spirit, as we walk in the Spirit and are led by the Spirit, but it is not spoken of as the evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit.

Put away your doubts and reasoning and become hungry for the Holy Spirit. Pray, BELIEVE, and PRAISE the Lord until the Holy Spirit fills your whole being, and you will speak in another language to the Lord— and you will

know that you have received the infilling of the Holy Spirit. You do not necessarily have to pray long, but you must be hungry and wholehearted and must yield your whole body to the Holy Spirit and let the Holy Spirit speak through you in a new language.

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