

Lesson 3

HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT



The Holy Spirit is one of the persons of the Trinity – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He is a person just like the Father and the Son are, although he was not fully revealed in Old Testament times. However God promised that he would send his Spirit, and we are going to see how that was fulfilled.

1. HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF JESUS

(a.) His Birth

The Holy Spirit was working in the life of Jesus from his conception in the womb of Mary.

Luke 1:35 *‘The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”’*

Even at the time of his birth the Holy Spirit came upon men and women, who prophesied about the life and ministry of Jesus. E.g. Elizabeth, Zechariah, Simeon

Luke 1:41 *‘When Elizabeth heard ... was filled with the Holy Spirit.’*

(b.) His Baptism

At his birth Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, but at his baptism he was anointed for his ministry. We too need to be anointed for our ministry!

Luke 3:21-22 When Jesus was baptised in water the Holy Spirit came down upon him.

John 1:32 Not only did the Holy Spirit come down, but he remained on Jesus.

Remember in Old Testament times the Holy Spirit came to enable men to do exploits or prophesy, but he did not remain. Now he came and remained on Jesus, and he lived in the power of the Spirit.

Luke 4:1 *‘Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned ...’*

Luke 4:14 *‘Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit.’*

Luke 10:38 *‘God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power.’*

(c.) His Ministry

Although Jesus was the Son of God, he lived on earth as a human being – however he depended on the Holy Spirit for everything he did. Let’s see how the Holy Spirit helped Jesus.

Luke 4:18-19 The Holy Spirit enabled Jesus to preach, to heal and deliver people of evil spirits. Jesus was fulfilling God’s promise in Isaiah 61:1

Acts 10:38 The anointing of the Holy Spirit empowered Jesus to heal the sick and set people free.

(d.) His Resurrection

The resurrection of Jesus was accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit.

1 Peter 3:18 *'He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit!'*

Everything Jesus did – his teaching and preaching, healings and miracles, were done in the power of the Spirit. He promised that we would be able to do the same works that he did. John 14:12. That is only possible if we too are anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit. This is what Jesus wants to do in our lives.

(e.) His Promise

When Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan and the Holy Spirit came upon him. John the Baptist understood that Jesus was the one who would baptise others in the Spirit.

John 1:32 *'Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. I would not have known him, except that the one who sent me to baptise with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is he who will baptise with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God."'*

Jesus taught about the Holy Spirit and promised that he and his Father would send him to those who asked.

Luke 11:13 *"How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him."*

John 14:26 *"The Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name ..."*

Luke 24:49 *"I am going to send you what my Father has promised."*

Acts 1:5 *"But wait for the gift my Father has promised .. in a few days you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."*

Let's see now how this promise was fulfilled.

2. HOLY SPIRIT IN THE EARLY CHURCH

(a.) The Day of Pentecost

Just 10 days after Jesus had ascended into heaven the Jewish people celebrated the Feast of Pentecost or First-fruits. The disciples were praying together, waiting for the promise Jesus had given to be fulfilled. Suddenly the Holy Spirit came – it was like a rushing wind that filled the house. Everyone present was filled with the Spirit and spoke in other tongues. This is in Acts 2.

Just as the Holy Spirit had filled Jesus, now he filled all those who believed in him. Peter knew this was a fulfilment of the prophecy in Joel 2.

Acts 2:17-18 *"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people .. I will pour out my Spirit in those days."*

The disciples understood that the Holy Spirit was now available to everyone who repented and believed in Jesus. This was the promise God had given.

Acts 2:38-39

‘Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.”’

(b.) The Growth of the Church

The Day of Pentecost is the beginning of the church. Peter, who had just been baptised in the Holy Spirit preached with power to the crowds who gathered. The people were convicted by the Spirit and asked what they should do. That day 3000 were saved.

Acts 2:37

‘When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”’

From then on the disciples went about doing what Jesus had done. They preached in power, healed the sick and worked signs and miracles.

Acts 2:43

‘Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.’

Acts 4:8

‘Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit.’ (Peter spoke to the religious leaders under the anointing of the Spirit.)

Acts 4:31

‘After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.’

Acts 5:16

‘Crowds gathered bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.’

There are many other verses we could look at, but we can see that when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples they received power – this is what they had seen in Jesus’ life, and this is what he had promised them.

Acts 1:8

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you.”

Conclusion

Although we call Acts, the Acts of the Apostles, it is really the Acts of the Holy Spirit! Through the work of the Holy Spirit the church was born and grew. What God did in the lives of the early disciples is what he wants to do in our lives today.