

Did You Receive the Holy Spirit When You Believed?

(Acts 19:1-7)

Background

Paul passed through Ephesus while returning from his second missionary journey; he also promised to return there again, if it was God's will (Acts 18:19-21).

Questions

When Paul returned to Ephesus, he met some unusual disciples.

- From whom had these disciples learned the gospel? What truths had they been taught? What did they still not know?
- What did Paul tell these disciples? How did they respond?

These disciples were in an unusual situation: they remained disciples of John long after the Messiah had been revealed. Once they heard and believed the good news about Jesus, they received the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 1:38-39). Paul expected everyone to receive the Holy Spirit when they believed (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 2:12; Eph 1:13).

Application

When we believe in Jesus, we receive the Holy Spirit. Once we have received him, we should pray for him to work in our lives (Eph 3:14-21) and we should be careful not to grieve him (Eph 4:25-32).

Acts 19v1-10

1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples 2 he said to them,

“Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

So they said to him,

“We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.”

3 And he said to them,

“Into what then were you baptised?”

So they said,

“Into John’s baptism.”

4 Then Paul said,

“John indeed baptised with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.”

5 When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. 7 Now the men were about twelve in all.