

The Gift Of The Holy Spirit

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There is a lot of confusion in the religious world concerning the gift of the Holy Spirit. Let's study to find out what the Bible teaches on this subject.

1) **The Promise Of Acts 2:38.** Upon hearing words preached by Peter and the rest of the apostles on Pentecost, those in the audience "...were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Notice Peter's answer: "... 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). Whatever the gift of the Holy Spirit is, there were conditions necessary to receive it — repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

2) **Not To Be Confused With.** The gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 is not to be confused with:

What was "poured out" and "fell on" the Gentiles in Acts 10 and 11, called "the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 10:45). The two are not the same for they involve: (1) **Different subjects.** The "gift of the Holy Ghost" in Acts 2:38 was promised to

those who were baptized — the saved (Mk. 16:16). "The gift of the Holy Ghost" in Acts 10:45 came to those who had not yet been baptized — hence unsaved. (2) **Different order.** "The gift of the Holy Ghost" in Acts 2:38 was to be received after baptism. "The gift of the Holy Ghost" in Acts 10:45 was received before baptism. It wasn't until after they received it that they were commanded to be baptized (Acts 10:47-48). (3) **Different response.** Those in Acts 2:38 were anticipating and expecting to receive "the gift of the Holy Ghost." The reception of "the gift of the Holy Ghost" in Acts 10:45 was unanticipated and unexpected (Acts 10:45). For more information on "the gift of the Holy Ghost" of Acts 10:45, refer back to the article on The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit in the June 18 edition of The Terre Haute Speaker.

Nor is it to be confused with "the gifts of the Holy Ghost" (Heb. 2:4) or the indwelling of the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:9). Articles are forthcoming on these two subjects, if God permit.

What then is the gift of the Holy Spirit?

3) **Gift Or Giver?** At least three things are implied by the

term "gift": (1) A giver. (2) A gift. (3) A receiver. It is a mistake to make the giver and the gift one and the same thing. The question to be answered is this: In the passage under consideration (Acts 2:38), with reference to "the gift of the Holy Ghost", is the Holy Ghost the gift, or is He the giver? If you claim the Holy Spirit is the gift, how do you know He is not the giver? If the Holy Spirit is the gift, shouldn't the text read, "...and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost"?

4) **Now This Illustration.** I read a press release that said: "The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has contributed \$10 million to the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture." What was *the gift of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*? Did the Museum receive the Foundation? Did they receive Bill & Melinda Gates? Or did they receive \$10 million? If, in this illustration of *the gift of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*, one understands the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to be the giver and not the gift, then what would make one think the Holy Spirit is the gift and not the giver, when it comes to *the gift of the Holy Spirit*?

5) Equivalent Expressions.

As the Bible mentions “the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38), it also speaks of “the gift of God” (Jn. 4:10) and “the gift of Christ” (Eph. 4:7). In each of these passages, there is the same word for gift (*dōrea*) and the same sentence structure. If “the gift of God” is not God (but something given by God) and “the gift of Christ” is not Christ (but something given by Christ), why would one conclude that “the gift of the Holy Ghost” is the Holy Ghost?

6) A Parallel Statement.

Now consider a parallel statement in the immediate context of Acts 2:38. In Acts 2:33, Peter said of Jesus, “Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.” The promise of the Holy Ghost is parallel to the gift of the Holy Ghost. When Jesus received the promise of the Holy Ghost, did He receive the Holy Ghost or what the Holy Ghost promised? A reading of the context shows that the Holy Spirit promised by David that Jesus would be

raised up to sit on David’s throne (Acts 2:25-31; Ps. 16:8-11). What the Holy Spirit promised, Jesus received! Since, in this context, Jesus did not receive the Holy Spirit, but what the Holy Spirit promised, why would one think that five verses later to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost means to receive the Holy Spirit?

7) Other Passages To Consider. Consider these passages along with Acts 2:38:

Acts 2:39. Peter follows his answer in Acts 2:38 with this statement: “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). What was the promise? Acts 2:21 and Joel 2:32 show the promise to be the promise of salvation to those who call on the name of the Lord. This equates with what Paul wrote in Romans 10:12-13.

Acts 3:19. The Bible is its own best commentary! Compare Acts 2:38 and Acts 3:19:

Acts 2:38 Repent & be baptized — remission of sins — receive the gift of the Holy Ghost

Acts 3:19 Repent & be converted — sins blotted out — times of refreshing shall come

Galatians 3:13-14, 29. Paul refers to the promise of the Spirit. What was the promise of the Spirit? That in Abraham “... shall all nations be blessed” (Gal. 3:8; Gen. 12:3). The promise of the Spirit was not the Spirit, but what the Spirit promised — the blessing of Abraham; salvation through Christ!

Thus, the gift of the Holy Spirit is the blessing of salvation in Jesus Christ which was promised by the Holy Spirit to those who call upon the name of the Lord. Remember, salvation was promised, prophesied, revealed, and confirmed by the Holy Spirit (1 Pet. 1:9-12). “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). As Ananias asked Saul of Tarsus, “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).

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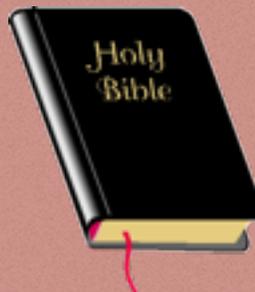
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