

SUMMARY: The gift of the Holy Spirit comes in 2 measures, an ordinary measure and a special measure. In some sense, all believers have the “ordinary” gift of the Holy Spirit. The special gift of the Holy Spirit is generally associated with the miracles in the first century. Peter’s promise of the “gift of the Holy Spirit” was made to Christians on the day of Pentecost in the first century appears to be in an undetectable supportive way which does not impact our situation as free moral agents, but will benefit us in living our lives.

Acts 2:38 is a pivotal verse in Christianity and the Gift of the Holy Spirit in that verse is not well understood. This lesson is to collect as much scriptural information on that topic as is practical to facilitate in discussions.

INTRODUCTORY SCRIPTURES:

Acts 2:1-4: When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

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. (NAS)**

Acts 2:43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place **through the apostles.** (Statement that the Apostles were the ones doing miracles would indicate that the gift of the Holy Spirit to the audience on the Day of Pentecost was not miraculous.)

Acts 5:32 “And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, **whom God has given to those who obey Him.**”

Acts 10:44-47: “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?” [Conversion of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert.] [Went back 8-10 years for an example.] [Gift associated with the miracle of speaking in tongues]

Acts 19:1-2 & 6 It happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, and found some disciples. He said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said to him, “No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit.” 6 “And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, **the Holy Spirit came on them,** and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.”

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Romans 8:9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the **Spirit of God dwells in you**. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

1 Cor. 6:19 Or do you not know that **your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?

Eph 3:14-19 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, **to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man**, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

PERIODS OF TIME:

We are concerned with what happens in the post apostolic period (today) as is illustrated in the table below. Our primary concern is what happened in the Apostolic period as it directly illustrates what was happening to Christians in the church.

1. Before the Ten Commandments (Garden of Eden to 1491 B.C.)
2. Writing of the Old Testament (1491 B.C to 391 B.C.)
3. Between the Testaments (391 B.C. to 0 A.D.)
4. Life of Christ (0 A.D. to Day of Pentecost)
5. Apostolic period (A.D. 33 to A.D. 95)
6. Post apostolic period (Today)

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER:

It should be instructive to consider some specific questions in understanding the work of the Holy Spirit today.

1. Did the 3000 in Acts 2:38 receive a miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit or a non-miraculous measure?
2. If the gift of the Holy Spirit was automatic, why did Paul ask if they had received it in Ephesus in Acts 19:1-2?
3. During the early Stone-Campbell movement, up to 150 people are reported to have fallen down, shouted or laughed from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. If that was valid, why did it stop?
4. In the post-apostolic times (today) is the gift of the holy spirit:
 - (a) The Bible (the Holy Spirit guided the writing of the Bible and so we get access to the Holy Spirit today only through the Bible per Marshall Keeble?)

- (b) Salvation?
- (c) Detectable?
- (d) A strengthening of existing blessings such as faith, love, and humility?
- (e) Of or from?

BENEFITS OF THE INDWELLING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT:

As the influence of the Holy Spirit in our lives today is undetectable, there can be a tendency to discount its activities. There are several verses indicating how we are blessed by the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in our bodies.

First, the Holy Spirit gives us hope. Galatians 5:5 says, "Through the Spirit, by faith, we wait for the hope of righteousness." So, through the Spirit our hope for the future is strengthened.

Second, in I Corinthians 6:19, Paul uses the fact of the Spirit's presence in our bodies (which are His temple) to encourage us not to sin. Thus, the presence of the Spirit can be motivation to right living. In Ephesians 4:30, Paul urges us not to "grieve the Spirit" by living in a way He would be displeased. Recognizing that the Spirit lives in me, then, motivates me to do what will please Him.

Third, the Spirit gives us direction. Romans 8:12-14 says the Holy Spirit leads us. This does not mean that He whispers in our ears to "turn right at the next corner." In the context of this passage it is clear that the leading of the Spirit is connected with our living like sons of God. We want to be like our Father and having the Spirit within us leads us in that direction. He also helps to produce good fruit in our lives (Galatians 5:22-23). Of course the Word, revealed by the Spirit, helps us to know what kind of lives He would have us lead and His presence within helps us to move in this direction.

Fourth, the Spirit gives us confidence. He helps us be bolder with our prayers (Romans 8:26) and this makes us bolder in approaching God and boldness here helps us to be bolder in carrying out the will of God.

Fifth, the Spirit gives us greater optimism. Ephesians 3:16-20 speaks of the Spirit's work within us as giving us greater power than we can ask or think. A child in the forest is far more optimistic about his outcome than is the child who has no sense that His father is near. So it is with us. Sensing that God is present with us through His Spirit, gives us strength to overcome many obstacles for we know that we are not alone.

BASIC CONCLUSION:

In reviewing all the verses found as is indicated here and in the appendix, the conclusion would be that there are two kinds of indwelling or gifts of the Holy Spirit after Acts 2:38: miraculous and ordinary. The miraculous indwelling or gifts of the Holy Spirit happened in the first century in the apostolic period. The ordinary indwelling or gifts happened in the Apostolic Period and in the post-apostolic period (today).

Occasionally such as at the start of the Stone-Campbell movement some apparently miraculous occurrences of the gift of the Holy Spirit happened. They soon faded indicating that although the “recipients” were likely sincere, they were likely caught up in the enthusiasm of the moment and the occurrence faded away because they were not from God.

The scriptures clearly show in at least five places post Pentecost that the Spirit is giving us some assistance. On the other hand, clearly the followers of the New Testament today are not healthier, wealthier, or wiser than followers of man-made creeds. So physical evidence is not an indication of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, other than factors like if you have the humility to follow traffic laws you are less likely to be in an accident.

In many cases Christians of all flavors pray for a good outcome and when it happens they conclude it is a work of the Holy Spirit. When an atheist wishes for a good outcome and it happens, it just happens. As a practical matter, the scriptures do not say we will have an easy life if we are obedient. In fact Jesus says in Matthew 5:10-12 we are blessed when we are persecuted. That is a far cry from today’s health and wealth gospel.

Today the work of the Holy Spirit supports our Christian life in ways which are not physically detectable, and does not interfere with our role as free moral agents. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit certainly have the power to make direct changes in our daily lives, but do not appear to work that way today.

Acts 2:43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. This is the answer to whether the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 was miraculous. Five verses later it is specifically stated that the miracles which were happening were through the Apostles.

SPECIFIC ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS POSED:

1. Did the 3000 in Acts 2:38 receive a miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit or a non-miraculous measure? The wording in Acts 2:42 clearly implies that shortly afterwards only the Apostles has a miraculous measure.
2. If the gift of the Holy Spirit was automatic, why did Paul ask if they had received it in Ephesus in Acts 19:1-2? Paul was talking about miraculous gifts, not the ordinary type.
3. During the early Stone-Campbell movement, up to 150 people are reported to have fallen down, shouted or laughed from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. If that was valid, why did it stop? It was not a miraculous gift of the holy spirit, they were being caught up in the excitement of the moment. It stopped because it was not real. If it was real it could not be stopped.
4. In the post-apostolic times (today) is the gift of the holy spirit:
 - (a) The Bible (the Holy Spirit guided the writing of the Bible and so we get access to the Holy Spirit today only through the Bible per Marshall Keeble?) (It is correct that we gain access to Holy Spirit through the word, but there are additional benefits.)
 - (b) Salvation? (It is reasonable to say salvation at least in a sense is gift from the Holy Spirit)
 - (c) Detectable? (The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not physically detectable today, that is not to say that the Holy Spirit could not depart detectable gifts if He chose)
 - (d) A strengthening of existing blessings such as faith, love, and humility? (certainly, these additional benefits)
 - (e) Of or from? (Possibly some of both. To say that the spirit dwells in our body would be "of", salvation would be "from")

APPENDIX

INFORMATION IN THE APPENDIX:

ALL VERSES IN THE ENTIRE BIBLE WITH BOTH “GIFT” AND “SPIRIT”

EXAMPLES OF CONVERSIONS

GIFT, SINGULAR, ALL AFTER ACTS 2:38

GIFTS, PLURAL, ALL AFTER ACTS 2:38

OTHER INTERESTING VERSES

ALL VERSES IN THE ENTIRE BIBLE WITH BOTH “GIFT” AND “SPIRIT”

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. (NAS)

Acts 10:44-47: “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. And all the circumcised believers who had come with Peter were amazed, because the **gift of the Holy Spirit** had been poured out upon the Gentiles also. For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?” [Conversion of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert.] [Went back 8-10 years for an example.] [Gift associated with the miracle of speaking in tongues]

Heb 6:4-6: For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the **heavenly gift** and have been made partakers of the **Holy Spirit**, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucified to themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame. (NAS) [Likely partakers of the Holy Spirit means recipients of a special measure of the Holy Spirit, not just the ordinary measure.]

As Acts 2:38 is a key passage on the plan of salvation, the scarcity of verses with “gift” and “Holy Spirit” together is instructive.

ALL POST-PENTECOST EXAMPLES OF CONVERSIONS

There are only 10 Biblical examples of conversions beginning with Acts 2:38.

Acts 2:38: Received the gift of the Holy Spirit

Acts 8:4-13: Baptized in verses 12-13 and did not receive the Holy Spirit, in verse 15 the apostles came down and prayed that they might receive the Holy Spirit, in verse 17 the apostles laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit .

Acts 8:35-39: Eunuch baptized by Phillip with no indication of the receipt of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 9:17-18: Paul was to be baptized and be filled with the Holy Spirit, but connection is not clear. (Obviously a special case)

Acts 10:34-48: The Holy Spirit was poured out on Cornelius and all who were listening in verse 45, they were baptized in verse 48. In 11:15 when Peter was explaining why he had baptized Gentiles, he related back to the day of Pentecost for a comparison, logically not what happened every day. (Happened before baptism)

Acts 16:13-16: Lydia and household baptized with no indication of Holy Spirit involvement.

Acts 16: 25:34: Jailor and household baptized with no indication of Holy Spirit involvement.

Acts 18:8: Crispus, leader of the synagogue, and household baptized with no indication of Holy Spirit involvement.

Acts 17:22-34 Athenians at Mars Hill, "Some men joined him (Paul) and believed. No indication of Holy Spirit involvement and no baptism mentioned.

Acts 19:1-6: Paul...to Ephesus and found some disciples, and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they {said} to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit...They said they were baptized into John's baptism....they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus....and when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them" (NAS) (Note: they did not receive the Holy Spirit after baptism until Paul laid his hands upon them)

There is only one verse which follows baptism with the receipt of the Holy Spirit – Acts 2:38, shortly after the apostles received the Holy Spirit. Saul (Paul) received the Holy Spirit, but you can't tell whether it is before or after baptism. All other cases of the receipt of the Holy Spirit happen either before the baptism or after the apostles had laid their hands on them.

GIFT, SINGULAR, ALL AFTER ACTS 2:38

In the verses following, the wording in parenthesis following the verse is a conclusion on what type of gift is being discussed.

Acts 2:38 Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Indwelling or Salvation)

Acts 8:20 But Peter said to him, “May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! (Miraculous)

Acts 10:45 All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. (Miraculous)

Acts 11:17 “Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as *He gave* to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” (Miraculous)

Romans 1:11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; (Miraculous)

Romans 3:24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; (Indwelling or Salvation)

Romans 5:15 But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. (Indwelling or Salvation)

Romans 5:16 The gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment *arose* from one *transgression* resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift *arose* from many transgressions resulting in justification. (Indwelling or Salvation)

Romans 5:17 For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. (Indwelling or Salvation)

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Indwelling or Salvation)

1 Corinthians 1:7 so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, (Would not be indwelling or salvation as that would be been automatic)

1 Corinthians 7:7 Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, each man has his own gift from God, one in this manner, and another in that. (Talent)

1 Corinthians 13:2 If I have *the gift of* prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. (Miraculous)

1 Corinthians 16:3 When I arrive, whomever you may approve, I will send them with letters to carry your gift to Jerusalem; (Money)

2 Corinthians 8:20 taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift; (Money)

2 Corinthians 9:5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brethren that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised bountiful gift, so that the same would be ready as a bountiful gift and not affected by covetousness. (Money)

2 Corinthians 9:15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift! (Indwelling or Salvation)

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; (Indwelling or Salvation)

Ephesians 3:7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. (Miraculous)

Ephesians 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. (Indwelling or Salvation)

Philippians 4:16 for even in Thessalonica you sent a *gift* more than once for my needs. (Money)

Philippians 4:17 Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. (Money)

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed on you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery. (Miraculous)

2 Timothy 1:6 For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. (Miraculous)

Hebrews 6:4 For in the case of those who have once been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit, (Miraculous)

GIFTS, PLURAL, ALL AFTER ACTS 2:38 (18)

In the verses following, the wording in parenthesis following the verse is a conclusion on what type of gift is being discussed.

Romans 11:29 for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. (Indwelling, Salvation, or Talents) note: plural

Romans 12:6-7 Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *each of us is to exercise them accordingly*: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service in his serving; of he who teaches, in his teaching; (Miraculous or Talents)

1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. (Miraculous)

1 Corinthians 12:4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. (Miraculous)

1 Corinthians 12:9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, (Miraculous)

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, *various* kinds of tongues. (Miraculous and Talents)

1 Corinthians 12:30-31 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they? But earnestly desire the greater gifts. **And** I show you a still more excellent way. (Miraculous)

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1 Corinthians 13:8 Love never fails; but if *there are gifts of prophecy*, they will be done away; if *there are tongues*, they will cease; if *there is knowledge*, it will be done away. (Miraculous)

1 Corinthians 14:1 Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual *gifts*, but especially that you may prophesy. (Miraculous)

1 Corinthians 14:12 So also you, since you are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek to abound for the edification of the church. (Miraculous)

Ephesians 4:8 Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN." (Miraculous and Talents)

Hebrews 2:4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will. (Miraculous)

Hebrews 5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; (Physical gifts)

Hebrews 8:3 For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this *high priest* also have something to offer. (Physical gifts)

Hebrews 8:4 Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law; (Physical gifts)

Hebrews 9:9 which *is* a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, (Physical gifts)

Hebrews 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a better sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying about his gifts, and through faith, though he is dead, he still speaks. (Physical gifts)

Revelation 11:10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and celebrate; and they will send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth. (Probably physical gifts)

OTHER INTERESTING VERSES

Acts 2:43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. (Miraculous)

Acts 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and {began} to speak the word of God with boldness. [Peter, John, & others - a refilling?] [Building shaking] (Miraculous)

Acts 8:14 & 17 “Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John,” “Then they began laying their hands on them, and they were receiving the Holy Spirit.” [Note: previously baptized] (Miraculous??)

Romans 5:5: “and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” (Creation or Gift of the Holy Spirit?)

1 Cor 3:16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and {that} the Spirit of God dwells in you? (Creation or Gift of the Holy Spirit?)

1 Cor 6:19: “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?” (Creation)

Eph. 2:21-22: “in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.” (Creation)

James 1:17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. (Creation or Gift of the Holy Spirit?)

James 1:5-6 But if any of you lacks **wisdom**, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind (Non-miraculous answer to prayers)

1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (Talent)

1 JOHN 3:24 NASV The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

1 JOHN 3:24 NLT: Those who obey God’s commandments remain in fellowship with him, and he with them. And we know he lives in us because the Spirit he gave us lives in us.”