

A MINISTRY FOR HUNGRY SAINTS

UNDER THE EXALTED CHRIST, THE GOSPEL BEGINS TO SPREAD

THE ACTS

† THE BOOK OF ACTS

OF THE APOSTLES

WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRIES, Associated

An overview of the Book of Acts, by Given O. Blakely

ACTS 5:31-32

"Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him."

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:12)

Lesson #50

COMMENTARY ON: 10:44-48

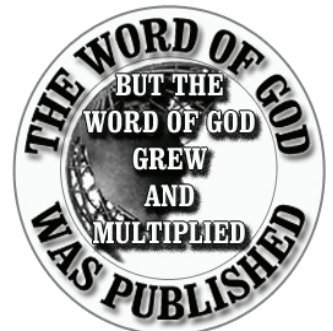
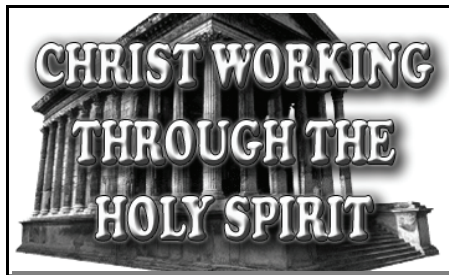
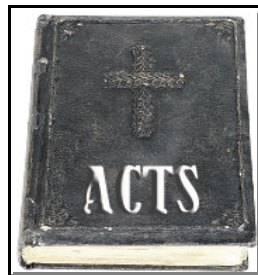
THE HOLY SPIRIT and CORNELIUS' HOUSE

In this text we are faced with a most remarkable phenomenon. In a sense, the whole event stands by itself, with unique spiritual properties. Here is an example of the King, Jesus Christ, administering the Kingdom in a manner that cannot be codified. The Holy Spirit is given in a procedural manner that differs from what occurred on the day of Pentecost. Neither, indeed, does it conform to what took place among the Samaritans. Yet it is the same Lord who poured out the Spirit. Although men are very prone to codify the manner in which the Holy Spirit is received, this text suggests that they should refrain from such tendencies. In matters pertaining to salvation and the receiving of the Holy Spirit, there is such a thing as the norm – what ordinarily takes place. However, God is not locked into the norm, and has been known to deviate from it according to His own discretion. He does have a right to do this because He is Lord. Men, however, do not have this right.

ACTS 17:26-27

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him, though He be not far from every one of us."

" . . . 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." (Acts 1:8)

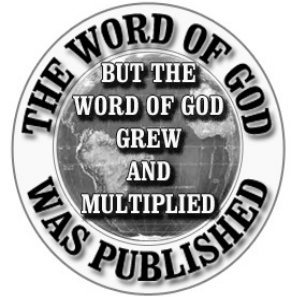


Since May, 1993, a ministry instituted for the encouragement of believers in Christ



The Book of Acts

Lesson Number 50



A MINISTRY INITIATED IN MAY 1993, AND DEDICATED TO STRENGTHENING THOSE WHO ARE IN CHRIST, BY BUILDING THEIR FAITH, ENHANCING THEIR JOY, AND STABILIZING THEIR HOPE, ENABLING THEM TO WORK OUT THEIR SALVATION WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

TRANSLATION LEGEND: ALT = Analytical-Literal Translation (2005), AMPLIFIED = Amplified Bible (1965), ASV = American Standard Version (1901), BBE=Bible in Basic English (1949), DRA = Douay-Rheims (1899), ERV = English Revised Version (1885), ESV = English Stand Version (2001), GNB = Good News (1966), GWN = God'S Word (1995), IE = International English, ISV = International Standard Version (1967), JPS = Jewish Publication Society (1917), KJV = King James Version (1611), L.ITV = Literal Translation of the Bible ((1976), LIVING = Living Bible (1971), MKJV = Modern KJV (1962), MONTGOMERY = Montgomery's New Testament (2001), MRD = Peshitta-James Murdock Translation (1852), NAB = New American Bible (2002), NASB = New American Standard Bible (1977), NAU = New American Standard Bible (1995), NIB = New International Bible, NIV = New International Version (1984), NJB = New Jerusalem Bible (1985), NKJV = New King James Version (1979), NLT =New Living Translation (1996), NRSV = New Revised Standard Version (1989), PHILLIPS = J B Phillips New Testament (1962), PNT = BISHOP'S New Testament (1595), RSV = Revised Standard Version (1952), TNK = JPS Tanakj (1985), Webster = The Webster Bible (1833), WEYMOUTH = Weymouth's New Testament (1903), WILLIAMS = William's New Testament (1937), TYNDALE = Tyndale's Bible (1526), WYCLIFFE = Wycliffe New Testament (1382), YLT =Young's Literal Translation (1862).

----- Lexicon and Bible Translation Codes with Identification -----

LEXICON LEGEND: FRIEBERG = Friberg Lexicon, UBS = UBS Lexicon, LOUW-NIDA = Louw-Nida Lexicon, LIDDELL SCOTT = Liddell Scott Lexicon, THAYER = Thayer's Greek Lexicon, LEH = LEH Lexicon, GINGRICH = Gingrich Lexicon

THE INSPIRED RECORD OF HOW THE ENTHRONED CHRIST, BY MEANS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WORKED THROUGH HIS HOLY APOSTLES AND GODLY MEN, TO SPREAD THE WORD OF THE GOSPEL THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD, AND TO BRING EDIFICATION AND STABILITY TO MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY.

DISCLAIMER: The quoting of other translations is not to be taken as a condoning of them. My purpose is rather to show the remarkable diversity, and sometimes outright contradictions that exist among these various versions of Scripture. Our understanding of the Word of God ultimately depends upon our comprehension of the Lord Himself and His eternal purpose. Where this understanding is not present, we are shut up to scholasticism and conjecture, both of which are of the world, not of God.

THE HOLY SPIRIT and CORNELIUS' HOUSE

^{10:44} 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." (Acts 10:44-48)

INTRODUCTION

In this text we are faced with a most remarkable phenomenon – a **group** of people receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit, and in a most unusual way. In a sense, the whole event stands by itself, with unique spiritual properties. Yet, there are other ways in which it is representative of something that is common among believers – the receiving of the Holy Spirit. The experience itself is part of apostolic doctrine. **The precise nature of the**

experience, however, is not inherent in apostolic doctrine.

There are recorded incidents of other **groups** of people receiving the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost, the disciples *“were **all** filled with the Holy Spirit”* ^{NKJV} (Acts 2:4). In this text, Peter referred to that occasion as the disciples *receiving* the Holy Spirit, paralleling the experience of Cornelius' household with that event (Acts 10:47). Later, the whole body of

disciples were *“filled with the Holy Spirit”* following a prayer for boldness to speak the word of the Lord. It is written, *“and they were **all** filled with the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 4:31). The Samaritans also appear to have received the Spirit as a group, with Peter and John laying their hands upon them. It is written that *“they received the Holy Spirit”* ^{NKJV} (Acts 8:17). Certain disciples in Ephesus, who had been baptized with the baptism of John also **received** the

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- THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS Poured OUT UPON THE GENTILES (10:45b)
- THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK WITH TONGUES (10:46a)
- THEN ANSWERED PETER (10:46b)
- IS THERE ANY REASON WHY THESE CANNOT BE BAPTIZED? (10:47a)
- THEY RECEIVED THE SPIRIT AS WELL AS WE (10:47b)
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- CONCLUSION

Spirit as a group when “*the Holy Spirit came on them*” ^{NKJV} after Paul had preached Christ to them and laid his hands upon them (Acts 19:6). In Scripture such occurrences are rare, and therefore worthy of serious consideration. **The fact that they are rare means that they are not the kingdom norm.** It also means they are strictly controlled by the King Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, it is not on the part of wisdom to attempt to formulate a doctrine from such passages, or to fit them into a preconceived pattern of theology.

In view of these things, in handling this text, I will endeavor to show how it relates to the **doctrine** of the apostles, as well as the experience of all believers. The precise relationship will not be at the detailed, or evidential, level.

AN EXAMPLE OF CHRIST’S RULE

Our text records an example of

the King, Jesus Christ, administering the Kingdom in a manner that cannot be codified – at least not at the experiential level. He is the one who orchestrated the events relating to Cornelius. They include the preparation of Cornelius, the preparation of Peter, and the gathering of the people to whom Peter is speaking. They also include getting Peter into the area, the inclination of Cornelius to the Lord and to His people, and the response of his household to the things of God – i.e. fearing God.

AN UNFORTUNATE TENDENCY

Throughout history, devout men have often struggled with how to handle the record of the experiences of godly people. This ranges from the working of the miraculous, to how men went about serving God, and even how they received the Holy Spirit of God. It has not been unusual for them to form doctrinal statements out of corrective teaching – such as Paul’s correction of the Corinthian’s desire for, and handling of, spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians, chapters 12-14). Such people speak of “the nine spiritual gifts” just as though it represented the manner in which the apostles taught. Others have taken the record of what early disciples did, and shaped it into a hard and fast doctrine – such as gathering together on the first day of the week to break bread, or even gathering a collection at that time.

Mind you, there is profit in considering what the early believers actually did. **However, when men attempt to shape that into a teaching, they have entered an activity in which human opinion will be inevitably mingled with Scripture.** It is preferable to ponder WHY the believers did what did, considering the impact that the truth of the Gospel had upon them. I have found that when this is done, the people generally end up doing much the same things as the early disciples – such as meeting on the first day of the week to break bread. However, in such a case, their activity has not been determined by a commandment or a law – for no such commandment or law has been given. **Rather, the understanding that results from believing the Gospel becomes the true motivation.**

It seems to me that all of this

reflects a certain Divine manner. It is **KNOWING** the truth that causes them to be free – free to conduct their lives in such a manner as to please God (John 8:32). When speaking of this, Jesus went on to say that the freedom of which He spoke was actually accomplished by Him personally: “*If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed*” (John 8:36). That is, He works in the individual to the degree that they have apprehended the truth. **Further, while His commandments are true, truth itself has a wider circumference than commandments.** It includes all of the commandments, yet is not confined to them.

A POINT ABOUT DOCTRINE

When speaking of the various ministries of the Scriptures, “*doctrine*” is one of four uses. “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*” (2 Tim 3:16). These appear to be listed in order of their priority.

⇒ **DOCTRINE.** This is the objective teaching of Scripture, and pertains to reality – the way things are. Doctrine is not variable. There is not one doctrine for one person, and a different one for another. Doctrine can be summarized in a Person – Jesus Christ. Thus we read of “*the doctrine of Christ*” (Heb 6:1; 2 John 1:9). It can be summed up in an objective – God’s eternal purpose. We therefore read of “*the doctrine of God our Savior*” (Tit 2:10), and God’s “*eternal purpose*” (Eph 3:11). It can also be gathered into an ordained “*form*” that depicts the doctrine – such a baptism, which is a form of the doctrine (the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ – Rom 6:17). The “*doctrine*” is what shapes our understanding concerning God



Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the execution of an eternal purpose. It is also what edifies, strengthens, and builds up.

- ⇨ **REPROOF.** Reproof has to do with rebuking, or denouncing conduct or speech that is wrong. It deals with convicting one of sinfulness. Rebuke differs from doctrine in that its objective is to bring the person away from sin in order that a proper response may be given to the doctrine. Rebukes are also tailored for the individual, while doctrine is not. Reproof, or rebuke, does not edify or build up. It rather prepares the sinner so he can be edified.
- ⇨ **CORRECTION.** Correction differs from rebuke, because it is dealing with one who is headed in the wrong direction. Such a person may not

up-building.

- ⇨ **INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS.** This has to do with training the young, whose understanding is not yet fully formed. Scriptural teaching concerning interpersonal relationships and personal vigilance and consistency are examples of “*instruction in righteousness.*” This is also designed to get the person to a point where the doctrine can be comprehended. It is required because the doctrine cannot be seen when a person does not know what is involved in living unto the Lord. Instruction in righteousness is also something that prepares a person to be built up in the most holy faith. Men are not made stronger by knowing what they ought to do. Rather, such a ministry has to do with **preparing** one for the process of

incorrect emphasis – for what is preached IS the emphasis. For example, it is not proper to take the text before us and preach the detailed experiences that it declares as a doctrine. **The doctrine will pertain to the receiving of the Holy Spirit, and will be in strict accord with the promises of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

In this text, the Holy Spirit is given in a procedural manner that differs from what occurred on the day of Pentecost. Neither, indeed, does it conform to what took place among the Samaritans. Yet it is the same Lord who poured out the Spirit.

PRONENESS TO CODIFY

Although men are very prone to codify the manner in which the Holy Spirit is received, this text suggests that they should refrain from such tendencies. To be sure, in matters pertaining to salvation and the receiving of the Holy Spirit, there is such a thing as the norm – what ordinarily takes place. **However, that norm does not concern the manner in which the Spirit was perceived as being bestowed.** Rather, it is seen in the FACT that He is bestowed, given, poured out, and received. It is **that** norm that is contained in the doctrine.

Concerning the phenomenon that attends the receiving of the Spirit, God is not locked into the evidences declared in our text – or any other isolated text. Those are matters that He determines according to His own discretion, and always comport with His eternal purpose. They are always in keeping with His objective, and not intended to be standards. He does have a right to do this because He is Lord. Men, however, do not have this right.

The strengthening of a believer, or edification, is something that is accomplished by faith, which comes by means of hearing the Gospel of Christ and taking hold of the promises of God

require rebuke, yet must adjust his course, for he is headed in the wrong direction. This involves making a place for Satan, not being vigilant, or being slow and indolent in response to God. The person also may have already fallen into sin, requiring rebuke. In such a case, “*correction*” brings the person back to the narrow way that leads to life. Correction is also **not** in order to edification, and does not itself minister edification or

edification.

The strengthening of a believer, or edification, is something that is accomplished by faith, which comes by means of hearing the Gospel of Christ and taking hold of the promises of God (Rom 10:14-17; 2 Pet 1:4).

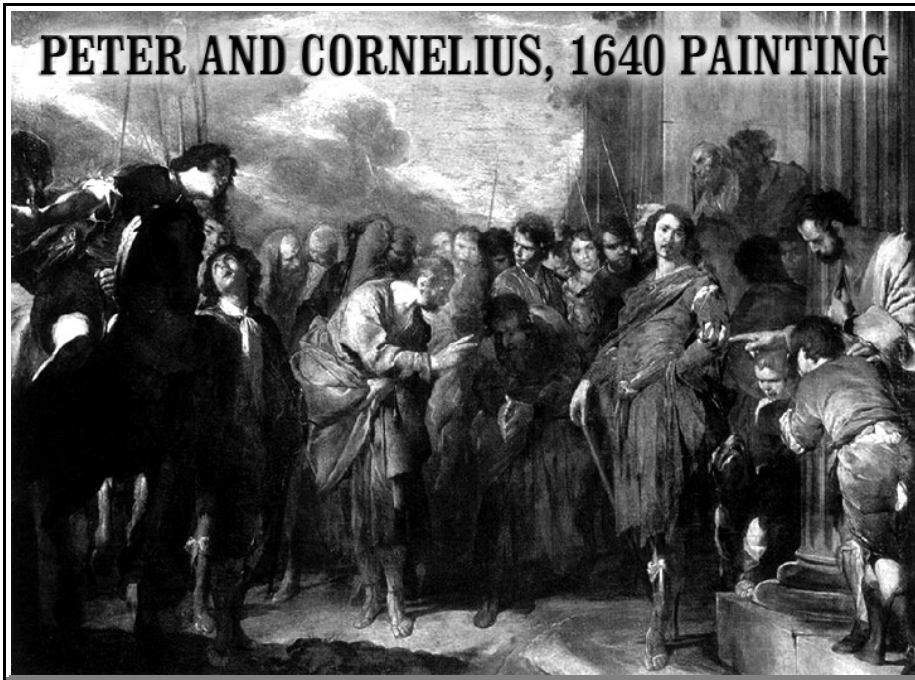
When men PREACH rebuke, correction, and instruction in righteousness, they are presenting an

WHILE PETER YET SPAKE THESE WORDS

“ ^{10:44a} **While Peter yet spake these words . . .**” Other versions read, “*while Peter was still speaking these words,*”^{NKJV} “*while Peter was still saying this,*”^{RSV} and “*while Peter was still speaking these truths.*”^{WILLIAMS}

This text is of particular significance because it records **a heavenly response** to the words of Peter. There is no doubt about the propriety of what Peter said. No one is in order to question either the content or the focus of Peter’s

words, for the Divine approval of his words is seen in the heavenly response. The marvelous effect of these words upon the hearers will also be confirmed, for they are the ones who will be blessed. Therefore, it is in order to nail into our



conscience precisely what Peter has said.

- ⇒ God is no respecter of persons (10:34).
- ⇒ In every nation, the one who fears God and works righteousness is accepted by Him (10:35).
- ⇒ God sent the Gospel to the children of Israel (10:36a).
- ⇒ Jesus is Lord of all (10:36b).
- ⇒ The particular word that is said to have been declared is concerning things that occurred after the baptism that John preached (10:37).
- ⇒ God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power (10:38a).
- ⇒ Jesus went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil (10:38b).
- ⇒ God was with Jesus (10:38c).
- ⇒ The disciples of Jesus were witnesses of all that He did (10:39a).
- ⇒ The Jews slew Jesus and hanged Him on a tree (10:39b).
- ⇒ God raised Jesus from the dead on

the third day (10:40a).

- ⇒ God showed the risen Jesus openly (10:40b).
- ⇒ God did not show Jesus to all of the people, but only to witnesses that He had chosen beforehand (10:41a).
- ⇒ The chosen witnesses were those who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead (10:41b).
- ⇒ Jesus commanded the disciples to preach to the people (10:42a).
- ⇒ Jesus commanded them to testify that He is the one who has been ordained by God to be the Judge of the living and the dead (10:42b).
- ⇒ All of the prophets gave witness to Jesus (10:43a).
- ⇒ The witness of the prophets confirmed that through Jesus' name, all who believe on Him will receive remission of sins (10:43b).

Notice that everything that was declared had to do with God and Jesus Christ.

GOD THE FATHER

- ⇒ God is no respecter of persons.

- ⇒ God accepts every person in every nation that fears Him and works righteousness.
- ⇒ God sent the Word of salvation to the Jews.
- ⇒ God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power.
- ⇒ God was with Jesus.
- ⇒ God raised Jesus from the dead.
- ⇒ God showed Jesus openly.
- ⇒ God ordained the ones who would see the risen Christ.

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

- ⇒ Jesus is Lord of all.
- ⇒ Jesus went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil.
- ⇒ The word that was published concerned what Jesus did.
- ⇒ Jesus was slain and hanged on a tree.
- ⇒ Jesus was raised from the dead.
- ⇒ Jesus commanded the disciples to preach to the people.
- ⇒ Jesus commanded the disciples to testify that God had ordained Him to judge the living and the dead.

OTHERS MENTIONED

Others who were mentioned had some relationship with God or Christ, and that is the only reason they were mentioned.

- ⇒ Those who fear God and work righteousness.
- ⇒ The children of Israel to whom God sent the word.
- ⇒ John the Baptist, whose baptism prepared the way for Jesus.
- ⇒ The disciples who were witnesses of all that Jesus did.

- ⇒ Witnesses that were ordained of God to see the risen Christ.
- ⇒ The people, to whom the disciples were to preach of Christ.
- ⇒ Those who ate and drank with the risen Christ.
- ⇒ The prophets who gave witness to Jesus.
- ⇒ Those who believe on the name of Jesus, who will receive remission of sin.

It is every evident that Deity was the focus of everything Peter said. **There is an evident thrust in his words that is not common in our day.** The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are not merely mentioned, but are the axis around which Peter's word rotate. The fundamental work that was accomplished was clearly that of Deity. **Furthermore,**

the responses of men, whether good or bad, were, strictly speaking, to what the Lord had done.

This message does not fit handily into a theological system, or an institutional mindset. Notwithstanding, that circumstance, which is a disconcerting condition to many, there is a sanctifying nobility in Peter's words that is most refreshing.

OTHER THINGS TO NOTICE

Peter did **not** set Jesus forth as the grand answer to humanities self-diagnosed needs. He did **not** represent Him as one who could help men reach their goals or realize their dreams. He made **no** connection of the Lord with political, social, or domestic circumstances. **While the Lord Jesus does touch all of these facets of life, that is not the message of the Gospel itself.** Jesus is simply not presented as panacea for the troubles of life in this world.

It also ought to be noted that Peter has not yet specified what is required of men. He has only presented the facts relating to Christ. He does present the general promise that all of the prophets give witness to the fact that whoever believes in Jesus will receive the remission of sins. That promise, of course, has a certain attraction that tugs at the soul of those who are seeking the Lord. In addition to that marvelous reality, he has also stated that those who fear God and work righteousness are accepted by Him, and that Jesus has been appointed to judge all men – the living and the dead. Of course, to someone who is fervently seeking the Lord, such declarations are of the highest relevance. You may rest assured that Peter has the attention of all who have gathered together to hear his words. Such attentiveness always attends an earnest quest for the Lord. I fear that the conditions I have just mentioned are not at all common in our time.

THE HOLY SPIRIT FELL ON THEM THAT HEARD

“ 10:44b . . . the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.”

Let me emphasize that we are being exposed to the discretionary working of the God of heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not part of the Lord's nature to do something that is out of harmony with either His character or His purpose. The enthroned Jesus will not do something that conflicts with the Gospel, or that is contradictory to the salvation that it announces. If what takes place in this text is at variance with a theological system or way of thinking, then they are what is wrong, not what is now reported through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

THE SPIRIT FELL ON THEM

“ . . . the Holy Ghost fell on all them . . .” Other versions read, *“the Holy Spirit fell upon all those,”* ^{NKJV} *“the Holy Spirit came on all who heard,”* ^{NIV} *“The Holy Spirit came upon all those who were hearing,”* ^{BBE} *“the Holy Spirit came down on all those who heard,”* ^{CSB} *the Holy Spirit came to everyone who heard his*

message,” ^{GWN} *“the Holy Spirit overshadowed all them that were hearing the word,”* ^{MRD} and *“the Holy Spirit took control of everyone who was listening.”* ^{CEV}

The Greek word from which “fell” is translated is ἐπέπεσεν (e-pip-ip-to). Its lexical meaning is as follows: “to fall upon, to rush or press upon, to lie upon one,” ^{THAYER} “literally fall on someone, throw oneself on,” ^{FRIBERG} “press close on, embrace,” ^{UBS} and “approach eagerly . . . come upon, embrace.” ^{GINGRICH} In its various forms, this word is used fourteen times in the Scriptures. I will highlight the English word that is translated from the Greek word just mentioned.

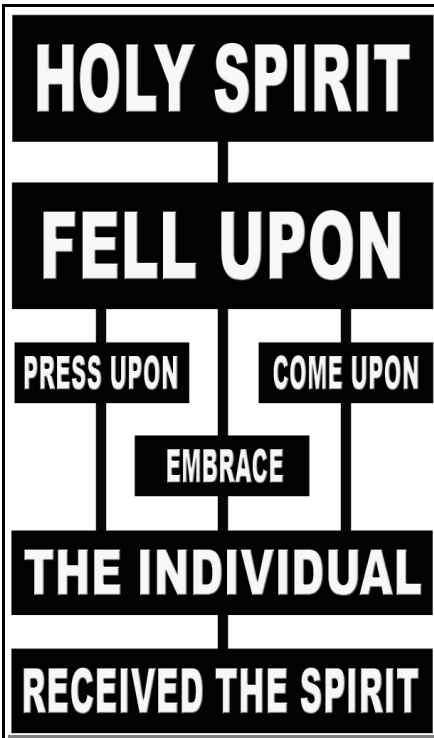
- ⇒ **PRESSING UPON.** *“For He had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon Him for to touch Him, as many as had plagues”* (Mark 3:10).
- ⇒ **FEAR COMING UPON.** *“And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him”* (Luke 1:12).
- ⇒ **EMBRACING.** *“And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him”* (Luke 15:20).
- ⇒ **LIE UPON.** *“He then lying on Jesus’*

Let me emphasize that we are being exposed to the discretionary working of the God of heaven and the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not part of the Lord's nature to do something that is out of harmony with either His character or His purpose.

breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?"(John 13:25).

- ⇒ **COMING UPON.** "For as yet He was **fallen upon** none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus"(Acts 8:16).
- ⇒ **OF A TRANCE.** "And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he **fell into a trance**"(Acts 10:10).
- ⇒ **COMING UPON.** "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost **fell on** all them which heard the word"(Acts 10:44).
- ⇒ **COMING UPON.** "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost **fell on** them, as on us at the beginning" Acts 11:15).
- ⇒ **RUSH OR PRESS UPON.** "And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there **fell on** him a mist and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand"(Acts 13:11).
- ⇒ **FEAR COMING UPON.** "And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear **fell on** them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified" (Acts 19:17).
- ⇒ **EMBRACE.** "And Paul went down, and **fell on** him, and embracing him said, Trouble not yourselves; for his life is in him"(Acts 20:10).
- ⇒ **EMBRACE.** "And they all wept sore, and **fell on** Paul's neck, and kissed him"(Acts 20:37).
- ⇒ **REPROACHES COMING UPON.** "For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee **fell on** me"(Rom 15:3).

These texts confirm there are both an objective and a subjective sense in which this word is used. That is, it is used to denote something that a person does, and something that is experienced apart from his own volition.



Examples of something a person does are the people thronging and pressing Jesus, the father of the prodigal embracing him, John lying on Jesus' bosom, Paul embracing Eutychus and raising him from the dead, and the disciples from Ephesus embracing Paul.

Examples of things occurring independent of human volition are fear coming upon people, falling into a trace, darkness falling upon a rebel, and the reproaches of sinners coming upon Jesus, being laid upon Him by the Father.

Unfortunately, some men have fastened on the expression "fallen upon" as though it spoke of an external phenomenon. Such men represent the Holy Spirit as violently seizing men, and throwing them into an unconscious state. However, as used in this text, the expression "fell upon" does not emphasize what happened to men. **It rather described the activity of the Holy Spirit Himself.** He came upon the people, embracing and, in a sense, taking control of them. There is such a tenderness in the experience, that the individuals maintained their rationality.

This is a view of men receiving

the Holy Spirit, and will be so declared in this text. Peter will also affirm this to have been the reception of *the gift of the Holy Spirit* and in two later explanations of the event to others (Acts 11:18; 15:8). Included in the idea of "fell" is that the Holy Spirit *came down from heaven* to embrace and sanctify the people.

THAT HEARD THE WORD

"... which heard the word." Other versions read, "heard the message," NIV "were hearing the word," MRD and "were listening to the message." AMPLIFIED

Although the experience of receiving the Holy Spirit is something that is common to all believers, here **the manner** in which that was accomplished is different. Thus far, we have several instances reported of people receiving the Holy Spirit.

- ⇒ **THE DISCIPLES.** The disciples on the day of Pentecost. Then they were said to have been "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:3). Referring to that very experience, Jesus had told them they would be *baptized with the Holy Spirit* (Acts 1:5). He also said the Holy Spirit would "come upon them"(Acts 1:8). Jesus referred to the giving of the Holy Spirit when He said, "Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you" (Lk 24:49). He also referred to this as the Father giving them "another Comforter" (John 16:14).
- ⇒ **PENITENT BELIEVERS.** On the day of Pentecost, those who were convicted of their sin, cried out inquiring what they ought to do. It is written, "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**" (Acts 2:38). He went on to say that the "promise" was also to them and their children (Acts 2:39). **This promise pertained to the giving of the Holy Spirit – something that Joel had promised, and the disciples had experienced** (Acts 2:17). Peter also said that Jesus had "shed forth" the Spirit upon them, as they were witnessing (Acts 2:33). The details of those who were baptized receiving the Holy Spirit are **not** provided.

- ⇨ **THE SAMARITANS.** The Samaritan believers were baptized, but they had not yet received the Holy Spirit. The description of that circumstance is the same as our text: *“for as yet He was **fallen upon none of them**”* (Acts 8:16). Peter and John went down to that *“that they might **receive the Holy Spirit**”* ^{NKJV} (Acts 8:15). When Peter and John laid their hands on them, they *“**received the Holy Spirit**”* ^{NKJV} (Acts 8:17,19). Luke says of the event that the Holy Spirit *“was **given**”* to them (Acts 8:18).
- ⇨ **CORNELIUS’ HOUSEHOLD.** Our text relates the Spirit of God falling upon everyone who was hearing, or

reported to the Jerusalem conference concerning this event that *“**God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by **giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us**”*** – Acts 15:8.

(7) **VISITED BY GOD.** James said of this event that God *“**did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name**”* (Acts 15:14).

These inspired references confirm that the experience thus described was related to salvation itself and the initiation of newness of life. It also is said to be the same kind of experiences the disciples had on the day of Pentecost.

God also works with a consideration of those who are beholding His activity, as well as those toward whom it is focused. A point is made of this in this text. Some of the conceptions of the Gentiles that were promoted under the Law, and were obviated with the taking away of the sins of the world, were being corrected in this working

listening to, Peter’s word. **This is the first, and only, recorded occurrence of this kind.** It is referred to in a number of ways.

- (1) **FELL ON THEM.** The Holy Spirit *“**fell on**”* them – 10:44.
- (2) **RECEIVED.** They *“**received the Holy Spirit**”* – 10:47.
- (3) **BAPTIZED WITH.** Upon witnessing this, Peter recalled the words of Jesus that the disciples would be *“**baptized with the Holy Spirit**”* – 11:16.
- (4) **GIFT OF THE SPIRIT.** God *“**gave them the like gift**”* as He did the disciples – 11:17.
- (5) **GRANTED REPENTANCE.** Upon hearing the report, the Jews in Jerusalem responded, *“**Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life**”* – 11:18.
- (6) **SPIRIT GIVEN.** Peter also

Additionally, it is specifically said to be the **gift of the Holy Spirit**, as promised on the day of Pentecost. There is no need to attempt to provide additional explanations of this event.

God also works with a consideration of those who are beholding His activity, as well as those toward whom it is focused. A point is made of this in this text. Some of the conceptions of the Gentiles that were promoted under the Law, and were obviated with the taking away of the sins of the world, **were being corrected in this working.** Therefore an accent is placed on the fact of God’s approval and acceptance of Cornelius and his household – all that were hearing the word.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PREACHING THE WORD

There is also something else to be seen here: the importance of preaching the Word. We are living in a time when the Word itself is not the thrust of much of the preaching. There is an inordinate dependence on human experience,

illustrations, and everyday life. It all may sound acceptable to a psychiatrist or sociologist. However, it is not acceptable to those who are acquainted with *“**the ways of the Lord**”* (Hos 14:9). **Those who speak in the name of the Lord must remember that He is active in the Kingdom,** visiting people (Lk 7:16), taking a people out of the masses for Himself (Acts 15:14), directing the people (2 Thess 3:5), giving repentance (Acts 5:31) and much more. **However, there is a context within which these things are realized.** Generally, it includes the proclamation of the Word of God, which is the *“**sword of the Spirit,**”* used by Him to work among men (Eph 6:17).

Personal testimonies, which a means whereby men can labor together with God, obtain their power when they are associated with the Word of God. I do not know that it can be substantiated that a personal witness of what the Lord has done for as person has any **power** or effectiveness where there is an ignorance of what the Lord has said. It can whet the appetite of the hearer, and provoke an interest in further inquiry. **However, until there is some cognizance of the Person and work of the Lord, declaring what He has done for us has little meaning to the hearer.**

Therefore, in our text, while Peter was speaking **the Word**, heaven moved toward those who were taking in what he said. You may recall that this same man was vigorously opposed when he declared much the same thing to the chief priests and Jewish council. Upon hearing this, that group of people took counsel to kill the apostles (Acts 5:29-32). **Whether the council or the household of Cornelius, the Word of God was the catalyst that brought the condition of the people to the surface.**

When men refuse to deliver the Word of the Lord, tone down what the Lord has said, or attempt to modify its straightforward message, the sword of the Spirit is sheathed. God will not work in such a case, and therefore the real condition of the people will not, and cannot, be known. Only the Word of God can cut to the heart, exposing what is in it (Heb 4:12).

This is the precise reason for

taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me" (Rom 7:8-11). **This happened because the Law reflected the Divine nature, which conflicted sharply with fallen man.** That conflict is what caused sin to break forth among those who were under the Law, while is spread among the Gentiles through their conscience.

Once sin was condemned in the flesh of Christ (Rom 8:3), righteousness could be imputed to both Jew and Gentile **upon the basis of their faith** (Rom 3:22,29; 4:5-13). This was not possible under the Law, for "the law is **not** of faith," or "**is not based upon faith,**"^{NIV} or "**does not rest on faith [does not require faith, has nothing to do with faith]**"^{AMPLIFIED} (Gal 3:12).

Now, with liberating power converted Gentiles are told, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Eph 2:19). Peter reminds them, "Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (1 Pet 2:10). Now they are "fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel" (Eph 3:6).

Why Say These Things?

Why spend time saying these things? To many they appear to have little to do with life. Such people would rather hear what they perceive to be relevant, having to do with life as it really is – down where the rubber meets the road, so to speak. However, we should not be turned aside by such foolish chatter. **How can anything that God has done have nothing to do with life?** How can any word spoken by the Almighty God be considered irrelevant, or disconnected from life as it really is.

The Point of It All

The point of all of this is that the

text before us is accomplishing the very thing that God promises. It is what is actually realized in Christ Jesus. Jews and Gentiles are being joined together into one, by means of the faith and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This is what Paul described in Galatians 3:14: "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might **receive the promise of the Spirit through faith**" (Gal 3:14). As to the reception of the Holy Spirit, Paul also wrote, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with **that holy Spirit of promise,**" or "**the promised Holy Spirit**"^{NIV} (Eph 1:13).

WERE ASTONISHED

"... were astonished, as many as came with Peter . . ." Other versions read, "were amazed,"^{NASB} "were astounded,"^{NRSV} "full of wonder,"^{BBE} "astonied,"^{GENEVA} "greatly astonished,"^{NET} "surprised and amazed,"^{AMPLIFIED} "absolutely amazed,"^{PHILLIPS} and "were out stood."^{INTERLINEAR}



The word translated "astonished" is a strong one. Its root lexical meaning is, "to throw out of position, to displace . . . to throw into wonderment,"^{THAYER} "To be out of one's mind,"^{UBS} and "to drive out of the senses, to amaze, to confound."^{LEH}

This is a word that shows the limitations of the human intellect, or the mind. The mind of "the natural man" has certain boundaries beyond which it cannot reach. Those boundaries consist of knowledge and experience. As soon as the mind is confronted with things beyond

those boundaries, the individual becomes astonished or amazed. **This is because they are pulled beyond the limitations of natural aptitude.** In order to comprehend such things, either their knowledge must be upgraded or their experience. If, as in the case of Peter and those with him, their experience can verify what they have witnessed, all will be well. However, until that takes place, confusion will dominate the mind. In our text, Peter will make the association between what he is witnessing and what he himself has personally experienced.

The text is stated very precisely. It was **not** Peter that was "astonished," but those who had come with him. Peter will include them in the experience that he himself had – yet, at this point, these believers were not able to make that association. Peter's comprehension has been preceded by insight into the fact that God is no respecter of persons, but accepts those who fear Him and work righteousness, regardless of whether they are Jews or not. He will therefore be able to make some sense out of what is happening before their very eyes.

IT IS STILL HAPPENING

Here is an experience that is still taking place in our time – and it is to a far greater extent that permits any degree of tolerance. There are at least two sets of people within the body of Christ. John identifies three: children, young men, and old men (1 John 2:13). I will here fasten on "little children" and "fathers" – the extremities of the members of the body. They are both legitimate believers, like Peter and the brethren who were with him. **Though really in Christ, some of that number are unable to account for what is taking place before them, while others know full well what is happening.** The difference between these two groups of people is spiritual maturity – growing up into Christ in all things (Eph 4:15), or being "no more children" in their understanding (1 Cor 14:20).

Our text provides some insight into how to address this situation. It is **NOT** to let those who are "astonished" make an effort to describe what they have seen, or what they think an event or the Scriptures mean. It is those who **DO** understand that are to provide the

required explanation – just as Peter does in our text. It is not appropriate for those without wisdom and spiritual

understanding to provide explanations of texts and events that are “hard to be

understood” (2 Pet 3:16). That is something reserved for the mature.

THE HOLY SPIRIT WAS POURED ON THE GENTILES

“^{45b} . . . because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

The Spirit moved Luke to record why the brethren that came with Peter were astonished at what they saw and heard. It was the **Source** of the phenomenon, and not the phenomenon itself that resonated in their hearts. They also were taken with what had happened TO Cornelius household, not merely what they did. **As the text will affirm, the extraordinary activity of the household indicated a Divine initiative.**

This is a consistent patten throughout the book of Acts. **What actually took place is the primary point, and what it moved the people to do was the secondary point.** This should move people to avoid seeking a recorded experience, rather than the benefit that caused it. Allow me to briefly dwell on this subject so that we may better appreciate the text before us. Here are some examples of the accent being placed on the **cause** of recorded experiences.

- ⇒ On the day of Pentecost, the disciples “were all filled with the Holy Spirit.” That was the cause for them speaking with different languages (Acts 2:4).
- ⇒ Following his stirring message, it was those who “gladly received the Word” who were baptized (2:40).
- ⇒ When Peter and John were opposed by the Temple authorities, it was because Peter was “filled with the Holy Spirit” that he was able to speak with such focus and clarity (4:8).
- ⇒ When the early church prayed for boldness, and then actually did speak the Word of God with boldness, it was because they were

“were all filled with the Holy Spirit” (4:34).

- ⇒ The selfless spirit of the early disciples, as evidenced by none of them saying the things they possessed were their own, was because they “believed,” and “were of one heart and one soul” (4:32).
- ⇒ When the apostle were found ceasing not to teach and preach Christ daily in the Temple, and in every house, it was because they were “rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name” (5:41-42).
- ⇒ When Stephen did “great wonders and miracles” among the people, and confounded those in the synagogue of the Libertines, it was because he was “full of faith and power” (6:8-9).

is the manner in which those who are riveted to an institution tend to think. That is why one segment of professing Christendom make it their aim to get people baptized. Another segment seeks to get people to speak in tongues. Still another makes it their aim to work miracles. Others make the unity of believers their goal. **As noble as such efforts may appear, they all fail to consider the revealed cause of such responses.** As Solomon well said, “Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it” (Psa 127:1). Let it be clear that when men make it their aim to produce certain responses, they have set sail on an uncharted sea. This is precisely why Paul gave this testimony, which is disconcerting to many: “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be

That is why one segment of professing Christendom make it their aim to get people baptized. Another segment seeks to get people to speak in tongues. Still another makes it their aim to work miracles. Others make the unity of believers their goal.

- ⇒ When the people in the city of Samaria “were baptized, both men and women,” it was because they “believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ” (8:12).
- ⇒ When the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized, it was because he believed “that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (8:37).

It is possible for men to fasten on the responses I have just mentioned, making them their objective. In fact, that

made of none effect” (1 Cor 1:17). He certainly was not deprecating baptism, for most of the teaching concerning its necessity and effectiveness comes from him (Rom 6:1-17; Col 2:11-12; Gal 3:27). **He chose to focus on the activity through which men are brought to obedience from the heart – preaching the Gospel.** Where that is faithfully done, and the Gospel is gladly received, the appointed responses will take place.

I will now approach this text with what I have just said in mind. **The emphasis will be the cause.** The effects of

that cause are something determined by heaven, not men.

FELL ON THEM = POURED OUT

“... because that on the Gentiles also was **poured out** . . .” Other versions read, “had been poured out,” NKJV “was also being poured out,” CSB “had been poured on,” GWN “was shed out,” PNT “had been showered upon,” WILLIAMS and “had been bestowed and poured out largely.” AMPLIFIED

Other versions read “poured out,” NKJV and “poured forth.” NASB

Joel is not the only prophet who spoke of this pouring. Through Isaiah the Lord also declared, “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: **I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring**” (Isa 44:3).

In addition to this, Paul speaks of

are ever the focus of a discourse or word concerning salvation.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

“... the gift of the Holy Ghost.” The vast majority of all English versions read “the gift of. . .” Other versions read, “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” NKJV “the Holy Spirit was given,” BBE “the grace of the Holy Ghost,” DOUAY “the Holy Spirit. . . given,” LIVING “the free gift of the Holy Spirit,” AMPLIFIED and “the gratuity of the Holy Spirit.” INTERLINEAR

This too is common language: i.e. “The gift of the Holy Spirit.” This is what Peter promised to those who inquired concerning what they should do: “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**” (Acts 2:38). That “gift” is what Peter declared they had been witnessing in the disciples. He went on to say that it was a promise to everyone the Lord called: “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**” (Acts 2:39). The words “the promise” refer to the promise of God to give His Holy Spirit to the people. Paul refers to this promise in both Galatians and Ephesians. “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive **the promise of the Spirit through faith**” (Gal 3:14). “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with **that holy Spirit of promise**” (Eph 1:13).

The giving of the Holy Spirit of God is one of the unique qualities of the New Covenant, and is often mentioned in the Apostolic writings.

⇒ “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” (Rom 8:9).

⇒ “But if **the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you**, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in

The pouring forth of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is not something that is only external. In our text, as well as in Acts the second chapter, there were external evidences, but the evidences were not the outpouring itself, which, as Paul affirms, is common to all believers.

Previously, the text states that the Holy Spirit “fell on all them that heard the word.” Now that same Holy Spirit moved Luke to describe what had taken place. It is vital to perceive this in order to avoid assigning some unique meaning to “fell on all them,” that is not intended by the text.

Here the same action is referred to as the Holy Spirit being “poured out” on the Gentiles in Cornelius’ house. That language perfectly comports with what Peter said took place on the day of Pentecost. At that time, he correlated what was happening with what had been prophesied by Joel. “But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 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: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of My Spirit; and they shall prophesy**” (Acts 2:16-18). Using the same Greek word translated “pour out” (ἐκχεῶ), Peter also referred to what the people were seeing as them receiving what the exalted Christ had dispensed: “He hath **shed forth this, which ye now see and hear**” (Acts 2:33).

the pouring out of the Spirit as an experience common to all believers. “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He **shed on** (ἐξέχεεν) us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior” (Titus 3:5-6). Other versions read, “poured out” NKJV/NASB/NIV This is the same word used to described the love of God being poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who Himself is poured out upon us (Rom 5:5).

The pouring forth of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is not something that is only external. In our text, as well as in Acts the second chapter, there were external evidences, but the evidences were not the outpouring itself, which, as Paul affirms, is common to all believers.

I suppose that there may be some who wish to affirm that the testimony of Titus 3:6 refers only to the apostles. Such a view would rob the text of its edifying power. That particular text is not speaking of the empowerment of special messengers, but of the manner in which God has “saved us” (Tit 3:5). I do not know that the apostles, or any other special group within the body of Christ,

you” (Rom 8:11).

- ⇨ “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that **the Spirit of God dwelleth in you**?” (1 Cor 3:16).
- ⇨ “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of **the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own**?” (1 Cor 6:19).
- ⇨ “Now we have **received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God**: that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God” (1 Cor 2:12).
- ⇨ “Who hath also sealed us, and **given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts**” (2 Cor 1:22).
- ⇨ “Now He that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath **given unto us the earnest of the Spirit**” (2 Cor 5:5).
- ⇨ “He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also **given unto us His holy Spirit**” (1 Thess 4:8).
- ⇨ “And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by **the Spirit which He hath given us**” (1 John 3:24).
- ⇨ “Hereby know we that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because **He hath given us of His Spirit**” (1 John 4:13).

The pouring forth of the Holy Spirit is associated with salvation as well as empowerment. In the case of the

The pouring forth of the Holy Spirit is associated with salvation as well as empowerment. In the case of the household of Cornelius, that is the point that is being emphasized. What took place there was not an example of the bestowment of spiritual gifts, given

household of Cornelius, **that** is the point that is being emphasized. What took place there was not an example of the bestowment of spiritual gifts, given for the edification of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:7). This was evidence given by God for the sake of Peter and the Jews who were with him. **It chronicled a spiritual epoch in which the acceptance of the Gentiles by God took place.** As would be opened up in other apostolic writings, they were being grafted into Israel, who is the natural olive tree (Rom 11:24). They were being made partakers of “*the root and fatness of the olive tree*” (Rom 11:17), which were the promises that had been vouchsafed to Israel, yet were never intended to be for them alone.

WHAT HAVE I SAID THESE THINGS

I have taken the time to say these things because of the confusion that covered this subject in my earlier days. I have been subjected to a doctrine that stated the Spirit was poured out only upon the apostles. **That teaching confused the unique evidences of the gift with the gift itself.** Even during those days, I found it most difficult to comprehend why, on the day of Pentecost, Peter referred to “*the gift of the Holy Spirit*,” paralleling it with what these hearers were witnessing. There was

never a satisfactory explanation of Joel’s prophecy, which spoke of sons and daughters prophesying, and the participation of young men and old men, and servants and handmaidens in that outpouring. Nor, indeed, could I make any sense out of Peter saying “*the promise*” was to everyone called by God. The problem was compounded even more by the things recorded as taking place in the house of Cornelius.

Oh, there were attempts to explain all of these things. One particular body of thought said that the apostles received “the miraculous gift” of the Spirit, while the other believers received the “ordinary gift.” This seemed to meet their claim to exclusiveness. However, that proved to be nothing more than theological jargon, and could not be supported by Scripture.

It seems to me that it is far better to simply accept the events as they are recorded, and allow the words used to describe those events to shape our understanding of it. If that seems to impinge upon some cherished doctrines, so be it. Furthermore, such an approach will not automatically align the individual with corrupted doctrines that are extant in the Christian community. **It is always safe to stick with the Word.**

THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK WITH TONGUES

“^{46a} **For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.**”

I understand that the religious lives of some would be greatly simplified if these words were not in the text. However, what can be said of any

approach to the truth that makes a Scriptural expression intrusive, or requiring some extensive modification? How can any view be right that tends to filter out words that have been inspired by God, or makes them appear strange and out of harmony with what one

perceives to be the truth? **All of this is particularly accented when we consider that this is a record of something that God and the exalted Christ are doing.** No man is at liberty to question what the Lord has done, or to doubt its authenticity or profitability.

THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK WITH TONGUES

“For they heard them speak with tongues . . .” Other versions read, *“they were hearing them speaking with tongues,”* NASB *“speaking in other languages,”* CSB *“speak with diverse tongues,”* MRD *“speaking strange languages,”* NJB *“speaking different languages,”* IE *“speaking in foreign languages,”* WILLIAMS *“talking in [unknown] tongues (languages),”* AMPLIFIED *“speaking in foreign tongues,”* PHILLIPS *“speaking languages,”* INTERLINEAR and *“speaking in other languages.”* GW

The word *“tongues”* is translated from the Greek word *γλώσσαις*. As used in this text, its lexical meaning is *“the language used by a particular people in distinction from other nations (Acts 2:11; Isa 66:18; Dan 3:4; 5:19; Rev 5:9; 7:9; 10:11; 11:9; 13:7; 14:6; 17:15),”* THAYER *“tongue; language; utterance,”* UBS *“a tongue, language,”* LIDDELL-SCOTT *“language,”* LEH

Theologically, **not etymologically**, men have assigned the following meaning to the term: *“as a religious technical term for glossalalia (tongues/-speaking), understood variously to be unintelligible ecstatic utterance (1Cor 14.2), heavenly language (1Cor 13.1),”* FRIBERG and *“The expressions γλώσσαί γένη γλωσσῶν ἐν γ. λαλεῖν etc. refer to the ecstatic speech of those overcome by strong emotion in a cultic context. The latter expression is usually rendered speak in tongues. Ac 19:6; 1 Cor 12:10; 13:1, 8; 14.”* GINGRICH **This definition has been driven by a theological persuasion, and does not reflect the root meaning of the word, or the intent of the Holy Spirit.** It represents a human interpretation, not a Divine revelation. It is men’s explanation of how the term **came to be** used, without regard as to whether or not that use was proper.

I do not believe it can be substantiated that this is the intended meaning of the text before us. I will therefore proceed with the understanding that *“tongues”* refers to the utterance of a language – a human language. It does appear from the context that this parallels the experience that took place at Pentecost when men spoke in a language that was not their native tongue. Yet was understood.

As such, this record is much like that of the disciples on the day of

Pentecost, who, when the Spirit was *“shed forth”* upon them, *“began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance”* (Acts 2:4). The word *“utterance”* has the following lexical meaning: *“to speak out, speak forth, pronounce, not a word of everyday speech, but one “belonging to dignified and elevated discourse,”* THAYER and *“speak out (loudly and clearly), declare (emphatically).”* FRIBERG **This is a word that described an intelligent, well ordered, and discernible statement made with the voice.** This is also the kind of utterance that is described in our text.

The verse says that Peter and the six men with him **“heard them speak with tongues.”** As used here, the word *“heard”* means, *“to attend to (use the faculty of hearing), consider what is or has been said . . . to understand, perceive the sense of what has been said,”* THAYER *“of inner comprehension understand, be aware of,”* FRIBERG *“to hear and understand,”* LIDDELL-SCOTT *“to understand,”* LEH and *“heed, listen to, understand.”* GINGRICH

From the standpoint of language itself, therefore, what Peter and those with him heard was not unintelligible. It was not a language that was strange or unknown to them – although it no doubt was formerly unknown to those who were speaking, else it would not have been attributed to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Again, it perfectly parallels what took place on the day of Pentecost. Men were speaking in a language they had not learned naturally, and it was understood by those who heard it.

I do not doubt that the people could have been speaking in Hebrew, the language of the Jews, or some other dialect that was common to them.

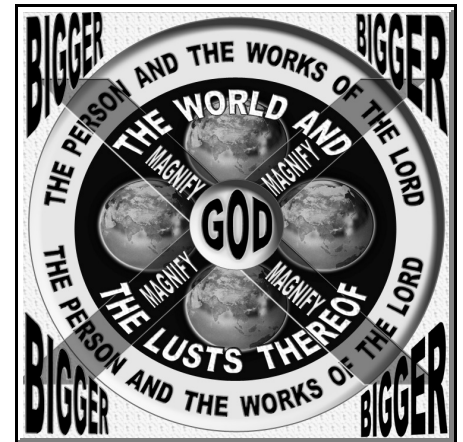
MAGNIFY GOD

“. . . and magnify God.” Other versions read, *“exalting God,”* NASB *“praising God,”* NIV *“extolling God,”* NRSV *“giving glory to God,”* BBE *“declaring the greatness of God,”* CSB *“proclaiming the greatness of God,”* NJB *“extolling the majesty of God,”* WEYMOUTH *“telling of the greatness of God,”* WILLIAMS *“extolling and magnifying God,”* AMPLIFIED *“glorifying God,”* PHILLIPS and *“praising God’s greatness.”* GNB

As used in this text, the word *“magnify”* has the following lexical

meaning: *“to make great . . . enlarge . . . to make conspicuous . . . to esteem highly, to extol, laud, celebrate,”* THAYER *“enlarge, extend,”* UBS *“to make big,”* LOUW-NIDA and *“to make great by word.”* LIDDELL-SCOTT

To a Jew, magnifying God means something quite different than some of the representations that are being heard in our day. They had been tutored by the Psalms in praise, and knew well what God had said of Himself in the Scriptures. To magnify God means precisely what the term implies: **to cause Him to appear larger.** In this case, larger than all that competes with Him. In other words, they were affirming the truth about God, and Peter and his colleagues recognized it.



Here is the real situation: *“the whole earth is full of His glory!”* (Isa 6:3). God is imminent in all of creation, and is *“not far from every one of us”* (Acts 17:27). However, sin has rendered men obtuse to the Lord and His glory. As a consequence, apart from Christ Jesus, His Person and his works are hidden. **There is an ignorance of God that dominates any realm permeated by sin.** Now, what happens when the eyes of the understanding (Eph 1:18) are opened is that suddenly the individual becomes aware of the Lord. What may have been known intellectually is now realized in human experience. It is then that the Lord can, in fact, be *“magnified.”* **God Himself is not made larger, but the understanding of Him is enlarged.** What happens when people magnify the Lord is this – **words are spoken that draw the attention of the hearers away from the things of this world.** The prominence and

preeminence of God are proclaimed in such a way as to dwarf everything else. **Furthermore, the magnification of God can only be done by someone whose vision and heart have been captured by the Lord.** No person can magnify the Lord who is fundamentally unacquainted with Him, or has not become acutely aware of who He is.

Much of what is referred to as “praise” in our time is **not** really the magnifying of God, but is done out of rote, or human orchestration. The element of spontaneity is often missing, and there is more mimicry than insightful expression. This kind of thing is **not** what took place at the house of Cornelius!

Furthermore, what Peter and those with him heard was **not** gibberish, or a language that could not be understood, therefore requiring an interpretation like the writing on the wall seen by Belshazzar. To be sure, it is not possible that it was the repetition of hackneyed religious phrases that were popular among the people.

THEN ANSWERED PETER

“^{46b} **Then answered Peter . . .**” Other versions read, “*Then Peter said,*”^{NIV} “*The Peter declared,*”^{RSV} “*Peter’s response was,*”^{CJB} “*Then Peter responded,*”^{CSV} “*Then Peter asked,*”^{NLT} “*Then Peter exclaimed,*”^{PHILLIPS} and “*Peter spoke up.*”^{GNB}

of God, putting forth a question that will reflect “*the mind of Christ*” (1 Cor 2:16).

One of the signs of a spirit-filled man is the ability to respond to things that are new in a manner that glorifies God. Those who are unlearned and

followers. He is the teacher, and they are the taught. For them, this is not necessarily a demeaning circumstance. However, from that point on, and since the record of these events has been made public, it is no longer acceptable for a state of ignorance to exist on this matter.

It is a sign of spiritual advancement when a person can recognize the exceptional working of the Lord. God is fully able to work within the parameters of the truth without being locked into a theological routine.

It is a sign of spiritual advancement when a person can recognize the exceptional working of the Lord. God is fully able to work within the parameters of the truth without being locked into a theological routine. He does not give men the liberty of developing unique approaches to the truth, and especially to men being saved. However, He Himself is not locked into a rigid procedure, as is confirmed in this text.

The word “*answered*” is translated from a word that means, “to answer . . . to begin to speak.”^{THAYER} Of course, no question was asked Peter, so he is not responding to an interrogation. **Instead, he is responding to a circumstance.** Something has occurred that elicited a response from this man of God – and it is something that has been initiated by heaven. Peter, enjoying “*the communion of the Holy Spirit*”^{NKJV} (2 Cor 13:14), will process what he has seen and heard. Mixing it with faith (Heb 4:2), and bringing out of his spiritual “*treasure things new and old*” (Matt 13:52), he will speak in concert with the truth. He will not be able to hold his peace. **Peter correlates what he has witnessed with the manner of entrance into the Kingdom**

undiscerning will not make sense out of what Peter says. His words will not blend with their perception, for it is immature.

This, of course, is one of the differences between Peter and the brethren who were with him. **They were very real brethren in Christ, but the whole event had left them confounded and astonished.** But it is not so with Peter. Our text does not say that he was astonished, but that those “*who had come with*” Him “*were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles.*”^{NIV} **However, being more fully taught by the Lord, Peter can now see further and deeper, and knows how to respond to what has taken place.** He is the leader, and they are the

I am careful to point out that what occurred at the house of Cornelius was not intended to establish Kingdom standard. However, it does provide enough insight into the ways of the Lord to provoke discerning souls to cease from associating Divine acceptance with fixed outward procedures and sequences that have been compiled by men. **What God did at the household of Cornelius did not obviate any revealed requirement for the appropriation of salvation, and it is wrong to so approach it.** However, it certainly did reveal that our conclusions must be shaped by the **proper** assessment of what the Lord Himself has done.

IS THERE ANY REASON WHY THESE CANNOT BE BAPTIZED?

“^{47a} **Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized . . .**”

Peter appears to be asking a question, but he is not looking for an

answer. **He rather appeals to his audience in such a way as to promote**

holy conclusions.

CAN ANY MAN FORBID WATER

"Can any man forbid water . . ."

Other versions read, "Surely no one can refuse water,"^{NASB} "Can anyone keep these people from . . . water,"^{NIV} "Can anyone withhold water,"^{NRSV} "Is anyone prepared to prohibit these people from . . . water,"^{CJB} "No one can refuse . . . water,"^{GWN} "No one can withhold the water,"^{NET} "Could anyone refuse the water,"^{NJB} "Can anyone object to,"^{NLT} "The water is any one able to forbid,"^{YLT} "No one can stop us from using water,"^{ISV} "No one can stop us from using water,"^{WILLIAMS} "no any the water is able to forbid,"^{INTERLINEAR} and "I am certain that no one would dare stop us."^{CEV}

The technical Greek expression Μήτι (translated "can any") is defined as

" . . . that these should not be baptized . . ." Other versions read, "for these to be baptized,"^{NASB} "being baptized with water,"^{NRSV} "for baptizing these people,"^{RSV} "have baptism,"^{BEBE} "from being immersed,"^{CJB} and "to be immersed."^{LIVING}

Here we are introduced to a certain technicality that has eluded many. Baptism is associated with one's initial acceptance by God. **It is never represented as an option that can be accepted or rejected by the individual – never!** Men have haggled over baptism to such an extent that some have been repulsed by a discussion of it. I wonder if many of the professing theologians and teachers of our time would have attempted to answer Peter's rhetorical question.

Here the issue is birth, not life – for only life can be birthed. What has

reject some who have been made alive by God. Instead of responding to evident life by giving proper instruction, they are often rejected, just as though there was no life in them. **Like life in the mother's womb, spiritual life must be birthed, else it will not survive.**

Keep in mind that the same man who is making this statement wrote the book of First Peter. There he said that the water through which Noah was "saved" "symbolizes baptism that now saves you also" (1 Pet 3:21). The sense in which baptism saves us is by moving us out of domain of darkness and into the kingdom of Christ – like water. It is also "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38), which accents the **appropriation** of a purged, or "good," conscience, as indicated in First Peter 3:21.

BAPTISM IS NOT A RITUAL

Baptism is not a ritual or mere technicality. This is also made clear in Peter's statement, mentioned above. Some versions thoroughly confound the matter by incorrectly rendering the text. A classic example is the New International Version. "and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also-not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Removing dirt from the body, as in taking a bath, is not at all the point of the text. It is absurd to compare being baptized into Christ with taking an ordinary bath. **The cleansing of the flesh has to do with the ceremonies that were put in place by the Law.** In particular it had to do with the procedures that ceremonially cleansed a person so he could traffic among the people of God. Scripture refers to this as "Sanctifying to the purifying of the flesh" (Heb 9:13). An example of this procedure are found in Leviticus 14:7-8

By way of contrast when our bodies are "washed with pure water" (Heb 10:22), it is not to allow the right to be among the people of God. Rather, it is to appropriate a cleansed conscience, **which is a requisite for coming to the Lord – "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience"** (Heb 10:22). This cleansing is associated with being baptized "with water" into Christ. No amount of theological wrangling can

Here the issue is birth, not life – for only life can be birthed. What has been made clear to Peter is that life has been granted to the household of Cornelius, for "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:2) has been visibly attested. Now, however, that life must be birthed, so that the individual may be inducted into Christ, added to the church, and raised to sit in heavenly places.

follows: "an interrogative expecting a negative answer; in a direct question,"^{THAYER} "used when expecting an emphatic negative answer,"^{FRIBERG} "used in questions to indicate the expectations of a negative answer,"^{UBS} and "used in questions to indicate the expectations of a negative answer."^{LOUW-NIDA}

The question is a rhetorical one. **That is, an answer is not expected, because the answer to it is glaringly obvious.** In this case, the question is asked with the expectation that it is **apparent** that water cannot be forbidden. Should there be any objection to a question like this, the objection would be evidence of ignorance, and would therefore be ignored.

THAT THESE SHOULD BE BAPTIZED

been made clear to Peter is that life has been granted to the household of Cornelius, for "the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" (Rom 8:2) has been visibly attested. **Now, however, that life must be birthed, so that the individual may be inducted into Christ, added to the church, and raised to sit in heavenly places.** The new birth, one which is "of water" as well as "of the Spirit" (John 3:5), is the point at which men are "delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of" God's "dear Son" (Col 3:5). It is not the point at which the individual becomes alive. In spiritual birth as well as that of the flesh, **life always precedes birth.** Many who speak much concerning baptism have failed to make this distinction, which has moved them to

drive a wedge between those sacred associations.

Now, Peter will reason on the baptism of the household of Cornelius. He will show that God has worked in a unique manner to confirm that the

Gentiles have been accepted, and that there is nothing to hinder them from being joined with the Jewish believers as full citizens of the household of faith. In this case, God has given them the Holy Spirit BEFORE baptism, while Peter had previously promised the gift of the Spirit

following baptism. **This was not done because it was an alternative method of the Holy Spirit being given, but because this was a singular epoch that required Divine attestation.** It was no ordinary occasion. Peter immediately sees this, and reasons as follows.

THEY RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT AS WELL AS WE

“ 47b . . . which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?”

Now Peter accounts for why no man can object to those before him being baptized – baptized with water. **I will tell you that his response will not fit handily into the mold of systematized theology.** He will assess what has happened, and the fact that Luke was moved to put it down in writing confirms that his assessment was precisely correct.

THEY RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT

“ . . . which have received the Holy Ghost . . .” Other versions read, “*who have received the Holy Spirit,*”^{NKJV} “*They have received the Holy Spirit,*”^{NIV} “*who have been given the Holy Spirit,*”^{BBE} “*who the Holy Spirit did receive,*”^{YLT} and “*who the Holy Spirit got.*”^{INTERLINEAR}

Thus far, this event has been referred to in various ways. In addition, it will be referenced in a number of other ways – all speaking about the same event.

⇨ **FELL ON THEM.** The Holy Spirit “*fell on*” them (10:44). This same terminology was used of the Samaritans, who also received the Spirit (Acts 8:16).

⇨ **POURED OUT.** The Spirit was “*poured out*” upon them (10:45a). Peter referred to Joel’s prophecy, which foretold God would “*pour out*” His Spirit on “*all flesh*” as commencing on the day of Pentecost (Joel 2:17-18; Acts 2:33). The KJV refers to this as the Spirit being “*shed forth.*” Other versions read “*poured out.*”^{NKJV/NIV} Paul said that

the Spirit was “*shed on us abundantly*” (Tit 3:6). Other versions read “*poured out.*”^{NKJV/BASN/NIV/NRSV} **This confirms that what was accomplished is common to all believers,** even though the means through which the Spirit was given differed.

Spirit” (10:47). The Samaritan believers are said to have “*received*” the Holy Spirit when Peter and John laid their hands upon them (Acts 8:17). Apostolic doctrine states that those in Jesus have *received* the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:12; 2 Cor 11:4; Gal 3:2,14). Once, when Paul

What we are confronted with in this text is the common experience of the Holy Spirit being given to the people of God. This is speaking of an initial experience that is associated with repentance and baptism.

⇨ **THE GIFT.** This was the “*gift of the Holy Spirit*” (10:45b). Peter referred to the “*gift of the Holy Spirit*” as something that God promised to those who repented and were baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). He also said that gift was promised to “*as many as the Lord our God shall call*” (Acts 2:39). Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would be “*given*” to those who believed on Him (John 7:39). Peter said the Holy Spirit has been “*given to them that obey Him*” (Acts 5:32). The Apostolic doctrine emphasizes that the Holy Spirit has been “*given*” to those in Christ (Rom 5:5; 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; 1 Thess 4:8; 1 John 3:24; 4:13). Our text, then, is speaking of a common gift.

⇨ **RECEIVED.** They “*received the Holy*

confronted certain disciples in Ephesus, he asked them if they had received the Holy Spirit since they believed. When they said they had never heard about the Holy Spirit, he asked them about their baptism. When they said they were baptized with the baptism of John, he taught them more perfectly concerning John and baptism, then baptized them into Christ (Acts 19:2-5).

What we are confronted with in this text is the common experience of the Holy Spirit being given to the people of God. This is speaking of an initial experience that is associated with repentance and baptism. We must discipline ourselves not to be unduly attracted to the particular manner in which this gift impacted those in the house of Cornelius who heard Peter’s word. This will be made even more clear

as the text continues. It will also be confirmed in the manner in which it was reported to the brethren in Jerusalem, and how they responded to the report.

AS WELL AS WE

“ . . . as well as we?” Other versions read, “just as we have,”^{NKJV} “just as we did,”^{NASB} “just as we have,”^{NIV} “as we also did,”^{DARBY} “the same way we did,”^{GWN} and “just as we did ourselves.”^{PHILLIPS}

When Peter reported this event to

acceptance of the Gentiles was being considered. “*And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye 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. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as He did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith*” (Acts 15:7-9). Notice

all who are in Christ Jesus.

I acknowledge that this sharply conflicts with what I had accepted earlier in my life. I was taught that Jesus baptizing with the Holy Spirit was an experience unique to the apostles. However, in the case of Cornelius Peter made a clear and unquestionable association between what took place there and the words of Jesus, who said men would be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

It is to be acknowledged that the outward phenomena that took place on the day of Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius do not occur every time someone receives the gift of the Holy Spirit – even though some affirm that it does. The rushing mighty wind and cloven tongues of fire that took place on the day of Pentecost apparently did not take place at the house of Cornelius. However, it was the same gift that was given, although the manner differed.

Men must resist any inclination to seek to duplicate the circumstances that attend the giving of the Holy Spirit. I do not know how you could select only some of the signs to be preferred. On the day of Pentecost, you had a rushing mighty wind, cloven tongues of fire, and a simultaneous filling. In the case of the Samaritans, it was necessary for Peter and John to lay their hands on the recipients. At the house of Cornelius, the Spirit was given while they were hearing the Word of God, and before they were baptized. It is possible for men to attempt to construct a system from that, but they will not be successful. Such an approach also betrays a hearts that is not right with God, just as surely as the heart of Simon the sorcerer was not right (Acts 8:21). In a sense, he was also seeking a procedure, and it was one in which he would be allowed some preeminence. He received a stern rebuke.

The promise of Joel was certainly not one limited to the apostles, for it spoke of “all flesh,” and male and female as well. Peter said that the promise uttered by Joel was to everyone that the Lord called. Apostolic doctrine confirms that the receiving of the Holy Spirit is common to all who are in Christ Jesus.

the brethren in Jerusalem he made a very specific correlation between what happened at the house of Cornelius, and what took place “at the beginning.” He even connects it with what Jesus had said about baptizing “with the Holy Spirit.” Here are the words of an enlightened man who had been given the keys to the kingdom of heaven. “*And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?*”^{NKJV} (Acts 11:15-17).

Some time later, Peter reported the same thing at the Jerusalem conference where the matter of the

that the gift is not associated with a special empowerment, but with hearing the word of God and believing. **Also, confirming that this was not an experience disassociated from salvation, Peter stated that it was related to the purifying of the heart by faith.**

Additionally, it is imperative that we consider that Peter was the **only** apostle that was present. It is not to be assumed that when he said “as well as we,” that he was referring to the apostles only, and excluding the six brethren that had accompanied him. I do not know how such a postulate could be supported. The promise of Joel was certainly not one limited to the apostles, for it spoke of “all flesh,” and male and female as well. Peter said that the promise uttered by Joel was to everyone that the Lord called. Apostolic doctrine confirms that the receiving of the Holy Spirit is common to

HE COMMANDED THEM TO BE BAPTIZED

“^{48a} **And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.**”

Peter does not wait for some input from the audience, or the six brethren

who are with him. He does not offer alternatives to the hearers, but uses the

keys of the kingdom of heaven that have been given to him.

HE COMMANDED THEM

“And he commanded them . . .”

Other versions read, *“he ordered them,”* NASB *“he gave orders for them,”* BBE *“he ordered that,”* CJB *“gave orders,”* NET and *“he directed,”* WEYMOUTH

As used here, the word *“commanded”* means *“to enjoin, order, prescribe, command . . . to appoint, to define,”* THAYER *“to order, tell, instruct,”* FRIBERG and *“to give detailed instructions as to what must be done - to order, to instruct, to tell, to command.”* LOUW-NIDA

In a sense this command was twofold. First to the hearers themselves who were to be baptized. Second, to the brethren who were standing by, who were to see to it that the baptism was carried out. Peter provides no option for the hearers to refuse to be baptized, or for the brethren to abstain from carrying it out.

It appears that Peter himself did not baptize these believers – just as Paul made it a practice not to baptize the people himself, lest they be unduly attached to him (1 Cor 1:13-17). The six brethren who were with him were doubtless the ones he ordered to baptize the hearers.

Peter knew that Jesus had commanded them to baptize the disciples they made through the preaching of the Gospel (Matt 28:19). He knew the Lord had promised that those who believed and were baptized would be saved (Mk 16:16). He had not been cultured in some of the theology that is popular in our time.

BE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD

“ . . . to be baptized in the name of the Lord.” They were not simply to be baptized, but to do so *“in the name of the Lord”* – that is, the Lord Jesus Christ. **Baptism, is not an ordinance of the church.** It is not the means by which a person becomes a member of a local congregation. Baptism is *“into Christ”* (Gal 3:27). It is *“into His death”* (Rom 6:3-4). In baptism, *“the circumcision of Christ”* takes place, in which there is a severance of the fleshly nature from the

essential person, or *“new man”* (Col 2:11-12). Further, it is by means of the resurrection of Christ that baptism saves us (1 Pet 3:21). When we are baptized, it is Christ that is *“put on”* (Gal 3:27). It is on the authority of Christ that believers are baptized. It is in obedience to Christ that this is done. All of this is wrapped up in the expression *“be baptized in the name of the Lord.”*

This is the same manner of instruction Peter gave on the day of Pentecost – namely, that the inquirers should be baptized *“in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins”* (Acts 2:38). The Samaritans were also said to have been *“baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus”* (Acts 8:16). The Ephesians disciples were also *“baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ”* (Acts 19:5).

Notice the difference in the

Any opposition to baptism, or denigration of its importance, is a direct attack on the Lord Jesus Christ, and is to be so regarded.

The associations that are made with baptism confirm its necessity. I provide them here for your reference.

THINGS WITH WHICH BAPTISM IS ASSOCIATED

1. Repentance (Acts 2:38).
2. The remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
3. The gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).
4. Believing (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12; 18:8).
5. Salvation, or being *“saved”* (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21).

Any opposition to baptism, or denigration of its importance, is a direct attack on the Lord Jesus Christ, and is to be so regarded.

terminology.

- ⇨ **“Baptized in the name of the Lord”** (Acts 10:48).
- ⇨ **“Baptized in the name of Jesus Christ”** (Acts 2:38).
- ⇨ **“Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus”** (Acts 8:16).
- ⇨ **“Baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ”** (Acts 19:5).

Add to that the words of the Lord Jesus, **“baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”** (Matt 28:19). These are all speaking of the *“one baptism”* that is common to all believers (Eph 4:5). None of them are speaking of the appellation *“Jesus,”* or of a formula that validates baptism. They are rather speaking of the Person of the Lord Jesus, and of the association that is made with Him through baptism.

6. Being buried with Christ (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12).
7. In baptism we were raised with Christ (Rom 6:4; Col 2:12).
8. Being identified with Christ's death (Rom 6:3).
9. Becoming dead to sin (Rom 6:2-3).
10. Becoming alive to God (Rom 6:3-11).
11. The circumcision of Christ, in which the whole body of sin is cut away (Col 2:11-12).
12. Faith in the operation, or working, of God (Col 2:12).
13. Coming into Christ (Gal 3:27).
14. Putting on Christ (Gal 3:27).
15. A commandment (Acts 10:48).

16. The confession of Christ (Acts 8:36-37).	⇒ NOT serving sin (6:6c).	⇒ Becoming servants of righteousness (6:18b).
17. Gladly receiving the Word of God (Acts 2:41).	⇒ Being dead, and consequently freed from sin (6:7).	⇒ Yielding our capacities as servants to righteousness unto holiness (6:19).
18. Washing away our sins (Acts 22:16).	⇒ Being dead with Christ (6:8a).	⇒ Being ashamed of our former lives (6:20-21).
19. Coming into one body through the Spirit (1 Cor 12:13).	⇒ Believing that we will live with Christ (6:8b).	⇒ Being made free from sin and becoming servants to God (6:22a).
20. Something that is done "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit" (Matt 28:19).	⇒ Christ triumphing over death (6:9). ⇒ Christ living unto God (6:10).	⇒ Having fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life (6:22b). ⇒ The wages of sin and the gift of God (6:23).

All doubts concerning the necessity and effectiveness of baptism with water should forever be thrust from us. There is not so much as a syllable of Scripture that suggests baptism is optional, or is not immediately associated with salvation. There is even extended apostolic doctrine concerning baptism.

All doubts concerning the necessity and effectiveness of baptism with water should forever be thrust from us. There is not so much as a syllable of Scripture that suggests baptism is optional, or is not immediately associated with salvation. There is even extended apostolic doctrine concerning baptism. One segment of the doctrine consists of an entire chapter – the sixth chapter of the book of Romans. It places great stress on the importance of baptism, associating it with the following:

⇒ Being put into the death of Christ (6:3).	⇒ Reckoning ourselves to be dead indeed unto sin (6:11a).
⇒ Being buried with Christ (6:4a).	⇒ Reckoning ourselves to be alive unto God through Jesus Christ (6:11b).
⇒ Walking in newness of life (6:4b).	⇒ Not allowing sin to reign in our mortal bodies (6:12).
⇒ Being planted in the likeness of Christ's death (6:5a).	⇒ Not yielding our capacities as instruments of unrighteousness (6:13a).
⇒ Being in the likeness of Christ's resurrection (6:5b).	⇒ Yielding our capacities as instruments of righteousness unto God (6:13b).
⇒ The crucifixion of "old man" (6:6a).	⇒ Sin not having dominion over us (6:14a).
⇒ The destruction of the "body of sin" (6:6b).	⇒ Being under grace and not under law (6:14b).
	⇒ The total unreasonableness of sin (6:15-16).
	⇒ Obeying the form of the doctrine delivered to us (6:17).
	⇒ Being made free from sin (6:18a).

All of that teaching is based upon the fact that we are baptized into Christ. It proclaims the implications of baptism, rather than stressing its necessity. However, if those implications are true, no one but a fool would engage in an effort to minimize the importance of baptism.

It simply is not possible for any ordained response to the Gospel to be neutral, non-essential, or optional, that has been associated with such things. Further, these are not associations made by men, but by the Holy Spirit of God. Men of spiritual integrity will simply not consent to any spiteful words concerning this ordinance.

A TRAGEDY

It is most tragic that many of those who declare the necessity of baptism to be saved fail to stress to the church what is to follow baptism. **In fact, all of the doctrine concerning baptism is delivered to the church.** I do not question that much of the opposition to baptism arises from the lack of spiritual life in those who stress it. Let it be clear that when the lives of believers do not "adorn the doctrine" in all things (Tit 2:10), the word of God **will** be blasphemed by others (Rom 2:24; 1 Tim 5:14; 1 Tim 6:1; Tit 2:5).

If a body of professing believers are not walking in the Spirit, living by faith, and generally characterized by unquestionable godliness, it is questionable whether or not they should be engaged in evangelistic efforts. Such people will fall into the same category as the scribes and pharisees of whom Jesus

said, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves” (Matt 23:15).

I do understand that withdrawing from purported evangelistic efforts would bring about a diminishment in the numbers of many churches. However, where the lives of people are unacceptable before God, the attention

must be turned to them – just as Jesus did to the unacceptable churches in Asia (Rev 2:4,14,20; 3:1). When a church is packed with people who are not hungry and thirsting for righteousness, and are not perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, its light is, to say the very least, beginning to dim. In such a case, something must be done to get leprous influence out of the church, and see to it that it is perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 7:1). God will not receive people until that is done.

That, of course, is His own statement: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Cor 6:17). It takes a hard and calloused heart to ignore that word!

Now we will behold the response of the newly baptized hearers of the Word of God. Remember that this is a response of faith, and is the expression of newness of life. This reveals some aspects of life in Christ Jesus, and is to be duly noted.

THEY ASKED PETER TO STAY FOR A WHILE

“^{48b} Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.”

What is the reaction of people who are really baptized into Christ? Do they consider baptism a kind of ultimate goal to be reached, or is it seen as a beginning? Indeed, baptism is the door through which we enter into “the newness of life”—a spiritual environment in which we move about with liberty and benefit (Rom 6:4). Our text will confirm that there is a kind of spiritual intuition that accompanies the new birth. **When a person who is spiritually alive knows they are in the presence of someone who can bring profit and edification to them, they are eager to avail themselves of the fellowship of that person.** That tendency is made known in this text.

THEY PRAYED HIM

“Then prayed they him . . .” Other versions read, “they asked him,”^{NKJV} “they invited him,”^{NRSV} “they kept him with them,”^{BBE} “they begged him,”^{DARBY/NJB/LIVING/WEYMOUTH/WILLIAMS/MONTGOMERY/AMPLIFIED} “they desired him,”^{DOUAY} “they requested him,”^{MRD} and “they besought him.”^{YLT}

The word “prayed” is not a casual one, reflecting a polite, but not fervent, invitation. It appears to me that several versions, in attempting to use contemporary words, have managed to superimpose a certain culture upon the text that is not there. Even in the English language, the word “pray” has an urgent tone in it. Here is the primary

modern definition of that English word: “entreat, implore,”^{MERRIAM-WEBSTER} “wish or hope earnestly for a particular outcome,”^{OXFORD} The Greek word from which “prayed” is translated is ἠρώτησαν, which is the third person plural of the word ἠρωτάω. The “third person” means that what is reported was not said by the writer, nor was it addressed to the writer. This is a report of something that took place external to the one who is giving writing the record. In this case, the report is an inspired one, as the writer is being moved by the Holy Spirit. That fact alone makes it important that a proper English word be used to convey the activity of the ones who addressed Peter.

is reporting the expression of newness of life, and the outflow of the heart.

This same word is used elsewhere in the book of Acts. Its use will confirm the nature of the request.

⇒ **THE LAME MAN ASKING ALMS.** “Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple **asked** an alms” (Acts 3:3).

⇒ **ENEMIES OF THE FAITH ASKING PAUL TO LEAVE THEIR AREA.** “And they came and besought them, and brought them out, and **desired** them to depart out of the city” (Acts 16:39).

This is a report of something that took place external to the one who is giving writing the record. In this case, the report is an inspired one, as the writer is being moved by the Holy Spirit. That fact alone makes it important that a proper English word be used to convey the activity of the ones who addressed Peter.

As used here, the lexical meaning of the word “prayed” is “to ask i. e. to request, entreat, beg, beseech,”^{THAYER} “as making a request ask, demand, beg someone to do something,”^{FRIEBERG} “request; beg, request urgently,”^{UBS} “to beg, to entreat.”^{LEH} I do not want to overemphasize this point. However, there is a spirit in the text as well as words. It

⇒ **BELIEVERS IN APHESIS BESEECHING PAUL TO STAY.** “When they **desired** him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not” (Acts 18:20).

⇒ **PAUL REQUEST THAT HIS NEPHEW BE CONSULTED BY THE ROMAN GUARD.**

*“So he took him, and brought him to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and **prayed** me to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee” (Acts 23:18).*

⇒ **THE CHIEF CAPTAIN QUESTIONING PAUL’S NEPHEW.** *“Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went with him aside privately, and **asked** him, What is that thou hast to tell me?” (Acts 23:19).*

⇒ **THE JEWS REQUESTING THAT PAUL BE BROUGHT BEFORE THEM.** *“And he said, The Jews have agreed to **desire** thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to morrow into the council, as though they would inquire somewhat of him more perfectly” (Acts 23:20).*

leisurely activities. These people had experienced something from heaven, and knew it. They had received the word with gladness, and had been baptized into Christ. They had been raised up together with Christ, and made sit in *“heavenly places”* (Eph 2:6). **It is a long plummet from there to the mundane!** In fact, those who are cognizant of where they are in Christ refuse to occupy the lower realms – like Nehemiah refused to come down from the wall to hold a caucus with Sanballat and Geshem (Neh 6:3).

In this text, Peter was with the converts like Nehemiah was with the builders. You may rest assured that they entertained no notions at that time of terminating their fellowship with the man of God. How could any sensible person entertain such thoughts after God

⇒ **Elisha** refused to leave Elijah, declaring, “As the Lord giveth, and as thy soul giveth, I will not leave thee” (2 Kgs 2:2,4,6).

⇒ When a certain **Shunammite woman** knew that a man of God, Elisha, frequently passed that way, she told her husband, *“Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither”* (2 Kgs 4:10).

⇒ When the son of the Shunammite women died, she went to the prophet Elisha. Having brought Elisha and his servant to her house, she said, *“As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee”* (2 Kgs 4:30).

⇒ When Jesus spoke to “many of the **Samaritans**” who had been brought to Him by the women at the well, it is reported that *“they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days”* (John 4:40).

⇒ When **Cleopas** and his companion confronted the risen Christ, and hear Him speak marvelous words to them, they did not yet know who He was. Yet, knowing the impact of His words, they said to Him, *“Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them”* (Lk 24:29). It was during that occasion, when they asked Him to remain, that He was made known to them (Lk 24:30-31).

⇒ Following the preaching of Paul, and after **Lydia** had been baptized, Luke reports, *“she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us”* (Acts 16:15).

⇒ When Paul met with **the elders of the church of Ephesus** in Miletus, he told them he had to leave. And they wept. The chief reason is said to have been *“that they should see his face no more”* (Acts 20:38).

That should be sufficient to

My point here is that what was requested of Peter was in harmony with the nature of salvation, as well as the experience of it. This was not a request for time to exchange pleasantries. Rather, there was a distinct spiritual advantage seen in having Peter remain with them.

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TARRY CERTAIN DAYS

“... to tarry certain days.” Other versions read, *“stay a few days,”* ^{NKJV} *“stay on for a few days,”* ^{NASB} *“stay with them for a few days,”* ^{NIV} *“stay for several days,”* ^{NRSV} *“remain for some days,”* ^{RSV} *“kept him with them for some days,”* ^{BBE} *“remain with them for a time,”* ^{WEYMOUTH} and *“stay on there for some days.”* ^{AMPLIFIED}

Having profited so much from the presence and words of Peter, the newly born believers urge him to stay on for several days. You may rest assured, it was not in order to engage in some

Almighty had sent an angel instructing them to bring this man to the house in which they were sitting?

OTHERS HAVE MADE SIMILAR REQUESTS

This is not an isolated incident! **Throughout the Scriptures, when a person of God was recognized by someone who valued the things of God, there was a request for them to stay on.**

⇒ When the angels of the Lord visited **Lot**, preparing to destroy the city in which he lived, he constrained them, pressing them to *“turn in,”* and *“tarry all night”* in his house (Gen 19:2-3).

⇒ **Ruth** refused to leave Naomi, affirming that she would live where she lived, make Naomi’s people her people, and make Naomi’s God her own (Ruth 1:16).

confirm that the request of those who heard Peter was not a strange one.

A UNIQUENESS OF OUR TIME

We live in a time when a significant number of people object to the extension of their exposure to a man of God – for only a few minutes! In fact, it is exceedingly rare in our nation for there to be a group of people who earnestly seek to personally be with an individual who **only** speaks the Word of the Lord. **These days, wherever there is a person who has insight into the things of God, it is difficult to find some hearers.** Occasionally some do surface who are not content with a brief exposure to the word of the Lord. However, they are rare, and are greatly to be treasured.

One of the most disconcerting experiences I have had is that of professing Christians who have little or no interest in the things of God. I have never been satisfied with the miserable explanations that are offered for their lack of hunger and thirst for righteousness. Even the attitude of primitive saints who did not have access to the abundance of truth that is realized in Christ Jesus outshine these souls without spiritual appetite. Ponder the following statements with those being said by people today.

- ⇒ **JOB.** *“I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food”* (Job 23:12).
- ⇒ **DAVID.** *“My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?”* (Psa 42:2; 63:1; 143:6).
“My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times” (Psa 119:20).
“I opened my mouth, and panted: for I longed for thy commandments” (Psa 119:131).
“... the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb” (Psa 19:10).
- ⇒ **JEREMIAH.** *“Thy words were found, and I did eat them: and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O*

LORD God of hosts” (Jer 15:16).

And what will those of meager appetites say on the day of judgment when these man stand up before them?

How will they respond to those who had less than was offered to them, yet did more and went further with it? Believe me when I say they will not be in an enviable position!

CATERING TO THE DISINTERESTED

Furthermore, it is seriously wrong to cater to people like this, as though they could be wooed with compromise and awakened Godward with spiritual froth. Jesus did not stay with people who had no interest in what He said (Matt 16:4; 21:16; Mk 8:13). Paul responded in the same manner a lack of interest (Acts 13:46; 18:6-7; 19:9). Believers – all of them – are told to *“turn away”* from those who have a *“form of godliness, but deny the power thereof”* (2 Tim 3:5). They are told to *“withdraw”* from professing believers who walk in a *“disorderly,”* or in an inconsistent manner (2 Thess 3:6). They are also admonished to note those who *“cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine,”* and *“avoid them”* (Rom 16:17). After warning Timothy about teachers who did not consent to *“wholesome words,”* but chose to wrangle about words and engage in *“perverse disputing,”* Paul said, *“from such withdraw thyself”* (1 Tim 6:5).

Even David knew the inappropriateness of unnecessarily maintaining company with people who were ungodly: *“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But His delight is in the law of the LORD; and in His law doth he meditate day and night”* (Psa 1:1-2).

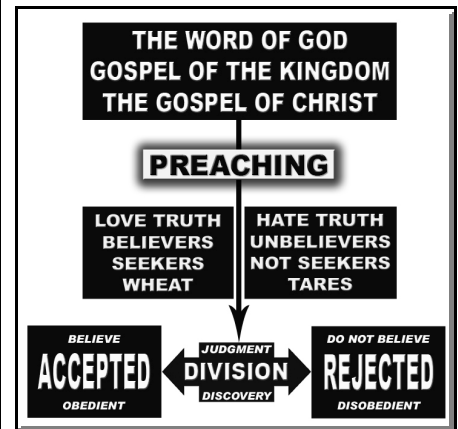
The clear implication is that a compelling interest in the Lord and His word is neutralized by ungodly relationships.

AN ERRONEOUS APPROACH TO RELIGION

An approach to religion has been cunningly put in place that has caused people to be content with brevity and shallowness. They do not want brevity in

their athletic events, movies, or concerts, but they are quite content for that arrangement in matters pertaining to life and godliness. These people are the product of church leaders and influences to whom they have subjected their minds. **The fact that such people are unlike “newborn babes” – that are set before us in the Word of God – is a circumstance worthy of earnest inquiry.** Unless the Gospel produces various kinds of *Christians*, just how can we account for such differences in the professing church? Every Lord’s day, there are gatherings in which the interested and disinterested sit together. Those with a love for the truth are found side by side with those who do not love the truth. People who are **hungering and thirsting for righteousness** occupy the same seat as those who have no interest in righteousness at all.

Who is able to justify such an admixture? Will they point us to the mingling of the tares and the wheat? In that case, Jesus said the field was *“the world,”* not the church (Matt 13:38). **If the church Jesus is building does not consist of those who are born again and those who are not, then exactly how can it be that any church can be so characterized?**



The appointed means of deciphering those who will be accepted by the Lord and those who will not is the proclamation of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. The most general description of the subject declared is *“the Word of God”* (1 Thess 2:13; Heb 4:12). Considered from a more narrowed focus, it is *“the Gospel of the Kingdom,”* which particularly accents what God is doing

Those who withhold this preaching, or water it down to please the people, have withdrawn the means by which genuineness is perceived. If people do respond to such preaching, there is no way to know whether they are sincere or nothing more than hypocrites.

(Matt 24:14). In the most focused sense, it is *"the Gospel of Christ,"* which is the Means through which the purpose of God is being fulfilled – Jesus Christ being the One in whom men are made *"complete"* (Rom 1:16; 2 Cor 4:4; Col 2:10).

Those who withhold this preaching, or water it down to please the people, have withdrawn the means by which genuineness is perceived. If people do respond to such preaching, there is no way to know whether they are sincere or nothing more than hypocrites.

If it is countered that we are not to sit in judgment of other people, that is a proper view. **However, there is an influence that does search out the difference, discovering the real nature of the people. That is the Seed of the Kingdom, the Word of God in general,**

and the Gospel of Christ in particular.

That Word will uncover the hypocrites in the synagogue of the Libertines (Acts 6:9), and the thirsty souls in Samaria (Acts 8:12). It will discover the tender souls in Solomon's porch (Acts 4:4), and the arrogant religious leaders who cared nothing for the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:1-2).

I realize that all of this sounds a bit critical – and, indeed, there is some of that in my words. None of these things would be said if the people in question did not profess any identity with Christ. However, when such a profession is made, mild though it may appear to be, the name of the Lord is brought into the matter. His great salvation is also related, together with the *"church of God"* and *"the Word of God."* **Whoever the person is, when there is a claim to be**

connected with Jesus, or be saved, or be part of the church, or have faith, critical issues converge upon that testimony. Either Christ will be exalted or defamed by the professed association. The Word of God will either be praised or blasphemed. The salvation of God will be either magnified or diminished.

Let no person suggest to us that we ought to be tolerant of inconsistencies **that are denounced by Lord.** In this matter, we cannot draw up our own standards for conduct, but must confine ourselves to what the Lord Himself requires of His people. Whatever separates a person from the Lord, also separates the individual from His people. Such conditions are to be addressed by rebukes, corrections, and instructions in righteousness. Where there is no satisfactory response to these ordained approaches, the old leaven must be purged from the assembly (1 Cor 5:7-8).

Those who have comprehended the truth to some measurable degree long for their paths to cross with hungry souls. That is simply the manner of the Kingdom. They are also intolerant of religious pretension, novel presentations, and activities that are tainted by the flesh. That is just the way they are, and everyone in that category knows it.

CONCLUSION

We have been exposed to the working of the Lord. It has been confirmed in the interest of the Gentiles and the tenderness of Peter. It is made known in heaven's approach to the seeker, and toward a person who is in Christ and living for Him.

CONFIRMATION

The responses of both Peter and the household of Cornelius substantiate how people respond to revelation when their hearts are tender. **The eagerness with which obedient hearts proceed** is seen in Cornelius sending for Peter, and Peter going with his servants to bring him the good news of the Gospel. **The interest and spiritual camaraderie of**

kindred spirits are witnessed in the servants and soldier joining in the case, as well as the brethren from Joppa accompanying Peter in the trip to the home of Cornelius. **The zealotness of a believer** is seen in Cornelius gathering his family, friends, and relatives together to hear the Word of the Lord. It is also seen in Peter commencing his declaration as soon as he arrived, even though the journey was lengthy. **The patience of believers** is seen in the four day wait of Cornelius and those with him. **The immediacy of the response of faith** is seen in the reaction of both Cornelius and Peter to the visions given to them. **The willingness to grow and take hold of things not seen before** is seen in both the

reaction both Peter and Cornelius to heavenly direction. **The lingering effects of faith** are seen in the request of the people for Peter to stray, and in his readiness to do so.

The kind of message to which heaven responds is seen in the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit while Peter was speaking. **It seems to me that too often men are seeking a response from their peers, when they ought to be seeking one from heaven.** There is no way to compensate for the absence of the response of heaven. Men may resort to appealing buildings, lighting effects, and visual presentations to elicit a response from the people. They may embellish

their message with all manner of illustrations, scholarship, and humorous anecdotes. **But if God does nothing through their message, of what worth is it?** Should some small element of truth be found in what such people say, it is like a "jewel in a swines' snout" (Prov 11:22). By the time men finally get hold of it, they are so defiled they cannot maintain

their grasp upon it. Far better to pursue the course of Peter. Let the preacher preach what he has seen and heard from heaven. We really have no time to listen to anything else.

See, all of these things are between the lines of our text. In it we are witnessing God, Christ, and the Holy

Spirit at work. Furthermore, the degree and effectiveness of Their activity among the people are in direct proportion to the truth that is unveiled in what is being proclaimed in "spirit of faith" (2 Cor 4:13). **If what God has said is not valued, there is no possible way to have a proper estimation of what He has done.** That is simply the way it is!

Our next Hungry Saints Meeting will be held on Friday, 4/25/08. We will continue our current series of lessons on the book of Acts. The Fifty-first lesson will cover verses 1 through 18 of the eleventh chapter: "PETER REPORTS TO JERUSALEM." The unprecedented events that took place at the house of Cornelius were reported to the church in Jerusalem. Before the details were given, the brethren contended with Peter for companying with the uncircumcised, and even eating with them. However, after Peter gave his faithful report, they recognized the hand of the Lord, held their peace, and glorified God. Thus, the manner of the saints was confirmed. Our meeting will begin at 7:00 P.M. You are invited to bring your family and friends for fellowship around the Word of God. Refreshments are served afterward, with a time of extended fellowship for everyone.

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COMMENTARY on Acts: <http://wotruth.com/Acts.htm>

	 <p>THE WORD OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST</p> <p>KNEO, 91.7 FM 4:00 - 4:15 PM Monday thru Friday</p> <p>The purpose of this program is to clarify the nature and content of the Gospel of Christ. Our target is the body of Christ, and our aim is to strengthen their faith and enhance their hope.</p>
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BROTHERS AND SISTERS

SPEAKING/LEADING/MINISTERING IN THE ASSEMBLY

DURING MARCH 2008

A DESCRIPTION OF THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES DURING OUR GATHERINGS

"Openings and Introductions" = 7-10 minute exposition of truth to promote spiritual focus; "Calling" = 7-10 minute exposition of truth designed to provoke disciplined thought; "Message" = 45 minute exposition of the things of God as revealed in Scripture; "Exhortation" = 5-8 minute challenge to act upon the truth we have heard; "Table Meditation" = 8-12 minute exposition of matters relating to Christ's role in salvation; "Lead Scripture shower" = Leading of the quoting/reading of Scripture without comment; "Lead prayer session" = Presentation of three matters for prayer that are taken from the Word of God; "Lead Intercessory Prayer" = A time of focused prayers for personal needs.

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|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>Blakely, Benjamin</i> (Closing Scripture and Benediction)2. <i>Blakely, Eva</i> (Lead Scripture Shower).3. <i>Blakely, Given O.</i> (PM Message, PM Message, PM Message, PM Exhortation).4. <i>Blakely, Jonathan</i> (AM Calling, AM Table Meditation, PM Message).5. <i>Blakely, June</i> (Lead PM Prayer Session, Teach AM Class, Lead PM Singing).6. <i>Blakely, Mattie</i> (Lead AM Singing, PM Introduction).7. <i>Blakely, Michael</i> (Play piano, AM Message, AM Table Meditation, Teach AM Class, AM Opening Word).8. <i>Cobb, Matthew</i> (PM Exhortation, PM Message).9. <i>Cobb, Robert</i> (AM Table Meditation, AM Message, AM Exhortation, AM Exhortation, Teach AM Class, PM Exhortation, PM Table Meditation, Lead PM Singing, PM Table Meditation). | <ol style="list-style-type: none">10. <i>Cole, Michele</i> (Play Piano,)11. <i>Hill, John</i> (Lead Intercessory Prayer).12. <i>Hutchcraft, Aaron</i> (AM Exhortation, AM Opening Word, AM Message, AM Table Meditation, PM Table Meditation, PM Exhortation, AM Table Meditation).13. <i>Hutchcraft, Barbara</i> (Lead AM Singing, PM Introduction, PM Introduction).14. <i>Hutchcraft, Debbie</i> (Lead AM Singing, AM Calling, Lead PM Singing).15. <i>Hutchcraft, Gene</i> (Teach AM Class, AM Calling, AM Message, AM Exhortation, PM Exhortation).16. <i>Hutchcraft, Judah</i> (Closing Scripture and Prayer, Read AM Sermon Text, Closing Scripture and Meditation).17. <i>Miller, Levi</i> (Lead Scripture Shower, Lead PM Singing).18. <i>Murphy, Isaac</i> (AM Sunrise Closing Prayer, AM Opening Word, Lead PM Singing). |
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| <p>19. <i>Murphy, LaVaine</i> (AM Sunrise Message).</p> <p>20. <i>Murphy, Mariah</i> (Read AM Sermon Text, Closing Scripture and Benediction, Read PM Sermon Text).</p> <p>21. <i>Murphy, Micaela</i> (Read PM Sermon Text, Read PM Sermon Text).</p> <p>22. <i>Murphy, Tobiah</i> (AM Calling).</p> <p>23. <i>Parker, Tony</i> (Teach AM Class, AM Message, PM Introduction).</p> <p>24. <i>Sims, Annie</i> (Read AM Sermon Text, Read PM Sermon Text).</p> <p>25. <i>Sims, Baylie</i> (Read AM Sermon Text. Closing Scripture and Benediction, Read AM Sermon Text).</p> | <p>26. <i>Sims, Ricky</i> (AM Opening Word, AM Exhortation, AM Table Meditation, AM Calling, PM Table Meditation. PM Message).</p> <p>27. <i>Sims, Tasha</i>, (Lead AM Singing, Lead Scripture Shower, Lead AM Singing).</p> <p>28. <i>Tucker, Charlene</i> (Lead Scripture Shower, Lead AM Sunrise Service Singing).</p> <p>29. <i>Williams, Jeremy</i> (AM Opening Word).</p> <p>30. <i>Williams, Logan</i> (Play AM/PM Lord's Table Interlude, Lead Scripture Shower, PM Introduction, Read PM Sermon Text).</p> <p>31. <i>Preparing Lord's Supper</i>(Various sisters).</p> |
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