

Do You Know the Holy Spirit?
Lesson Ten: The Gift of the Holy Spirit.
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Introduction: What is the Gift of the Holy Spirit? (Acts 2:38)

A. Just exactly what is the gift of the Holy Spirit is greatly debated in the religious world and among many brethren today.

B. While the question is fascinating to consider, *what difference does it make?*

1. We may know “the plan of salvation” (hear-believe-repent-confess-baptism) and readily quote **Acts 2:38**, but what about the gift of the Spirit?

a. To hear some teach on **Acts 2:38**, the gift is completely ignored!

2. The apostle Peter, speaking by the Spirit, would not have mentioned the gift of the Holy Spirit unless it was important.

3. In fact, when the Jews learned of their lost condition as sinners against the Lord “*they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?”*” (**Acts 2:37**)

4. In response to their need for forgiveness and salvation, the apostle said:

Acts 2:38 *And Peter said to them, “Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* (NASB)

C. Every person who obeys the gospel of Christ is promised the forgiveness of their sins **and** the gift of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 2:38**).

1. Brethren readily agree that baptism is for the remission of sins, essential for our salvation (**Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21**).

2. Let us also recognize that baptism was also so that the people would “*receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*” (**Acts 2:38**).

3. What the gift of the Holy Spirit is and whether or not we receive this gift today can be easily answered by the Scriptures.

I. Examining the “the Gift of the Holy Spirit.”

A. The significance of DOREA (gift) in **Acts 2:38**.

1. Some have tried to identify the gift by examining the use of various Greek words for gift; *however there is no hard fast rule in Scripture*.

2. For example, CHARISMA often refers to miraculous spiritual gifts, but not always (See “**Miraculous Spiritual Gifts**” **Lesson 6, Section I, B.**).

3. In **Acts 2:38**, the word for gift is DOREA, also used in **Acts 10:45** where it is clearly a miraculous spiritual gift (i.e., speaking in tongues).

4. However, DOREA is also used for “*the gift of Christ*” in **Ephesians 4:7** where Christ gives “*gifts unto men*” (DOMA) (**Eph. 4:8**), some miraculous and others non-miraculous (**v. 11**)

a. There are instances when DOREA is used to refer to a non-miraculous gift (**John 4:10; 2 Cor. 9:15; Heb. 6:4**).

b. DOREA (and DOREMA) is used *interchangeably* with CHARISMA of the gift of righteousness in **Romans 5:15-17**.

5. Therefore, in examining a gift, we must depend upon *the context* of each passage of Scripture where it is found to determine what kind of gift it is.

- B. Is the Holy Spirit the donor of the gift **or** is the Holy Spirit the gift?
1. An examination of the construction of the Greek text of **Acts 2:38** does not prove conclusively for one or the other.
 2. The grammar (of **Acts 2:38**) shows that it may refer to one or the other.
 - a. “*The gift of the Holy Spirit*” may refer to something given by the Holy Spirit (e.g., **Rom. 6:23**).
 - b. “*The gift of the Holy Spirit*” may also refer to the Spirit Himself.
 - a. The phrase “of the Holy Spirit” is used in the N.T. with obvious reference to the Spirit Himself (**Acts 2:33; Gal. 3:14; 2 Cor. 5:5 / Eph. 1:13-14**).
 3. Some teach that the gift of the Holy Spirit must be Eternal life, just as the gift of the Father and the Son is Eternal life (**Jn. 4:10-14; Rom. 6:23**).
 - a. Yet, this is an *assumption* and not an inescapable conclusion.
 4. Others assert that since the Holy Spirit is a *Person*, He cannot possibly be presented to the Christian as a gift.
 5. However, this is exactly what is revealed in the case of the household of Cornelius (**Acts 10:44-48**).

- Note:** The only other place the phrase “*the gift of the Holy Spirit*” is found is in **Acts 10:45**.
 - a. “*The gift of the Holy Spirit*” is identified as “*the Holy Spirit who fell upon all those who were listening to the message* (v. 44).
6. We may recognize the Holy Spirit as the gift of **Acts 2:38** and possibly the donor of the gift as well (**1 Cor 12:11**).
 - a. Or the donor of “*the gift of the Holy Spirit*” may simply be God (**Acts 11:17**) or the Lord (**Acts 3:19/ John 7:37-39; cf. Acts 2:38**).
 7. In harmony with **Acts 2:38**, the New Testament asserts that all Christians have been **given** the Holy Spirit (**Acts 5:32; Rom. 5:5; 1 Cor. 6:19; 1 Thes. 4:8; 1 John 3:24** – These will be studied in **Section IV**).

II. All Christians Are Promised the Gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39).

- A. This is a promise for *every* generation of Christians, whether Jew or Gentile.
 1. A promise *not* limited to a select group of people in the first century.
 2. The promise was “*for you and your children*” (Jews) “*and for all who are far off*” (Gentiles – cf. **Eph. 2:11-22**), for *everyone* (**Acts 10:34-35**).
 - a. God calls *both* Jew and Gentile to be His children (**Rom. 9:24-26**), according to His purpose in Christ (**Rom 8:28-30; 2 Tim 1:9**).
 3. This is a promise for “*as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself*” (**Acts 2:39**) by the hearing of the gospel of Christ (**2 Thes 2:14**).
- B. Therefore, this eliminates the possibility that the gift refers to a miraculous spiritual gift, since all *miraculous* gifts have ceased (**Review Lesson 8**).

III. All Who Become Christians Are “*Made to Drink of One Spirit.*”

- A. Every person who obeys the gospel to become a Christian is added to the Lord’s church **and** is “*made to drink of one Spirit.*” (**1 Cor. 12:13; cf. Heb. 6:4**).
 1. Every person who obeys the gospel is *automatically* added to the church which is the Lord’s body (**Acts 2:47; Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18**).
 2. Baptism into Christ adds a person to the “*one body*” **and** each person is “*made to drink of one Spirit*” (**1 Cor 12:13; cf. Eph. 4:4**).

3. Believers in Jesus would drink of the Spirit (**Jn 7:37-39**), “*times of refreshing*” would come “*from the presence of the Lord*” (**Ac 3:19; 2:38**).
- B. Jesus promised that **anyone** who believed in Him would “drink” of the Spirit (**John 7:37-39**).

1. “*If any man is thirsty*” [For righteousness - a right relationship with God - **Mt 5:6; cf. Ps 42:2; 63:1**] “*let him come to Me [Christ] and drink.*”
2. “*He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.'*”
 - a. In the Old Testament, water often stood for the life-giving Spirit or Eternal life (**Isa. 44:3; Ezek. 37:1-14; Ps 36:8-9**).
 - b. In the New Testament, “*living water*” also stands for Eternal life (**John 4:10-14; Rev. 7:17; 22:1**).
3. “*From his innermost being* [or out of his heart or belly, from within] *shall flow rivers* [moving or running water] *of living water.*”
 - a. Like blood that flows out from the heart and circulates through the body giving *physical* life, “*living water*” or the Spirit “*flows*” within the Christian as a sign of the promise of *Eternal* life.

Note: “RHEO ‘to flow,’ is used **figuratively** in John 7:38 of the Holy Spirit, **acting in and through the believer.**” (Vine’s Expository Dictionary)

4. “*But this He spoke of* [concerning] *the Spirit whom those who believed in Him* [all believers] *were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*” [i.e., His resurrection & ascension]
 - a. Jesus explained that the “*rivers of living water*” He spoke of is ***in reference to the Holy Spirit.***
 - b. **Only until** the day of Pentecost arrived, after Jesus was glorified, would the Holy Spirit be given (**Acts 2**).
5. The events on the day of Pentecost were just the beginning of “*the last days*” (**Acts 2:15-17; cf. Joel 2:28; Isa. 2:2; Mic. 4:1**) (**Review Lesson 4**)
 - a. The Holy Spirit baptism the apostles received (**Acts 1:8; 2:1-4**) was evidence of, **but not limited to**, “the outpouring of the Spirit” (v. 17).
 - b. **Other** spiritual blessings would flow from the Holy Spirit, **both** the miraculous and non-miraculous, *including the promise of Eternal life.*
6. Remember, the Spirit worked in different ways *within* various individuals (**Review Lesson 5, “Measures of the Holy Spirit”**).
7. Each new convert received “*the gift of the Holy Spirit*” (**Acts 2:38**) or the Spirit Himself as promised by Jesus (**John 7:37-39**).
8. The Holy Spirit indwelt them or flowed within them like “*rivers of living water*” (**Jn. 7:38**) as an “*earnest*” of Eternal Life (**Eph 1:13-14**).

IV. Further Evidence That the Holy Spirit Has Been Given to All Christians.

A. Acts 5:32

“And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.” (NASB)

1. As promised, the Holy Spirit bore witness with the apostles of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (**John 15:26-27**).

2. Peter and the apostles also affirm that the Holy Spirit is given by God **“to those who obey Him.”**
3. **Why did they say this?** They were on trial before the Counsel for going against their orders not to teach in the name of Jesus (**Acts 5:25-28**).
 - a. They declared: *“We must obey God rather than men.”* (**Ac 5:29**)
 - b. **Proof** that they were obeying God’s will when they taught in the name of Jesus was that they had the Holy Spirit (**v. 32**), as evident by the miracles they had done for the people (**Act 5:12-16**).
 - (1) The apostles performed miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit (**e.g., Rom. 15:18-19; cf. 2 Cor. 12:12**).
4. Still, the apostles did **not** say: *“To us who obeyed Him.”* What they said was all-inclusive of the obedient: *“To those who (to them that) obey Him.”*

Note: Obey (PEITHARCHEO) means “to obey one in authority” (Vine) or “submit to authority” (Strong). This word is found only in **Acts 5:29, 32; 27:21; Titus 3:1**.

5. This truth, that *the Holy Spirit is with the obedient*, was seen on the day of Pentecost when three thousand people submitted to the authority of Jesus, who God had made *“both Lord and Christ”* (**Acts 2:36**).
 - a. By obeying the authority of Christ to be baptized, each one received the gift of the Holy Spirit (**Acts 2:38, 41**).
6. **In what sense do those who obey God receive the Holy Spirit?**
 - a. For the apostles, it was clearly a *miraculous* indwelling; enabling them to perform miracles as a sign they spoke from God.
 - b. For all people who obey the gospel of Christ, they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, a *non-miraculous* indwelling of the Spirit (**Review Lesson 5 on “Measures” of the Holy Spirit**).

B. Romans 5:5

“And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” (NASB)

1. To whom does the apostle Paul refer when he says: *“given to us”*?
2. **Christians** - People who have been *“justified by faith”* who have *“peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (**Rom. 5:1**).
3. Our hope of *“the glory of God”* (**Rom. 5:2**) or our inheritance to share in God’s eternal glory (**Rev 21:22-27; 22:5**) will **not** be disappointed.
4. **Why?** *“Because the love of God has been poured out (“shed abroad”) within our hearts.”* (**Rom. 5:5**)

Note: “Poured out” (EKCHERO): “to pour forth; figuratively, to bestow” (Strong); This was the **same** word used when Peter preached of “the last days” when there would be an “outpouring of the Holy Spirit” (**Acts 2:15-17**) (**Review Lesson 4, Section III**)

5. **How?** *“Through the Holy Spirit who was given to us”* (**Rom. 5:5**)
 - a. One way God’s love has been presented to us, so that our hope does not disappoint, is by His gift to us of the Spirit (**Acts 2:38**).
 - b. The Holy Spirit bears witness to God that we are truly His children and heirs of the glory of God (**Rom. 8:15-17**).
 - c. *“God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba! Father!”* a plea for our sonship and inheritance (**Gal 4:6-7**).

6. **Where?** “*Within our hearts*” – The Holy Spirit dwells within our hearts, yet **only** if we have true saving faith (**Rom. 5:5; cf. Eph. 3:14-17**).
- We must *believe* in God’s love and in His promise of salvation in Christ by the “seal” of His Holy Spirit (**Eph. 1:3-14**).
 - To maintain our faith, we must listen to the word of God (**Rom. 10:17**) and then demonstrate our faith by our obedience (**Gal. 5:6**).

C. 1 Corinthians 6:19

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?” (NASB)

- 1 Corinthians was addressed to “*to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus*” (**1 Cor. 1:2a**).
- Yet, clearly, the apostle spoke to **each individual Christian** when he addressed the problem of sexual immorality at Corinth (**1 Cor. 6:15-20**).
- In no uncertain terms, the apostle explains that it is the body of each Christian which serves as a temple of the Holy Spirit (**1 Cor. 6:19-20**).

Note: The Holy Spirit is God (**Ac 5:1-4**) who is *able to be everywhere at all times* (**Ps. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23-24**). Thus, the Spirit indwelling every Christian at the same time is entirely possible.

- “*The Holy Spirit who is in you*” emphasizes His indwelling us and “*whom you have from God*” emphasizes the gift we possess.
- Since the Spirit indwells the Christian, respect for God must be shown to God in the way we use our bodies that belong to Him.
- Furthermore, we “*have been bought with a price*” (blood of Jesus- **Eph 1:7; 1 Pet 1:18-19; Rev 5:9**), so we must glorify God.

D. 1 Thessalonians 4:8

“Consequently, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.” (NASB)

- As with Corinth, the apostle addresses the problem of sexual immorality in his letter to the church of the Thessalonians (**1 Thes. 1:1; 4:1-8**).
- There is a personal responsibility that **each individual Christian** has to please God by using one’s own body in “*sanctification and honor.*”
- God has called the Christian to be holy or sanctified, not impure or unclean. *To reject this call is to reject God Himself* (**1 Thes. 4:7-8a**).
- Why?** Because God gave the Christian His **Holy Spirit** (**1 Thes. 4:8b**).
 - For the Holy Spirit to dwell in us, we must be holy. God cannot have fellowship with us if we practice sin (**Isa. 59:2; Mic. 3:4**).
 - When we reject God’s instructions or rebel, we grieve His Holy Spirit (**Eph. 4:30-31; cf. Isa. 63:10**).

E. 1 John 3:24

“And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.” (NASB)

- All** Christians are commanded to believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another (**1 John 3:23**).
- The Christian who keeps the commandments of God has fellowship with Him, for he “*abides (dwelleth) in Him, and He in him.*” (**1 Jn 3:24a**).
- How does He dwell in us?** “*By the Spirit whom He has given us.*”

- a. God has “*given us*” bestowed or presented to us His Spirit.
- b. Each one who is baptized into Christ receives this gift (**Ac 2:38**).
4. This passage repeats the teaching of the apostles in **Acts 5:32** “... *the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him.*”
5. Indeed, fellowship with God or the Father, Son and Holy Spirit *demands* that we abide in the word of God (**John 8:31; 2 Jn 9; 3 Jn 4 / Gal. 5:25**).

V. The Significance of the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

- A. The most significant blessing this gift provides is the promise of Eternal life!
 1. When a person becomes a Christian, that person is “sealed” in Christ with the Holy Spirit of promise (**Eph. 1:13**).
 - a. Like the impression of a seal or a stamp, it is a mark that identifies ownership, that we belong to God (cf. **2 Tim. 2:19**).
 - b. A seal is also a mark of protection in Scripture (**Rev. 7:3**).
 2. The Holy Spirit has been given to the Christian as a pledge or earnest of their eternal redemption and inheritance (**Eph. 1:14; cf. 2 Cor. 5:5**).
 - a. An “earnest” (ARRABON) is an advance installment, deposit, or down payment as part of the purchase price to secure an item as one’s own possession (See Thayer’s Greek Lexicon definition)
 - b. Otherwise translated “pledge” (NASB) or “guarantee” (NKJV), it is a commitment given by God that the full amount will be paid.
 - c. “In modern Greek arrabona is an engagement ring.” (Vine).
 - d. Thus, the gift of the Holy Spirit is God’s pledge or “first payment” to us for the eternal inheritance of our reward in Heaven.
 3. The promises of God pertaining to our salvation in Christ is held secure by the seal of the Spirit given to us as God’s pledge to us (**2 Cor 1:20-22**).
 4. The gift of the Holy Spirit is God’s promise to us of our inheritance, *yet we can forfeit our right to eternal life by returning to a life of sin*.
 - a. We insult the Spirit of grace (**Heb. 10:26-29**) and even cause the Holy Spirit to sorrow when we continue in sin (**Eph. 4:30-31**).
 - b. God’s pledge by His Spirit should give us cause *not* to sin!
- B. To have the gift of the Holy Spirit is to have the Holy Spirit dwell in us.

Note: All three Persons of the Godhead indwell Christians (**1 John 4:12-16; Eph. 3:17; 1 Cor. 3:16**) as they abide in God’s word (**2 John 9; Eph. 4:30-32**).

1. The Scriptures teach that “the Holy Spirit is **in** you”, that He abides or dwells in every Christian (**Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 6:19; 1 John 3:24**).
2. He does not physically or miraculously occupy us, but spiritually the Holy Spirit indwells us as we follow His lead by obeying the word of God.
3. The Holy Spirit will dwell within us *to the extent* that we continue in the word of God (e.g., **Rom. 8:1-9; Gal 5:16, 22-23**).
4. **Lesson 11** will address in much greater detail **how** the Holy Spirit dwells within Christians and the spiritual blessings that come as a result.

Conclusion: Every Christian Has the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Let Us Give Thanks to God for the Gift of His Holy Spirit and Rejoice in That Gift Everyday!