

God's Gift For You

Jesus first spoke of this gift in the third chapter of John in His discussion with Nicodemus.

John 3: 5

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

- This scripture establishes the absolute necessity of the infilling of the Holy Ghost.
- Without experiencing the birth of the Holy Ghost, a person has no chance of entering the Kingdom of God.

Later, the Apostle Paul reemphasized the necessity of receiving the Holy Ghost in Romans chapter 8.

Romans 8:9

9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

- These scriptures sound very harsh, but don't worry; God's Spirit is a gift that He wants to give to everyone!

Since it is very clear that one must have the Spirit of Christ in their life to make it to heaven, we want to be very clear about everything the scripture teaches about this wonderful gift.

New Testament Prophecies about the Holy Ghost

John the Baptist foretold the coming of Christ's Spirit in Luke.

Luke 3:16

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

Jesus foretold the coming of His Spirit...

John 14:16-18

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Acts 1:4-5

4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Old Testament Prophecies about the Holy Ghost

The prophet Isaiah was the first one to prophesy about this gift...

Isaiah 28:11-12

11 For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people.

12 To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

There are a few important things to remember from this scripture.

Sometime in the future, God would speak to His people in this manner:

1. With stammering lips.
 - a. Stammering means foreign.

- b. God would speak to His people through foreign lips.
2. With another tongue.
 - a. The word 'tongue' in this instance refers to language.
 - b. God would speak to His people with another language.
3. When this came to pass it would cause the weary to find rest and refreshment.
 - a. These prophecies would later be fulfilled.

Another Old Testament prophet named Joel, prophesied about this gift...

Joel 2:27-29

27 And ye shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.

28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

29 And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.

- Joel's prophecy stated that God's Spirit would be poured out upon all flesh.
- He stated that this would come to pass sometime in the future.
- Four hundred years later, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Ghost is finally poured out;

The First outpouring of the Holy Ghost

On the day of Pentecost, 120 of Jesus' disciples were in an upper room in Jerusalem praying together and waiting for this promise from God.

Acts 2:1-4

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

As prophesied, when the Holy Ghost came, every person began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them the ability.

- This phenomenon drew the attention of the crowds gathered for the celebration of Pentecost.
- Many of the Jews attempted to explain what was happening.
- Some assumed that these disciples were drunk with wine.

Acts 2:6-8

6 Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.

7 And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?

8 And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?

Acts 2:12-13

12 And they were all amazed, and were in doubt, saying one to another, What meaneth this?

13 Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

Sensing an opportunity to share the Gospel, Peter stood up and explained what was happening.

Peter explained to them that it was only 9 am therefore they would not have been drunk with wine, but they were drunk with the New Wine of the Holy Ghost.

Peter also confirmed that this was the outpouring of God's Spirit that Joel had prophesied about in the Old Testament.

Acts 2:14-18

14 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words:

15 For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

16 But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

When Peter used the phrase, "this is that", he was addressing the Jewish people who knew the Old Testament scripture.

- These Jews knew of this prophecy.
- They had heard it all their life although they probably never understood it.
- Peter was reconfirming to the Jewish people what they already knew would happen one day.

As Peter finished speaking, the Jews were convicted in their hearts and asked Peter a question;

Acts 2:37-38

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Who is the Holy Ghost for?

The first people who received the Holy Ghost were all Jewish people.

At Pentecost there were 3000 people, including 120 of Jesus' disciples (followers) that received the Holy Ghost in one day. These 3000 people were all Jews.

Acts 2:41

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

It was this miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost that birthed the early Church.

In Jerusalem, during this time, there were three classes of people:

1. Jews.
 - The Jews were God's chosen people, the nation of Israel.
2. Samaritans.
 - The Samaritan people were a mixed race of foreign and Jewish blood, because of this they were not accepted as Jews by the Jewish people of their day.
 - There was a lot of hatred between the Jews and the Samaritans.
3. Gentiles.
 - The Gentiles were people who were not of any Jewish descent.

The Jewish people thought the Holy Ghost was only for them.

However, God, being no respecter of persons, desired that people from all nations receive the Holy Ghost.

As the church continued to grow, the Pharisees and religious leaders increased their persecution against the church.

- Those who had persecuted Christ now focused their anger and attention on the Apostles and those who followed their teachings.
- Because of this persecution, the Apostles began to disperse away from Jerusalem.

The Apostle Philip went to a city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.

Even though Philip was a Jew, the people of Samaria listened to him and many were delivered and healed.

Acts 8:5-8

5 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them.

6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

7 For unclean spirits, crying with loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them: and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed.

8 And there was great joy in that city.

This was a significant occurrence because nothing like this had ever happened amongst the Samaritans before.

- They were listening to a Jewish preacher.
- They believed his message about a Jewish Savior.
- And then they were baptized in the name of this Jewish Savior, Jesus Christ.

Acts 8:12

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

- It is important to note that up until this point the Samaritans had only believed and been baptized.

The importance of this event is shown when Peter and John, the two most experienced disciples, came from Jerusalem to pray for the Samaritans;

Acts 8:14-17

14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:

16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

This event establishes two important truths about the Holy Ghost:

1. A person does not receive the Holy Ghost simply by believing in Christ.
2. God desires that every believer receive the Holy Ghost.

To give further evidence of this truth, after receiving a vision from God, Peter goes to the house of a man named Cornelius, an Italian Christian, to share the Gospel message with him and his household.

While Peter was sharing the Gospel with them, listen to what happens...

Acts 10:44-48

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.

45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,

47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

The Holy Ghost fell on every person who heard the Word!

Even the Jews were astonished at this outpouring. They could not believe these Gentiles had received the Holy Ghost.

The only reason they believed that it actually happened was because they heard these Gentiles speak with tongues.

- The Greek word for tongues, 'Glossia', means a language not acquired naturally.
- They spoke in a language unknown to them.

This family was the very first Gentile family that received the Holy Ghost.

Later we read of some followers of John the Baptist's teachings that receive the Holy Ghost.

Acts 19:1-6

19 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,
2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.
3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.
4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.
5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.
6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

The reason that these disciples had not yet received the Holy Ghost was simply because nobody had told them there was such a gift.

- If the Gift of the Holy Ghost is not taught nor preached, people will not receive it.
- The reason that many churches are not experiencing the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in their church is simply because it is not taught or preached. (Those who are preaching this message are experiencing great outpourings of the Holy Ghost [with the evidence of tongues] just as they did in the book of Acts.)

How can anyone believe in something they have not heard of?

The Bible states;

Rom 10:14-17

14 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

The Holy Ghost is a gift that must be taught and shared with everybody.

- It was, and still is, a promise for every generation from Pentecost forward.

Peter Himself had prophetically spoken the words...

Acts 2:39

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

- This means that the Holy Ghost is for you today! You can receive the Holy Ghost right now if you desire to!

If the Holy Ghost is not given when one believes, how does a person know when they receive the Holy Ghost?

Speaking with other tongues is one universal and consistent evidence of the Holy Ghost infilling.

When people receive the Holy Ghost they will speak with new tongues or a new language.

Mark 16:17

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

Throughout this study we have read you accounts of this supernatural sign occurring in Acts 2, Acts 8, Acts 10 and Acts 19.

In virtually every example of somebody being filled with the Holy Ghost they spoke in an unknown language.

Jesus spoke of this...

John 3:8

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

- There will be a sound coming from every person who is born of the Spirit.
- The Greek word for sound in the scripture is 'fonay', which means saying or language.
- Every person who is born of the Spirit will speak in a new language.

Tongues are the only consistent Bible evidence that God's Spirit has filled the heart of a believer.

Why did God choose tongues?

The one thing we know about the tongue is that it has the ability to hurt people, the Bible calls the tongue "an unruly evil".

It is also evident that the tongue is usually the last part of our body to surrender to God...

James 3:5-8

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

Mankind has succeeded in taming everything except the tongue. No man can tame the tongue.

How many times have you said something that you wished you had never ever said?

- Most of us stick our foot in our mouths and say things that hurt others.
- For some reason, we cannot completely control our tongue.

Yet when God fills us with the Holy Ghost He causes our tongue to speak in another language thereby showing us that He is in control and His Spirit has entered into our hearts.

What does the Holy Ghost do for a believer?

The Holy Ghost is the third key to gain entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

- This is the single most important benefit of the Holy Ghost.
- We inherit eternal life!

However, the Holy Ghost also helps us fulfill God's will while we are on Earth...

Acts 1:8

8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

- The Holy Ghost gives us power to become a witness of Christ wherever we might be.

Every Christian has been commissioned to share this Gospel message. (Matt 28:19-20) Yet most would not be able to accomplish this without the power of the Holy Ghost helping them.