

THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The promise of the Holy Spirit is given in Acts 1:4: “And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me.”

What is a promise? Webster’s Dictionary defines it as 1) a pledge that one will or will not do something; or 2) a basis or cause for hope or expectation. We often use that word in statements we make to assure our children or other people of our word. When we fail to keep our word or promise, it reveals something about our character.

God’s promises are not like our promises—God keeps His word. He never fails to do what He says He will do or will not do. When He makes a promise or gives you His word, you can take it to the bank. You can believe it that it will come to pass!

In Acts 1:4, God gives us this promise concerning the Holy Spirit through the word of His Son, Jesus. He gives us His word concerning the promise of the Holy Spirit all the way back in

Ezekiel 36:26-27: “ And I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart. And I will put my Spirit in you so that you will follow my decrees and be careful to obey my regulations.”

He is referring here to the New Covenant. God also gave His promise concerning the Holy Spirit through the prophet Joel in

Joel 2:28-29: “And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also on My menservants and on My maidservants, I will pour out My Spirit in those days.”

John the Baptist prophesied of the receipt of the Holy Spirit in

John 1:29-33: “The next day, John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! He is the one I was talking about when I said, ‘A man is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for He

existed long before me. I did not recognize Him as the Messiah, but I have been baptizing with water so that He might be revealed to Israel.’

Then John testified, “I saw the Holy Spirit descending like a dove from heaven and resting upon Him. I didn’t know He was the one, but when God sent me to baptize with water, He told me, ‘The one on whom you see the Spirit descend and rest is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’”

The Holy Spirit is our helper, our counselor and our teacher. The Spirit guides us into greater understanding of what sin is and the toxic effect it has on our lives. The Spirit helps us know God. John the Baptist said that he baptized with water, but one more powerful than he would come, the latchet of whose shoes he was not worthy to unloose. The coming one would baptize us with the Holy Spirit! When we become believers, the Holy Spirit baptizes us into Jesus Christ—the Holy Spirit comes into us and joins our spirit.

Paul wrote in

Rom 6:3-4...” You have been baptized into Christ Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit in order that you may live a new kind of life, life in the Spirit...” We are now guided by the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit and led by the Spirit. The first time Jesus mentions the promise of the Holy Spirit is in

John 7:38-39: “The one who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, will have streams of living water flow from deep within him.” He said this about the Spirit. Those who believed in Jesus were going to receive the Spirit, for the Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet been glorified.” Jesus spoke these words of promise about the Spirit, confirming that those who put their faith and trust in Him would continually receive the flow of the Holy Spirit within their lives—that is why Jesus described it as a flow of rivers of living water “from your innermost being.”

Jesus promised in

John 14:16 that He would ask the Father to give them a Helper that would be with them forever. In

John 16:7, once again Jesus promises that He will send the Helper to His disciples: “But I tell you that I am going to do what is best for you. That is why I am going

away. The Holy Spirit cannot come to help you until I leave. But after I am gone, I will send the Spirit to you. “

In John 14:26, Jesus said that the Father would send the Holy Spirit in His name. “The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you.”

The Promise of the Holy Spirit to us has to do with how we live as believers. The Spirit guides our life every moment of every day. The Spirit provides the help we need to love God and keep His commandments. The power of the Holy Spirit enables us to be born to eternal life. **Pneuma**, the Greek word translated “spirit”, means “wind” or “breath”. As breath is essential to our physical life, the “Holy Breath” is crucial to our spiritual life.