

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Acts 2:38)

I. Reasons for believing this view.

- a. The word “gift” is used six times in conjunction with the Holy Spirit including Acts 2:38 and each time it is used in the other passages it is a reference to the miraculous.
 - i. The other verses are Acts 8:20, 10:45, 11:17; Ephesians 3:7, 4:7.
 - ii. In Acts 8:20 it is called the gift of God but it is a reference to the imparting of the miraculous gifts by the apostles.
 - iii. In Acts 10:45, it is a reference to the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the household of Cornelius and Acts 11:17 is a recounting by Peter of that event.
 - iv. The gift of Ephesians 3:7 is the apostolic gift that Paul received when made an apostle and notice that the effectual working of His power is mentioned, which indicates the power of the miraculous that Paul had.
 - v. In Ephesians 4:7, the gift of Christ is the miraculous described as gifts given unto men in verse 8, which gifts are then described 11.
 - vi. In all five cases the reference of gift is used to describe the miraculous, so why would Acts 2:38, the only other usage in regards to the Godhead, be any different?
- b. The word “receive” is also very important.
 - i. This word is found eight times in reference to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament (John 7:39, 20:21-23; Acts 2:38, 8:15-17, 10:47, 19:6; Galatians 3:7; 1 John 2:27).
 - ii. In each case, this is also a reference to the miraculous.
 - iii. It would be very odd indeed for Acts 2:38 to be the only reference to the word receive and the Holy Spirit and it not be miraculous.
- c. The setting of Acts 2 lends itself to the gift being miraculous.
 - i. Acts 2:1-4 is miraculous.
 - ii. The question of Acts 2:12 is about the miraculous.
 - iii. The quotation of Joel 2:28ff is about the miraculous.
 - iv. Acts 2:33 is about the miraculous.
 - v. Why then would Peter, in the midst of all this miraculous, tell people they would receive a non-miraculous gift from the Holy Spirit.
 - vi. Also, since the apostles had the Spirit miraculously, would not the ones promised a gift from the Holy Spirit not expect to receive something miraculous?
- d. We must keep in mind the setting.
 - i. Br. Robert Taylor, Jr., mentioned that many ask this question: “What is the natural and normal conclusion we should reach in exegeting the expression?”.
 - ii. He then made this very important point: “the we must be changed to they”.
 - iii. We were not the original recipients of this phrase.
 - iv. Just like we need to keep our 1st century glasses on when looking at Revelation, we need to keep them on when reading the entire New Testament.
 - v. How did Peter give it and how would those who heard it understand it?
- e. If repentance and baptism for the remission of sins leads to a non-miraculous indwelling by the Holy Spirit or is simply salvation, why did the Samaritans of Acts 8 have to have Peter and John come lay hands on them to give them the Holy Spirit?
 - i. Acts 8:15-17 which was noticed earlier.

- ii. If baptism causes the Holy Spirit to dwell in you, then why were the apostles needed?
- f. Some point to Acts 5:32 to show that the Holy Spirit indwells all Christians.
 - i. It was the miraculous that got the apostles in trouble with council in the beginning of the chapter.
 - ii. When Peter stated what is written in verse 32, he was simply saying that the miracles that were performed by the power of the Holy Spirit were to confirm what they were teaching about Jesus.
 - iii. Bobby Duncan wrote, “those in the first century who had the Holy Spirit used it to prove that they had the word of God, they never had to use the word of God to prove they had the Holy Spirit.”
 - iv. Jesus had told the apostles that they would bear witness of Him (John 15:26-27) and this is how they did that.
- g. This view is a scriptural view as well.
 - i. It follows with Mark 16:16-17 – signs followed the ones who were baptized.
 - ii. It goes with Acts 3:19.
- h. The last reason I want to notice is more of a subjective one but it is a real one nonetheless.
 - i. If one believes that the gift of the Holy Spirit is miraculous and bestowed only upon those whom apostles laid hands, then the false doctrines of today about the Holy Spirit are shut down.
 - ii. Listen to this statement by br. Guy N. Woods about what a personal indwelling of the Spirit does or does not do: “(a) gives them no awareness of his presence, (b) teaches them no truth, (c) offers no protection against accepting error, (d) and requires them to resort to a book nineteen hundred years old to learn his will through study when he is actually there and in direct contact with the heart (understanding) all the time! Is it any cause for wonder that those who dwell upon an alleged actual personal indwelling of the Spirit often go on, like Pat Boone, to believe that the Spirit does indeed move them to act apart from, and independent of the Word of truth- the New Testament?”
 - iii. Believing that there is no personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit and that the gift of the Holy Spirit is miraculous limits me drastically in how far I can go in terms of what the Holy Spirit may or may not be doing.

II. Some consequences of other views.

- a. Br. Taylor pointed out a few consequences that we need to notice.
- b. The first is that if it is the Holy Spirit Himself, then the apostles were deprived from giving to others what Holy Spirit baptism empowered them to do, which was pass on the miraculous gifts by laying their hands on believers.
- c. The second is it deprived those new converts from going home with any ability to confirm what they were teaching was truth.
 - i. Remember that the people present at Pentecost were from all over the known world.
 - ii. While many stayed in Jerusalem, some did not.
 - iii. Signs were performed for the purpose of confirming truth and if there were no ability to perform signs, there was no confirmation that what was being taught was truth.
- d. The third is that if the Holy Spirit literally, personally indwells you, you would be deity.
 - i. The Incarnation of Christ was deity in the flesh.
 - ii. Why would there be a difference if it is the 3rd member of the Godhead and not the 2nd?

The idea for this outline came from material by Robert Taylor, Jr. and Bobby Duncan.