

Acts 2:38 and Holy Spirit Baptism

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.

Many believe Acts 2:38 teaches that when we are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ the gift of the Holy Spirit we receive is the ability to perform miracles.

That this is not the case can be supported on different fronts.

1. The Greek Language / Text does not support this doctrine.

- A. “hagion pneuma” = Holy Spirit; “to hagion pneuma” = The Holy Spirit
- B. Without the article: The article is not used when the reference is to the gifts, operations, or manifestations of the Spirit in men.
- C. With the article: “to hagion pneuma, the Holy Spirit, spoken of as Himself, or regarded objectively.

2. Examples of conversions do not support this.

- A. Acts 2:41-43
 - 1. About 3000 are baptized, v.41
 - 2. Yet signs and wonders were taking place only through the apostles hands, v.43.
- B. Acts 6:1-8
 - 1. Seven men are chosen to serve the Hellenistic widows, v.3
 - 2. It is obvious these are Christians (those baptized).
 - 3. Stephen is one of the seven chosen, v.5
 - a. He is full of faith and of the Holy Spirit
 - 4. These men are brought before the Apostles and they lay their hands on them, v.6
 - 5. Following this incident we have Stephen performing miracles, v.8

C. Acts 8:4-24

1. Philip went down to Samaria, v.5
2. Here he was preaching and performing miracles, v.6,7
3. Those he preached to believed and were baptized, v.12
4. Simon a magician was also converted, v.13
5. After his baptism he continued on with Philip and observed signs and miracles taking place, v.13.
6. It is not until the Apostles arrive and begin to lay their hands on these Christians that they are able to perform miracles, vs.14-20
 - a. Simon sees this taking place, v.17,18
 - b. He desires this authority, v.19

3. The gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased but baptism is still commanded.

A. There was a reason for Jesus sending the Holy Spirit and miraculous powers to His apostles and other inspired men in the first century.

1. Jn 16:13.
2. Heb 2:3,4.

B. Through that God-given power, these men revealed in the first century:

1. 2 Pet 1:3.
2. Jude 3.
3. Jas 1:25.
4. Gal 1:6-9; Rev 22:18,19.

C. These and other scriptures tell us that the word of God was both revealed and confirmed in the first century.

D. Thus, God's purpose for the miraculous gifts had been fulfilled.

E. And it would be quite logical that when God's purpose had been fulfilled, the miraculous gifts would be done away.

F. God said would happen, as we studied earlier in 1 Cor 13:8-10!

G. And since God chose to eliminate miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit in the first century, those miraculous gifts do not exist today!

H. Therefore, no matter what the "gift of the Holy Spirit" is in verse 38, we know it does not include the ability to work miracles today!