

THE BOOK OF ACTS | GOD'S REVELATION OF TRANSITION

SESSION 26 | ACTS 8:14-25

ACTS 8:14-17 | THE HOLY GHOST COMES UPON THE SAMARITANS

- Verse 14 –
 - This takes place approximately one year after Pentecost.
 - When the **apostles which were at Jerusalem heard**, they did not say, “well of course, business as usual!” Rather, they knew that this required **Peter** and a witness, and they chose **John**.
 - Peter had been given the **keys to the kingdom** (Matt. 16:19) which gave him authority, and Jesus had instructed that with a witness, they could do anything (Matt 18:18-20).
- Verses 15-17 –
 - It seems that almost everyone teaches that the Holy Ghost comes upon a person immediately when they are saved, that this indwelling is the distinguishing mark of the church age, and that the church age began at Pentecost.
 - These theologians insist that Pentecost is the birthdate of the church age and refuse to discuss even the slightest bit of transition to the doctrine we hold today.
 - This passage of Scripture is very clear, and very problematic to such a position.
 - How long were these believers “saved” (using today’s terminology, as employed by the theologians) without the Holy Ghost? At minimum there are at least several days, and likely several weeks involved for the necessary communication and travel.
 - The dispensation in which this event took place was one in which belief was followed by baptism which was later followed by receiving the Holy Ghost, but only at the hands and authority of the apostles. We do not live in such an age, therefore our dispensation had not arrived, either in totality or at all.
 - In evangelical theology it is a given that we receive the Holy Spirit at the moment of belief. But the inconsistency with this passage is unquestionable, and if you question it you will be ostracized from the evangelical club.
 - From “GotQuestions”, “...how do we receive the Holy Spirit? We receive the Holy Spirit by simply receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior (John 3:5-16). When do we receive the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit becomes our permanent possession the moment we believe.”
 - Also from *GotQuestions*: “The church began on the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover when Jesus died and rose again.”
 - Also from *GotQuestions*: “The universal church consists of everyone, everywhere, who has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. “For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink” (1 Corinthians 12:13). This verse says that anyone who believes is part of the body of Christ and has received the Spirit of Christ as evidence.”

- Verse 18 –
 - At this point (one year after Pentecost), the *only* way that the **Holy Ghost was given** was through **laying on of the apostles' hands**.
 - This is clearly not a “church-age” practice. Simon, desiring this “apostolic authority” for himself **offered them money**.
 - The truth is that no amount of money could buy the apostolic office, for there were no more “desks” in the office, for the limit of 12 had been reached.
 - The term “simony” comes from this passage, and stands as evidence that those ignorant of the Bible will lack understanding of western civilization.
- Verse 19 –
 - Simon wanted **this power** in exchange for money. The power was to **lay hands** so that the one would **receive the Holy Ghost**.
 - Apostolic power is not only not for sale, it is non-transferable and unavailable for any outside of the Apostles themselves. Strangely, the modern church seems to relish the thought of displaying apostolic power.
- Verses 20-21 –
 - Peter’s condemnation is strong: **thy money perish with thee**.
 - He spoke the truth when he said that Simon had no **lot in this matter**. The word **lot** is the same as used in [Acts 1:26](#) where **the lot fell upon Matthias**.
- Verses 22-23 –
 - Notice that Peter gave no real hope that Simon would be forgiven, only that he should **repent...of this wickedness, and pray**.
- Verse 24 –
 - Simon, knowing that Peter held *the keys to the Kingdom*, asked Peter to **pray ye the Lord for me**.
- Verse 25 –
 - The **they** in reference is Peter and John.
 - As they **returned to Jerusalem** they **preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans**. Recall that John had once desired to **command fire to come down from heaven** on one of the villages of Samaria (Lk 9:54).
 - What **gospel** did they preach? No doubt it was the Gospel of the Kingdom, urging Samaritans to recognize Jesus as Messiah, repent of their sins, be baptized, receive the Spirit, and look forward to the coming Kingdom.