Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

From Judaism to Jesus, Part 3: Have you Received the Holy Spirit?
Scripture: Acts 19:1-7
Code: 1770

1974

Through Grace Church we ought to probably say for our first time guests we believe in two things that make the church what it ought to be. One is love. And that's an honest kind of biblical love. The other is sound doctrine. And so our commitment is not only to love the brothers and exercise the ministry of spiritual gifts and the responsibilities of fellowship to one another, but it is also to systematically verse by verse teach the Bible. Believing that if we protect the saints, the saints will do the work of the ministry.

And so in our study of the Scripture, we find ourselves in the book of Acts which is the historical record of the early church from the day of Pentecost through those early years. And we have come in our study to the 18th chapter and really begun what is one message in three parts as often we find is the case. We're studying the subject generally from Judaism to Jesus. And beginning in 18:18 the Holy Spirit gives us three incidents or three little experiences that illustrate to us the transition that was taking place from Judaism to Jesus.

When Christianity was established and a new covenant was introduced, there were many Jews who found it very difficult to make all of the transition very rapidly. And so there were people in the midst of transition, coming to Jesus Christ from Judaism and caught somewhere in the transition. And this occurs all through the book of Acts. Now in our study here, we found the apostle Paul. Though fully understanding Christ, though a believer in every sense, the Apostle of the gospel of grace and the gospel of God and knowing full well his commission and his message still taking a Nazarite vow which is something that was strictly Judaistic.

And we see even Paul in transition. And then we saw Apollos didn't we in verses 24 to 28. And here we met a disciple of John the Baptist, an Old Testament saint. A man ready for Messiah who even believed that Jesus was that Messiah but didn't understand the cross, didn't understand the Resurrection so he was really an Old Testament saint who only knew that Jesus was the Messiah and didn't know all that Jesus had done.

And so we met Apollos in transition. And we come in to this study to the third section of our transitional study, verses 1 to 7 of chapter 19 and we meet a group of 12 men who also are in transition. Now remember this, that the whole of Judaism pervaded all of these people's lives,

Christianity came in and it took a while for all of the adjustments to take place. In some cases like Paul, he couldn't let go of some old patterns. Like Apollus he just didn't know the whole Gospel.

And like these 12, they too were short of full knowledge. And so the spirit had to bring them along and individual circumstances to a full understanding of Christ and Christianity. Now the question that's going to key our discussion this morning is one that I'm taking from a rather pertinent scene that we all face today in the area of Christianity. And that is chapter 19, verse 2 where Paul says, "have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?"

Now that question posed in 19:2, "have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed" has become the favorite question of a modern movement in Christianity. And it's not that I am here for the purpose of having a fight with any other Christians or egoistically declaring my own theology or trying to convince myself and you that I'm right and they're wrong. The point of view that I take here is simply the exposition of the text. But I want to approach it in the light of a current movement because then I think you can see its significance.

We live in a day when the movement that we know of is Pentecostalism or if you will the later movement begun in 1960 called the charismatic movement has posed this question as the question to ask Christians. "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" The view that they take is that you can be a Christian and not possess the Holy Spirit. And at some point after your salvation you then by a certain activity allowed through certain information to come to the knowledge of the fact that the Spirit is available to you and that you can receive the Holy Spirit in certain ways.

Now this view is held by many Pentecostals. And perhaps not all of them would hold it in the same technical sense; some would no doubt say that the Christian has the Holy Spirit in a limited sense. But not in the sense of permanent personal full and dwelling. And so they would make a distinction between possessing the Holy Spirit and possessing the fullness of the Spirit or the Baptism of the Spirit. But really it boils down to the same thing. If you say a person receives a part of the Spirit or a limited sense of the Spirit, then you're saying in effect that the person hasn't received the Spirit at all.

Or the Spirit is who He is and He must come in the fullness of who He is. Jesus promised that we would receive the Spirit as salvation then he must have meant the Spirit as the Spirit is. And to draw the conclusion that the Spirit comes in part and then later on in fullness is not biblical. There's no such distinction made. For example in 1 Corinthians 12:13, "but rather that we receive the Holy Spirit or without any qualification." In fact if you wanted to illustrate that you can illustrate it in the sense of Christ.

Many people said that "well we receive Jesus as Savior but not as Lord." And then later on made Him Lord of their light. That is inaccurate. Jesus is Lord. And you receive Him for who He is. And the same is true of the Holy Spirit. There are no degrees in receiving the Holy Spirit. As in the case of Christ it

was said "God gives not the Spirit by measure." In other words He doesn't dose out the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given in the fullness of who He is.

And we're going to approach this question to try to show that the Christian, whoever he is, receives the Holy Spirit in full permanent, personal in dwelling from the moment of salvation. And this is an important question. I couldn't tell you how many times I've been asked this. People say to me, "Have you received the Holy Spirit?" And I say, "Of course." And one fellow said, "Oh, I didn't realize. You're one of us." I said, "Well I don't know about that, I might be one of you, what are you?"

Yeah I had received the Holy Spirit. So you don't need to ask me that question. But I'm not sure that I received the Holy Spirit under the conditions that this person assumed you received the Holy Spirit. But that is a very pertinent question. And you constantly are hearing about this. And that people are having to face the problem of what do you do with this massive movement that we call the charismatic movement that so dominates at least the media of Christianity.

And is so much a problem being introduced to us on a personal basis by people that we know. Now we are told that the charismatic movement and this is told to us of course by the people in it began in 1960, the modern one. The preliminary to that began in 1900. And the old line Pentecostalism which resulted in Assemblies of God and ____ Churches and things like that. But this whole thing began about 1900. And the question that always lingers in my mind is, well what happens to everybody before that? It's nice for the people since 1900; it's not so nice for everybody who lived before that.

If the only way to receive the Holy Spirit is through the manifestation of this particular thing, then all of these people historically when that did not exist, have been cheated by God of the fullness of that which God intended for His church and that's a problem in my mind historically.

David Duplessis who is a spokesman for this particular movement and you always see his name associated with all of their writings and with much of their conference work, said this and I quote him. "At the turn of the century, there was no Pentecostal movement. Today it consists of a community of more than 10 million souls that can be found in every country under the sun."

Now Duplessis went on to say this, "what happened during the years from Acts to 1900 was that the church lost its faith and hence lost the miracle gifts and lost the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit." Quoting him again he said this. "The Holy Spirit continued in control until the close of the first century. When He was largely rejected in His position as leader of the church usurped by man." Now that is the comment of one who is in the movement. It seems a very strange theology to assume that the Holy Spirit can only control the church until the end of the first century, then He lost control and man took it over for 1800 years.

And finally after 1800 years of struggle, the Holy Spirit got control again. My God is not such a God who is victimized by men. And I think that's part of the historical problem that these folks have to face. That you cannot assume a sovereign God. You cannot assume a Christ who said I will build My church and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it. You cannot assume that the Apostle Paul who said, "Christ is the head of the church." Said that on the hope that God wouldn't lose control. That's quite an assumption and to infringe upon the power of God.

Now let me add a footnote and as I said at the beginning, I'm not speaking on this because I pulled it out of the hat, but because it's in the past. I don't have any axe to grind. But the reason I'm concerned about it is not that I want to detract from these people or that I want to consider them not brothers in Christ for many of them are. But the reason that I want to speak on this is because I believe in my heart that the primary thing that the believer is to do in the world is exalt God.

I believe that. And I'm sure you do, don't you? The primary thing for a believer to do in the world is exalt God. And I believe that it does not exalt God when you hold a wrong view of Him, of His Son or of the Holy Spirit. I think in fact that grieves the Holy Spirit. And so what I say I say in order that you might understand that a wrong view of the Holy Spirit which subtracts anything from the dimension of his fullness is a slight against the Holy Spirit.

And so we're not just talking about little picky things. We're talking about the proper exaltation of God Himself in His Spirit. And it's important. Now can we biblically or theologically defend the fact that everything went wrong for 1800 years and God finally got control in the end time. I really think you'd have a hard time proving that if you carefully read the Bible and see that God is in control of everything. In addition to that, these folks would tell us that the movement as we know it today is then patterned on the book of Acts. And what everybody needed to do is get back to the book of Acts and that the book of Acts becomes the norm for the behavior of the Christian.

That the fact that you could be saved and get the Holy Spirit later is based on the book of Acts. Well ___ if you start basing everything on the book of Acts, you're gonna find yourself in a lot of trouble. Because then there's justification for us to do what Paul did. Take Nazarite vows, cut our hair and then have to go to Jerusalem and burn them in the Temple. It's going to be a little tough since there's no temple. If you want to take anything that is transitional in the book of Acts, then how do you arbitrarily decide what you take and what you don't take?

If you make the book of Acts the norm, then you got tremendous problems. You're going to have to allow for revelation current today. You're going to have to allow for Apostles today. You're going to have to allow for all of the signs and wonders and miracles that accompanied the early church and the various manifestations. Not just in some segments of Christianity, but throughout unqualified. There are many problems.

So there are two questions that we really face here. The historical problem of 1800 years when this didn't exist and God was supposedly according to one man out of control. And secondly the fact that if you take the book of Acts for the norm, you run into some tremendous problems. Now I hope that we can shed some light on this. As we've said, the book of Acts is a transitional book. And I want you to learn these things because I want you to be able to answer these things when they're asked of you. And so this is not an end in itself, but this is a means to an end for you to teach others.

So as we see in the book of Acts is a transition. The new covenant comes, the old covenant has died and as the book of Hebrews says, "It fades away, it decays and grows old." But as the new covenant arrives, the people come to Christ which is a momentary miracle; they still find it difficult to make the full transition. And so in the book of Acts, there are various transitional things occurring. There are some old things that just kind of die slowly. Some old forms like for example, the early church met in the synagogue.

And there are some new things that come and they're new and they're permanent things. But watch. There are some things we see in the book of Acts that aren't old, and they aren't new and permanent. They are just especially for the transitional period. And unless you understand that, you become confused. Let's look back at our text and we saw three sections to our transition. First of all Paul was in transition verses 18 to 22.

"Paul after this charity good while in Corinth and then he took his leave of the brothern, sailed from there to Syria, with him Priscilla and Aquila. Paul having cut his hair in Cenchrea for he had a vow." And that tells us he was in transition, he was still making vows on an Old Testament basis, Nazarite vow and he did it in thanks to God for delivering him from Gallio and from those Jews in Corinth who wanted to take his life.

"He came to Ephesus and left them there but he himself entered the Synagogue, reasoned with the Jews." And this of course is his first visit to Ephesus and he left Aquila and Priscilla there to being the work. The Jews wanted him to stay longer, verse 20, "but he had to hurry to Jerusalem" verse 21, "because he had to complete his vow, the Nazarite vow had to be completed in the temple."

Now this shows you this stringent nature of Paul's Judaism, even though he was a Christian, he still wanted to fulfill this vow in the right way and he wanted to be there for the feast which was a Judaistic feast. So you see the Paul was still in transition. He had not yet been able to set aside all of these old features. He sailed from Ephuses, landed at Cezeria, went up and greeted the church and of course we know that's Jerusalem church and then he went down to Antioch.

And verse 23 says, "After that he went again on his third missionary journey." And so we saw Paul in transition. Secondly we saw Apollos. Remember Apollos, a certain Jew. Born in Alexandria, an

eloquent and it means eloquent and learned man. Mighty in the Scripture, the Old Testament. Came to Ephesus, you remember that story, he was instructed in the way of the Lord, he was fervent in his spirit, he was speaking and teaching Jesus, but he knew only the baptism of John which means that he knew Jesus was Messiah, but came up short of the cross and the Resurrection.

Verse 26, "he began to speak Aquila and Priscilla took him home." And it says, "They explained unto him the way of God more perfectly. They gave him full knowledge of the work of Christ and of course he believed and became a New Testament saint. And then he went in verses 27 and 28 "back to Corinth and watered what Paul had planted." It says, "He helped much them who believe through grace and he publicly convinced the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah."

So here we see two people in transition. Paul was a Christian hanging onto to Judaistic features; Apollos was an Old Testament saint who needed to be brought to Christ. Thirdly we come to our third group in transition and that's in verses 1 to 7 in chapter 19. And I want you to see this clearly. Now in this particular little portion of seven verses, God is still picking up some Old Testament loose ends. These are Old Testament Saints. I'm convinced of that. Old Testament Saints who were followers of John the Baptist, who had not yet even heard about all the features of Jesus Christ. And so they're still caught in the transition.

As Old Testament Saints, they needed to be given the fullness of knowledge that they might become a part of the church. Look at verse 1. "It came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth." You remember Apollos left Ephesus where he met Aquila and Priscilla and went to Corinth administered there and really sort of built on what Paul had begun. "But it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper borders, came to Ephesus." Now you remember that back in verse 21 Paul had said the Ephesians, "If God so wills I'll come back." And God did will and so he came back.

He had started his third missionary journey went through south Galatia and confirmed the churches and strengthened them. And he keeps going and he comes to Ephesus and he comes to the upper borders, there were two roads, the lower one in the valley, the upper one in the hill. He came across the top one, downing from the north into Ephesus. Now watch what happens. "And finding certain disciples." Now I'll stop there for a minute.

He meets 12 men. Now the 12 is indicated in verse 7, "All the men were about 12." Now he meets 12 people who are introduced to him as disciples. Now this is interesting because when we look at the word disciple, it's easy to make an assumption. And that is the assumption that they were Christians. New Testament believers. And verse 2 says, "have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" So here we find disciples is one word used and believed is another word. Now the easy assumption is, oh, those are Christians. They are disciples, they have believed.

The question that's obvious in my mind is disciples of whom would believe what? Now you go back into the Gospel of John and what do you find John saying? Continually, continually pointing out that you can't always determine anything by whether a person follows or whether he believes on the surface. Jesus for example in 8 John it says that "many believed on His name and He said that's fine, but He that continues in My word is My disciple for real." 6 John 66 said, "And many of his disciples turned their backs and walked no more with Him." So in the word disciples which means learner, and in the concept of believing, there's really no implication of Christianity. The reason that people assumed that they had to be Christians here is because the word disciple in the book of Acts is used to speak of Christians. No less than a dozen times at least in the first 15 chapters.

And so they say they've got to be Christians. Now watch what happens. The folks who wanted to defend the view that you could be saved and not have the Holy Spirit say see, you have Christians. And then he says, "Have you received the Holy Spirit?" And they say, "We have not so much as heard whether the Holy Spirit has been given." So there you have Christians who have not received the Holy Spirit. And believe me, the Pentecostals use chapter 19 as a defense of their particular doctrine.

Now let me start at this point. I believe that the point about whether they were Christians is very, very debatable. You say why? Well in the first place, they didn't know anything about the Holy Spirit in terms of His being granted. And had they been Christians, they would have had to been on this side of the cross, right? A Christian is somebody who believes in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. If they had been on this side of the cross, they would have known about the Holy Spirit. For Christ had promised to give the Holy Spirit. And on that side of the cross the Holy Spirit had come obviously.

Another thing, if they had been Christians, verse 3 at the end says, "they said we were baptized under John's baptism." They didn't even understand the baptism of Christ. verse 5, Paul told them about it and then they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Let me ask you a question. In the early church, when were people baptized? When were they baptized? Immediately upon believing. If you look at Acts 2, "3,000 believed and were baptized." All through the book of Acts, baptism is immediate upon salvation.

Now if these people were Christians in the sense of believing in the finished work of Christ, they would have known the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ. They did not know that the Holy Spirit was given; they did not understand the baptism of Christ. The implication of verse 4 is Paul says unto them, "John the baptizer the baptism of repentance that you should believe on Him who should come after him, that is our Messiah Jesus." That implies they didn't even know about Messiah Jesus.

And Paul says to them, look, John was getting you ready for Jesus. Oh, they said. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. I think it is very clear from the passage that they were not Christians. They were Old Testament saints believers in God, followers of John the Baptist who was the last of the Old Testament prophets and he was getting a people ready for the Messiah's arrival. They were ready; they just didn't know the Messiah.

Now there are some important considerations in the passages. I want you to think these through with me. Many people have problems because of the term disciple and the word believe. But if you study carefully the use of those terms particularly in the Gospels, in the Gospel of John, you will find that a disciple is simply a learner. He can be a disciple of anybody. A disciple of anybody.

And somebody who believed that's an unqualified statement. The devils what? Believe. So there's no necessity to make people Christians just because they're followers or learners and just because they believe. And incidentally it doesn't say that they necessarily believe. Paul simply asks the question, whether they've received the Holy Spirit since they believed.

Now this again I say is a major, major passage for those who would defend a gap between salvation and the Holy Spirit. That you get the Holy Spirit later. This is what used to be called an old theology, the second blessing. That salvation is the first blessing and then you surrender or you yield later on and you get the Holy Spirit as kind of a second blessing. And I think a real problem here is first of all the failure to recognize the transitional nature of the book of Acts.

Let me say it this way. You cannot and I say that meaning the word that I said. You cannot take the experience catch that word. You cannot take the experience of the people in Acts and make it the norm for the church. In the first place it's not a command, it's not an explicit statement. They're merely taking an experience and extracting that experience out of a transitional period and establishing it as the norm.

Now the danger in doing that as I mentioned earlier is the fact that if you're going to take one experience in Acts, who's to stop you from taking all of them or who becomes arbitrary enough to say which ones you take and which ones you don't. And if you're really going to accept that, then you ought to run around take Nazarite vows and cut your hair. And offer a burnt sin offering.

But that's dead, that's a dead issue. That's long gone. And you're going to have to follow what James does in the 21st chapter of Acts when he has a whole bunch of people go down there and take vows, Jewish vows. No, you cannot take the experiences of the book of Acts and make them the norm. Now let me give you some thoughts. And remember our little word acrobos we said last week that Apollos was not only mighty in the Scripture but he was diligent. We said the word means exactness, that he taught the Scripture with exactness. Well we need to be exacting when we look at these verses because they're very important.

Let me give you some thoughts. First of all, these folks were not Christians at all. And I think that is important to establish at the very beginning. They were not Christians at all. You say well if they were followers of John the Baptist, they must have been. Well I'm not too sure about that. Let me show you why. Matthew 11, 1 through 3. "You know the followers of John the Baptist weren't too sure about Jesus even the ones that knew about Him." Now remember this, John was in the wilderness, right? Preaching Jesus. Announcing the Lamb of God was coming. Maybe not by name at first, he didn't really know who it was until finally Jesus arrived. And he said, "behold the Lamb of God, take away the sin of the world." But he was out there getting his people ready for the Messiah. And remember this, there were thousands of people coming out there. They would come, they would be baptized, they would go back to the city. Some of them got in on the initial information. Some of them got in on the later information.

Not all of the disciples of John the Baptist had all of the information about Jesus. Listen to this, even after they had announced that Jesus was the Messiah, they had questions. John was saying repent for what is at hand. The kingdom. And you know what happened to John? He woke up one day and realized he was in prison. And he looked around and he saw that Jesus didn't appear to be really setting up a kingdom. In fact it looked as if Jesus was becoming a victim. And his mind begin to wonder, did I make a mistake? Is in fact this not the Messiah?

And so he sends two disciples, Matthew 11:1. "In the past when Jesus had ceased commanding His 12 disciples, He departed from there to teach and preach in their cities. Now when John had heard in the prisons the works of Christ, he sent to His disciples." They said to Jesus, this is what he told them to say. "Art thou He that should come or do we look for another?" Amazing. You mean in John's own mind he's got questions? Listen. "If John in his own mind had some question about Christ, about the fact that Jesus was that Messiah, it's easy to understand that some of his disciples might not have understood all there was to understand about Jesus," right? And so we assume then and now you can go back to Acts 19 that these disciples could easily have been instructed by John short of a full understanding and a full belief in Jesus as their Messiah. And certainly they were not Christians. Or they would have known the baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus and they would have known something about the gift of the Holy Spirit.

I'm going to give you a second thing. I say first of all they aren't the norm for Christians because they aren't even Christians. So that eliminates this passage. And we took care of that. Point two. There's another reason that I don't believe they're the norm and that's because they're a transitional group. What happens in transition is not necessarily set the pattern.

Now if somebody comes to me and says John, what do you believe about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit? I don't take him to the book of Acts. Because there are straightforward, explicit statements about the Holy Spirit all throughout the Scripture. I don't need to go to the book of Acts because that's

a transitional time. And there are not those same explicit statements in these transitional pictures. Let me show you what I mean.

If somebody says to me do you believe that every Christian has the Holy Spirit? I'll tell you what verse I always take them too. Romans 8:9. Listen to what it says. This is doctrine Paul said this. "You're not in the flesh, but in the Spirit." Now that's a definition of a Christian. Not in the flesh, in the Spirit. "If so be it that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he's none of his. If you don't have the Holy Spirit, you're not Christian.

There can be no gap between your salvation and the gift of the Spirit. If you don't have the Holy Spirit, you don't belong to Christ. Turn it around. If you belong to Christ, what? You have the Holy Spirit. And I would say, oh, that's only one verse. Okay, I'll give you 11 others. 1 Corinthian 6:19. He says, what? "Know you not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you?" That's what I feel like saying and do say so often to these people.

What? "Don't you know your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you what you have of God?" I mean this is a gift of God. This is yours and believe me beloved, I am convinced that to deny the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is to slight God. Is to diminish His glory because it's to deny a work which He has done. Now I believe the credibility, we talk a lot about credibility gaps. I believe the credibility of God is at stake in this area because listen to what He said.

Ezekiel 36:26. You don't need to turn to it, just listen. God says, now watch this promise. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." verse 27. "And I will put my Spirit within you." Now do you read any conditions there? What are the conditions for getting the Spirit? What are they? Is there an if there? Nope. God says I will do it. Now the credibility of God is at stake. If a Christian has to do something to get the Holy Spirit then in theory, there are some Christians who never do that something so they never get the Holy Spirit. Therefore the promise of God is invalidated in their behalf. No the credibility of God is at stake. And secondly the credibility of Jesus is at stake in John 14, verse 16.

Jesus said, "I'll pray to the Father, He shall give you another Comforter." What are the conditions? The only condition for the coming of the comforter was what? The prayer of Jesus. I'll pray the Father and he'll give you the comforter. Next verse. "Even the spirit of truth and the world cannot receive it sees Him not, neither knows Him, but you know Him. He dwells with you and shall be in you." What's the condition? No condition. The prayer of Jesus.

"Listen beloved the indwelling Spirit and the life of the believer establishes the credibility of God and the credibility of Jesus Christ." To say that a Christian has not the Spirit of God is to impugn the credibility both of God and Christ. And that is not to give Him glory by any means. Now let me give you another one. John 7, this is really potent. John 7:37. And this is the words of Jesus. "In the last

day that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out saying, 'if any man thirsts, let him come into Me and drink.'" Now listen, Jesus said, "Let him come into Me and drink he that believeth on Me." What was that again? He that does what? Believeth on Me as the Scripture has said, the credibility of God. Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water. And this spoke He of the Spirit whom they that believe on Him should receive.

Did you hear that? Pretty convincing. Jesus said, "If you believe out of your heart shall flow rivers of living water. This spoke He of the Spirit. Whom they that believe should receive." Who receives the Holy Spirit? Those who believe. All who believe. And he said; the only reason the Spirit was not given yet was because Jesus was not yet glorified. Now watch, once Jesus was glorified, the Spirit was immediately given. 1 Corinthians 12, another one. And this is in verse 13. "By one Spirit where we all baptized into one body." How many were baptized? How many have had the baptism of Spirit? All.

What are Jews, Greeks, bon free, listen; we've all been made to drink into one Spirit. All of us. All of us. Give you another one. 2 Corinthians 6:16 and I like this. He's talking about being unequally yoked together with unbelievers. And he says this, "For you are the temple of the living God." Now if the Corinthians are with all their vile sins even as Christians. It's quite a statement.

"You are the temple of the living God as God has said, 'I will dwell in them and walk in them.'" You know why you're the temple of the living God? Because God said you'd be. Not because you sought it, because He said it. Well you say well some people don't have the Holy Spirit. You're right, some people don't have. You know who they are? I'll read you who they are. Jude 19. "These are they who separate themselves sensual having not the Spirit." Well who are they? They are mockers who walk after their own ungodly lusts. Unsaved people don't have the Holy Spirit. Not Christians. Not Christians.

In fact in Ephesians chapter 2, verse 21 and 22 says the "whole church is built together for inhabitation of the Spirit?" Of course. Alright, what are we saying? We're saying that if you want to look for the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, you don't look at the book of Acts and pull out some transitional passage. You look at theology you look at the doctrines that are written in the Epistles. Now you say, well John, but they also use Acts 8. Alright, look at Acts 8. Let's look at it. And this will be interesting I think for you. Take a little different angle.

Acts 8:15, because here are some Christians who didn't have the Holy Spirit. You say, uh oh, no, uh oh, there is no uh oh here. Does it matter? Because it's transitional. It's at a period of transition. Now listen. Acts 8, verse 15. "Who when they were come down prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. Or as yet He was falling upon none of them. Only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." So they were Christians without the Holy Spirit. Now listen.

"Then laid they their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit." Now I've told you before that this is a simple thing in the transition. These are Samaritans. In all the world it is unlikely that Jews hated anybody as much as they hated Samaritans. Now the Jews had received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, right? The Gospel had been preached in Samaria. And they had for 500 years had separate yemples. Mt. Gerizim and Jerusalem. They had not spoken to each other. The woman at the well was shocked when Jesus even talked to her because she was a Samaritan. Just didn't happen. And so what happened in the founding of the church in Samaria was very important because as those Samaritan believers came to Christ, if they had received the Holy Spirit right then on the spot, and no Jews had seen it. There would have existed the same dichotomy.

And so God in His marvelous wisdom withheld the Holy Spirit from them until Jewish apostles arrived. And the Jewish apostles saw them receive the Holy Spirit with the same manifestation that they had received on Pentecost and they could go back and say to the Jews in Jerusalem, you won't believe this, but God has made the Samaritans one with us. Do you see why that was important? Because the church was supposed to be one body, wasn't it?

And so God withheld the giving of the Spirit in the case of the Samaritans until the Apostles were present. Remember what happened in the case of Cornelius in chapter 10? He also received the Holy Spirit, had the same manifestation of tongues as they had on the day of the Pentecost and all the Jews that were standing there were absolutely shocked. They couldn't believe it. Peter went back to Jerusalem and says, you guys aren't going to believe this. Those Gentiles got the same thing we got.

You know why? That's exactly what God wanted them to see. God withheld the Spirit in the case of the Samaritans until such a time the Jews could arrive to see them receive the same thing they received that the church might be one. God did not want any schism. And so the only reason that that little group of believers there did not receive the Holy Spirit immediately was that God might weld together those two antagonistic peoples into one body.

And that's clearly indicated in this Scripture as Peter goes back later on and reports the marvelous fact that even Gentiles got the same thing they got. God was putting His church together. Now I want you to notice something in verses 18 to 23. This little statement here that just runs through these verses tells us how not to get the Holy Spirit. They received the Holy Spirit implying it was a gift. They didn't earn the Holy Spirit or gain the Holy Spirit. Verse 18, "when Simon saw that," Simon was a magician, a sorcerer, "saw that through the laying on of the Apostles hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money. Oh, that's a good trick, I want to buy that one."

Now watch 19. He said, "Give me also this power so that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit." And Peter said, "your money perish with you because you thought that the gift of God" watch "might be obtained with human means." You think that you can earn the gift of God the Holy Spirit by human means? Thou has neither part nor lot in this matter. You're not even saved.

Your heart isn't right in the sight of God. Repent of this wickedness. Pray to God and maybe you'll be forgiven. You in the gall of bitterness, you in the bond of the iniquity.

Now listen, watch this. Simon desired the gift of the Holy Spirit. He desired; here was his motive. He wanted more power. Greater spiritual power. Peter condemned. That's a dangerous motive friend. You know what kind of a motive that is? Selfish, selfish. And what happens in this kind of a thing is people begin to desire greater power, greater power see. Peter condemns it. Secondly he wanted to buy it. In other words, he thought it could be obtained through human means.

It wasn't just the money, it was the idea that Peter saw in this guy a desire to obtain a gift from God through human means and Peter just blasts that thing sky high. He says such a spirit that seeks a Holy Spirit for self and through human means is a spirit in which is the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity. And that kind of spirit needs to pray not for the Holy Spirit, but needs to pray for forgiveness. That's what he said to him. That's not even saved. And later on the early church regarded Simon as the father of heresy. Now beloved, I think Simon the magician serves as a lasting warning.

That we cannot selfishly seek by human means to obtain that which God gives freely through salvation. Simon sinned by presuming that God give him something because he would pay for it through some way. He thought he could pay a price to give what God gives for nothing, can't. And I think people who go around seeking for the Holy Spirit to have greater power and by doing some human things and going through some human gimmicks and some human routines and some human kind of seekings can earn the Holy Spirit are doing in a sense exactly what Simon was doing and are to be castigated in the same way that Peter castigated him.

And I say that with a sense of love and a sense of apprehension at the same time lest it be assumed that I do not love these people. I do, I love God though and I want God to get what is due Him in terms of His glory. And I don't think He does when we minimize the truth of the Holy Spirit. And when you take that which is the gift of God and turn it into something which can be obtained through human means, you have destroyed the concept of grace.

That's important to me. Alright, back to 19. Acts 19. And let's run down the passage. And I think it will all unfold for you clearly now as we go. Now watch what he says unto them. He said unto them, "have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" Why does he ask that? Because of this. He can establish by the answer to that question whether they're saved. If they said yes, he would say, hey, terrific, your’re brothers in Christ. Why? Because all Christians have the Holy Spirit. The old Samarian thing that's over. The old Cornelius bit with the Gentiles, that's over. From then on the transition is gone, people who believe now receive the Spirit.

People who believe receive the Spirit now. So he simply says then hey, have you received the Spirit since you believed? That's a normal thing. You go back to Acts chapter 15; Peter said, hey, here's the normal test. Listen to this. They were arguing about whether Gentiles are really saved. Well the circumcision were saying, they aren't really saved until they get circumcised. So Peter says this. Acts 15:7. "He rose up and said men and brothers you know how that a good while ago God made choice among us that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the Word of the Gospel and believe." He said, "now you guys know God called me to preach the Gospel to Gentiles." Okay? And they believed. Now watch. "And God who knoweth the heart." That's so important. You think God knows whether their faith is real? Sure He does. He says, "And God who knows whether their faith was real," watch "giving them" what? "The Holy Spirit."

You know why they got the Holy Spirit? Because God knew what? Their faith was real. What is the condition in for getting the Holy Spirit? Real faith. Believing. Peter says; this is the norm. And there's no difference between us and them. Now he says, let's leave it at that. And you know that became the norm for the church? So when Paul runs into a 12 guys and somebody says, hey, here's 12 disciples. He says, oh, terrific. Let me find out if you're real disciples. Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? That's important question. Because he knew, he knew that that was the sign of salvation.

You got it? It's important. Later on, Paul put it this way. "If any man had not the Spirit of Christ, none of His." Now Paul didn't say this, he didn't say did you receive the Holy Spirit when you prayed? Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you carried? Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you emptied yourself? Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you obeyed? When you yielded and when you surrendered? And as the authorized version says wrongly, did you receive the Holy Spirit after you believed? No, no, no. It doesn't say that.

He said, "Did you receive the Spirit when you believed?" When you believed is the literal Greek. "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" Now what's he saying? He's saying that faith is the key. Now look what happens. Watch this. "They said unto him." And I'll give you the rendering that's accurate. "We have not so much as heard whether the Holy Spirit was given." He says, "have you received the Holy Spirit since believing or when believing?" And they say, hey, we haven’t even heard of the Holy Spirit was given. He says, watch this. Verse 3. "Unto what then were you baptized?"

What kind of baptism did he have? He said, what's the point. The point is that if they had not received the Holy Spirit, they must not have been baptized as believers in Jesus Christ. What kind of baptism did you have? It couldn't have been a normal or they would have received the Holy Spirit. Now notice verse 2. He says, "have you every received the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They said unto him, and I'll give you the Greek rendering. "We did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was." That's all it says. And so we add best given at the end. "We did not so much as hear whether the Holy Spirit was given." Now it isn't right to say we have not so much as heard of the Holy Spirit. Because

they must have heard of the Holy Spirit.

The Old Testament saints and John the Baptist in Luke 3:16, he says, "one comith after me mightier than I who shoes latch that I am unworthy to loose, He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." It's amazing to me how many people say we want to be baptized through the Holy Spirit and fire. And if you read the next verse you wouldn't say that. Because the next verse says, "it's unquenchable fire where he burns the chafe. It's hell." You better be sure what fire you're talking about.

But the point here is that John the Baptist did teach about the Holy Spirit. So it wouldn't be proper to say we didn't know there was a Holy Spirit. But rather they did not know that the Holy Spirit had been given. They knew promised. Yes, every Old Testament saint who got promised His Spirit. And John said the Holy Spirit would come, but they didn't know that the Holy Spirit had been given. Now watch this. I love what he says to them. Verse 3. He says, "Unto what then were you baptized?" And we know what he didn't say. He didn't say what kind of faulty instruction have you had?

And then proceeded to teach them the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. He doesn't do that at all. I want you to notice something in verses 4 and 5. He uses only two proper names. Christ Jesus, at the end of verse 4 and Lord Jesus the end of verse 5. Did they teach him about the Holy Spirit? Nope. Isn't it interesting beloved that when they didn't know about the Holy Spirit, watch this one. He taught them about Christ. Why?

Because when they came to faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit was given as a gift. That wasn't even the issue. If I find somebody uninstructed knowing nothing about the Holy Spirit, I teach them about Christ. And the Holy Spirit is granted to them as a gift. No Paul doesn't say now I must give you the 16 principles to a deeper commitment. Well he just gives them the gospel. He just says, hey, he says, John was baptizing you to repent to get ready for the Messiah, but he was telling you that you had to believe on the one who came after. And that one is here and He is Christ Jesus and they heard that and said, great. And when they heard it they were baptized in His name.

And bang in verse 6, "the Spirit came." See. Oh Paul asked the right question. He did not ask did you after believing realize that you must press on to a second level? Didn't say that. Didn't say don't you know how to seek for the baptism? Didn't say that. He didn't say let's go to the second level; he said let's go back to the first level. He didn't say we must go to higher things. He said, let's get back to the basics. You don't know Jesus.

Well he didn't say how are you going to do this, do that. Ask for this; ask for that. So forth. He didn't say oh, did you believe hard enough? Was your surrender full? He never talked about subjective things. He took the objective content faith of Jesus and here it is, you believe it, the Spirit will come. And that's important. You know to assume that a Christian doesn't have the Holy Spirit is a hopeless thing.

Listen to 2 Peter 1:2. "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." All he didn't know is Jesus and God. The Holy Spirit comes along in the deal. Listen to verse 3. "According as His divine power has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness," would you say the Holy Spirit pertains to our eternal life and godliness? Yes. Well it says there He has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness. You say, but aha, how do you get it? Through the knowledge of Him that called us. Who's that? God. If you know God through Christ, the Spirit comes as a gift.

And so Paul simply says to them, I'll determine whether they're Christians. Have you received the Holy Spirit when you believed? We haven't heard that the Holy Spirit was given. Well then what kind of baptism did you have? Well we were baptized in John. Oh, you're short of Christ. John was only preparing you for Christ. Let me tell you about Christ. They believed baptized bang, verse 6 receive the Holy Spirit.

That's the pattern. That's the pattern. Now notice what happened when the Spirit came verse 6. "When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them and spoke with tongues, languages and prophecy." Some say that when Paul laid his hands on them, he it does not mean anything super apostolic people or anything like that. But that Paul was just baptizing them, holding them or whether he was putting his arms around them or he was just putting his hands on them in terms of a brotherly time of affection, whatever.

He had his hands on them and at that point the spirit came and they spoke with languages and prophecy. You say there it is, there's the norm, there's the norm. That's how it happens. Now wait a minute. That's the last time it ever happens in the New Testament. Did you get that? That's it. Now where are we, what book? Acts, transition. You say well why does it happen? Does it say command that this is the way it will always be is nothing about that there. verse 7 simply says, "and all the men were about 12." It doesn't say and this is how it'll always be.

It just wraps it up there. You say, well why did they speak in tongues? Two reasons. One, what did I tell you earlier that God wanted to do? He wanted to tie everybody into one church, didn't he? Because let me give you an even stronger reason. These people had never heard that the Holy Spirit had come. And God knew that they needed a strong convincing that the Spirit had come. And so God and His wonderful wisdom just extended Pentecost to them. So that they too would know the Spirit came. They were Jews.

And He just had a delayed little Pentecost there in Ephesus. And I'm sure they all said, oh, the Holy Spirit has come. We believed. Well, teaching of Acts 19:1 to 7 is this. Here were 12 men who lacked the Holy Spirit. Do you know why they lacked the Holy Spirit? Not because of a failure to summon Him. Not because they didn't surrender. Not because they didn't speak in tongues, but because they

never knew Jesus Christ.

I hope you understand that. And again I hope you understand that this is said with a sense of love and a sensitivity to the fact that many could construe that I am bitter towards these people. I am not; I am zealous for the glory of God. Well so we meet the third party in transition. Let me close by saying this. We met three little transitions here, didn't we? First Paul, then Apollos, then the 12. And you know something? We're a long way from the book of Acts. But we see these three groups still. You know that in the church of Jesus Christ we've got people like Paul who are saved, have come all the way to Jesus Christ, but they're hanging on to legalism?

They're hanging on to old patterns, traditions, even some Jewish people who find it very difficult to fully absorb themselves in the life of the church. And I say this; I praise God for Jewish Christians who function fruitfully in the ministry of the body of Christ as opposed to maintaining isolation. But you know we have many believers today in Christ who are still they're not in yet. They're still holding on to old things. And then we have people like Apollos, sure we have people who good people, honest people, repentive sin, they just believe in God, but they've never met Christ.

Maybe they think of Jesus as a wonderful teacher, a man of great ethics, they never come to the cross and the resurrection. And then we've got a lot of people running around who are uninstructed in the Holy Spirit. Much of it is because they don't even know Jesus Christ. Some know Christ. And grieve the Spirit by misunderstanding His marvelous work. I hope you're not in transition. I hope like the writer of Hebrews says, "you will come all the way to the fullness of experiencing all that God has provided for you." Let's pray.

Father, we're thankful that we can speak with conviction from the pages of Scripture, not from our own opinion. I thank You for these beloved folks here. And Father there may be in our midst some who have pursued this particular view of the Holy Spirit feeling that they do not have the Spirit and searching for some kind of outward manifestation. God help them to understand that our desire is only that they know the fullness of all that is granted them in salvation.

That salvation is complete and total. That God does not withhold from us any good thing. But rather that all who believe out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water in this big sea of the Holy Spirit. We even would say to the Holy Spirit thank you for being our strength, our life. Father we would pray that in dealing with those who misunderstand the work of the Spirit we might deal in love.

And Father as we meet others in transition, some perhaps like Paul who are hanging onto old patterns and have not yet been able to enjoy their liberty in Christ we pray that we might be gentle and that we might see them as weaker brothers in love even as Paul suggests. And not cause them to stumble. And Father as we meet some good people, some people who believe in You who may even believe in Jesus to a point that have never come to the foot of the cross that we may in love as

Aquila and Priscilla did put our arms around them and bring them to the complete knowledge of Jesus Christ and His perfect work.

Thank you Lord for what we learned today from your Word, what the Spirit shall teach us as these things are applied. We pray in Christ's name, Amen.

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