

There are 5 occasions in Acts when people got filled with the Spirit. In three of them we are immediately told that they spoke in tongues. On one occasion Prophecy is also mentioned, Acts 2v17 would confirm this. In Samaria we do not know what happened, nor are we told that Paul spoke in tongues although later he claims to hold the church record for doing so. (1 Cor 14v18) Why are people today so scared of tongues?

Read Acts 11v24

What was the result of Barnabas being full of the Spirit?
How could this be true for you?

Read Acts 11v28

What did the Holy Spirit do? Does this still happen?

Read Acts 13v2

What did the Holy Spirit do? How does this fit the Acts 1v8 passage?

Read Acts 13v9-11

What did the Holy Spirit do?
Is this scary? Why?

Read Acts 13 v52

What did the Holy Spirit do?
This is a consistence association in the NT the Spirit brings Joy.

Read Acts 15v28

What did the Holy Spirit do? How do you think this happened?
How does this fit the Acts 1v8 passage?

Read Acts 16v6

What did the Holy Spirit do? Why?

Read Acts 19v2-7

Who were the disciples? What did the Holy Spirit do?

It is inconceivable that they did not know there was a Holy Spirit – John taught that Jesus would bring the Holy Spirit. They simply did not know that this promised era had now come.

Read Acts 20v22

What did the Holy Spirit do? Does the Spirit have the right to do this?

Read Acts 20v23

What did the Holy Spirit do? How did the Spirit do this?

Read Acts 20v28

What did the Holy Spirit do?
What does this tell us about church leadership?

Read Acts 21v11

What did the Spirit do?

What kind of picture do you get as a whole here?

What activities of the Spirit are missing in Acts?

How much of what we have read should we still expect to experience today?

What response should we have to this study?

BIBLE STUDY



What does the Holy Spirit do? (in Acts)

There is a growing reassertion that the Gospels and Acts are not just random collections of stories, but are carefully crafted literary works. This changes the way that we read them. For example in Luke 4 Jesus reads Isaiah 61 In the synagogue in Nazareth. "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free," Luke 4v18

The rest of the book unpacks how Jesus did this.

This is typical of the way historiographies were written.

Acts follows a similar pattern. The book starts with a bold statement.:

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

The book then answers the questions raised in this verse:

What does it mean to receive power?

What does it mean to be a witness?

The book itself follows the geographical perspective that this verse describes. The book starts in Jerusalem, moves to Judea, Samaria, spreads out from there across the Roman world and ends in Rome the centre of the Empire.

There are 59 mentions of the Holy Spirit in Acts. The goal of this study is to ask; "What does the Holy Spirit do in Acts?" There is a lot of reading to do.

Read Acts 1v8

What does the Holy Spirit do in this verse?

What are the implications of this?

Do we see the Holy Spirit as part of the witnessing process today?

Are we more comfortable with the Holy Spirit as power to heal than we are with the Holy Spirit as power to witness?

The implications of this passage are larger than its direct message. It is the Holy Spirit that will direct, enable and empower the growth of the church. Is this still true?

Read Acts 1v2

What does the Holy Spirit do? How?

How might the Holy Spirit give you instructions?

Read Acts 1v5

What is the empowering with the Holy Spirit compared with here?

What does Baptism mean? What does it imply?

Baptism means to be immersed or dipped into. Jesus received the Spirit at His Baptism and this verse immediately reminds us of John the Baptist original prophecy. "I baptise you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. Luke 3v16

Read Acts 1v16

What did the Holy Spirit do?

What kind of speech was this?

What does this tell us about the First Testament Scriptures?

What implication does this have for Acts?

David spoke prophetically through the Spirit, but the First Testament is also inspired by the Spirit, who is active in its pages. It is the same Holy Spirit that is at work in Acts – therefore acts and the church are the continuation of God's purposes.

Read Acts 2v4

What did the Holy Spirit do?

What implications does filled have?

What kind of tongues were these?

What did the Apostles do?

We tend to approach being filled with the Spirit from a personal perspective. "What does it mean for me to be filled with the Spirit?" But the Spirit here chooses to work with and through humans, as He worked through Jesus. Luke 4v1. There is another continuation here what the Spirit did through Jesus He will continue through the disciples. The Apostles had to speak out and let the Holy Spirit work through them. The work of the Holy Spirit is a partnership, it is incarnational. To that extent the way the Holy Spirit works in each of us will be different, because each of us is different.

What does enabled mean?

How do you let the Holy Spirit enable you?

Read Acts 2v17-18

What did the Holy Spirit do?

Who does the Holy Spirit come upon?

What kind of dreams? What kind of visions?

The point of this passage is that the Holy Spirit is for all without discrimination on the basis of gender, age or status.

What does it mean to Prophecy?

We think of prophecy as a speech someone in church gives, perhaps during worship. Or as a prediction of the Future. These are expressions of prophecy, but often prophecy is a lot simpler, it is just speaking from God. It can happen at any time, in any environment. It does not need to start with "thus saith the LORD". For example?

We are all to prophecy – To be pentecostal is to embrace the "prophethood of the saints."

Read Acts 2v38

How is the baptism in the Spirit described?

What implications does this have?

Read Acts 2v39

What is the scope of the promise of the Spirit?

What does "far off" mean?

Does this include you?

Read Acts 4v8

What did the Holy Spirit do?

What did the Holy Spirit enable Peter to do?

Read Acts 4v31

What did the Holy Spirit do?

What did they do?

How does this answer the question "What does it mean to be a witness?"

How does this answer the question "what does it mean to be full of the Spirit?"

Read Acts 6v3

What did the Holy Spirit do?

Should we still expect this?

Read Acts 6v10

What did the Holy Spirit do?

This is a fulfilment of Luke 12v10 "When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say." Luke 12v11-12

Read Acts 7v55

What did the Holy Spirit do?

Read Acts 8v15-19

This is after the Samaritans have started to come to faith. They are believers but they have not yet received the Holy Spirit.

How was the Holy Spirit imparted?

What did the Holy Spirit do?

This is a hard one – we don't know! We do know that Simon a magician was so impressed he wanted to buy the ability to impart to others the gift of the Spirit.

What does this tell us about the effect of the Spirit Baptism on the Samaritans?

Read Acts 8v29

What did the Holy Spirit do?

What implications does this have for us when we witness?

Philip obeys the Spirit and leads the Ethiopian Eunuch to Christ.

Did Philip also have to use his own initiative? How?

Read Acts 8v39

What did the Holy Spirit do?

How do you imagine this worked?

Read Acts 9v17-18

What did the Holy Spirit do?

Physical, Spiritual or both?

Read Acts 9v31

What did the Holy Spirit do?

How do you imagine this worked?

Read Acts 10v19

What did the Holy Spirit do?

Have you ever experienced this?

Read Acts 10v38

What did the Holy Spirit do?

Is "doing good" a gift of the Spirit?

Can the Holy Spirit still empower you to do good?

It is very tempting in a study like this to describe each verse in terms on the 9 gifts of the Spirit given in 1 Corinthians 12v8-10. This passage is not intended to provide an exclusive framework in which the Spirit moves. The work of the Spirit is much more varied than this. There are 5 lists of spiritual gifts given in the New Testament and at least one in the First Testament. (Isaiah 11). In the NT lists there are about 20 gifts described. The power of the Spirit is there for every need.

Read Acts Acts 10v44-47

What did the Holy Spirit do?

How did Peter interpret what happened?

Should we expect to speak in tongues?