The Holy Spirit

The Spirit in the Life of a Christian – Part 1 Lesson 7

Introduction: Scripture introduced the idea of different measures or "portions" of the Spirit (II KIngs 2). The prophet Elisha asked for a “double portion” of the Spirit that abided with (or in) Elijah.

I. “Unlimited” Measure - Christ received the Spirit without measure. (John 3:34)

A. Christ had the "power" to do all things by the Spirit (Luke 4:14, Acts 10:38).

1. He healed the lame, gave sight to the blind, made the dumb to speak, the deaf to hear, fed the multitudes, walked on water, calmed the seas, and raised the dead because the "Spirit of the Lord" was "upon" him (Luke 4:18-21).

2. Even greater than all of that ... He rose from the dead by the Spirit's power (I Pet 3:18).

B. This "anointing" with the Holy Spirit confirmed that Jesus was the "Christ" or the "Messiah," i.e., the "anointed of God" (Acts 10:38).

II. "Baptism in the Holy Spirit" Measure - There are only two cases of this in all of the NT

A. First, only the twelve Apostles were "baptized" with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). The Spirit was poured out on the Apostles in a unique demonstration.

1. Prior to this, Christ had promised them the Comforter who would guide them into all truth (John 16:13)

a. Christ was returning unto his Father. The Apostles would still need guidance. Christ said He would send the Holy Spirit to direct them.

b. The Apostles were to wait in Jerusalem until they "received power" and were "baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1: 5,8).

2. After they were baptized with the Holy Spirit they had the power to speak in other languages, heal the lame, make the sick well, raise the dead, and lay their hands on other believers (that they might have the power to do miracles also).

B. The second case was Cornelius and his household.

1. They received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in order to show that the Gentiles had been accepted of God as well as the Jews for salvation (Acts 10 and 11).

2. Proof of this Spirit baptism was given by the Gentiles speaking in other languages.

3. Peter then asked (based on the evidence given) "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have" (Acts 10:47).

4. Peter later related this story to the Apostles and other brethren, he confirmed the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon those Gentiles (Acts 11:15).

5. Peter's choice of words is significant. He did not say that Cornelius and his household had received the Holy Spirit as all other believers had.

a. Rather he says that Cornelius and his household had received the Holy Spirit as they themselves had, speaking directly of the Apostles. He said "the Holy Spirt came on them as he had come on us at the beginning" (Pentecost) (Acts 11:15).

b. Peter referred to this outpouring of the Spirit as "the same gift as he gave us" (Acts11:17).

III. “Miraculous” Measure - Given by the laying on of the Apostles' hands

A. The Apostles were few in number and there was much to be done.

1. The Apostles layed their hands on various ones that they might receive a special gift(s) of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8, I Cor 12).

2. The Apostles first laid their hands on the Seven (Acts 6:6).

3. This gave men, such as Philip (one of the Seven), the power to go to Samaria and perform miracles. As a result of Philips preaching and the miracles, a number of Samaritans were obedient to the gospel.

4. Later, Peter and John (Apostles) came from Jerusalem to Samaria and laid their hands on the new converts so that they might receive the special gift(s) of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17)

a. While a mighty miracle worker, Philip could not pass on this gift to the Samaritians.

b. Only by "the laying on the apostles hands" were these gifts distributed (Acts 8:18).

c. Simon the Sorcerer observed this fact (Acts 8:18).

B. While the Apostles administered this gift(s), they did not control the gift(s).

1. The Apostles did not determine which believers got which gift. The Spirit Himself determined which gift(s) each believer received (I Cor 12:11).

2. When these miraculous gifts were given, they were then under the control of the individual Christian to whom they had been given (I Cor 14:27-32).

IV. The "Continuing" Measure - Given to all believers

A. All who are in Christ receive this measure of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

1. It was promised to every generation of believers who will "repent and be baptized."

2. "For this promise is for you, your children and for all who are far off - as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39).

B. This "gift of the Holy Spirit"

1. Is either a gift from the Holy Spirit (i.e., salvation) or is the Holy Spirit Himself. The original language allows for either construct.

2. Is different from the miraculous "gifts of the Holy Spirit" mentioned in I Corinthians 12.