



With hope that this page will bring glory to God and attention to His Word, you are invited to check this page every day for a piece of scripture, thoughts on the verse(s) and a prayer. May the ideas presented here bring you fulfillment as you continue your journey with Christ.

Wednesday May 1, 2024

Today's Scripture:

Acts 10: 44-48

While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who heard the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they invited him to stay for several days.

Thoughts on Today's Verse(s):

Today's passage from Peter's famous visit to the house of Cornelius, a Roman centurion, is striking in two ways. First, it was at this moment that Peter and his entourage realized that salvation was not just for the Jews. When The Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and his entire family, Luke tells us that Pete and his gang were "astonished"/"astounded". They had previously concluded that since Jesus was a Jew and lived His life among them as The Promised Messiah, salvation must be solely for the Jewish nation. This was a landmark event indeed that set in motion the salvation of souls across the globe. However, there is a second true understanding that occurred on this momentous occasion that should not escape us.

Many people, particularly adults who are totally committed to the process and to Christ, will report certain inexplicable "sensations" or experiences when they are baptized. Some may immediately begin speaking in tongues, others may even collapse while still others may report seeing things like flashing lights. All of these things appear to be generated/experienced through The Holy Spirit in remarkable ways - and they are. But, it doesn't have to be that way. The order of events is not set in stone centered around baptism.

We should take note of the fact that the entire household of Cornelius received the gift of The Holy Spirit *before* they were baptized, not after. Why? Because it is the *belief in Jesus* that is truly powerful in bringing people to salvation. Notice that St. Luke tells us that the people gathered on that day received The Spirit *while Peter was still talking*. And what was he saying?

A quick look back a bit in Acts 10 reveals this: "...everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name" (Acts 10: 43). It was the wonderful realization that they were saved by Jesus on the cross that brought The Power of The Holy Spirit overtly manifested in the new believers that day.

Is baptism still a sacrament? Of course. It is still a Holy event and The Holy Spirit comes as called to bless and engage in the happenings thereof. But, He "blows" in (John 3:8) to make Himself known where He wishes, not just where we call Him to be. We do not control The Holy Spirit through human means - and that's the way it should be. We must inspired to realize that The Advocate, The Helper, The Comforter and Consoler *Parakletos* reveals Himself as He deems, not as we do. Most wonderfully, He appears to bless the occasion in the moment when people *believe in Jesus*.

Prayer:

Lord God, Heavenly King, we thank You and praise You for The Gift of The Holy Spirit. It is marvelous to our senses when we are so blessed as to experience Parakletos in all His majesty and glory. Lord, help us to embrace the truth that we cannot manufacture or influence You/The Spirit in any way to appear only when we call. Such things suggest that we are somehow in control and it just isn't so. Father, we now realize, just as Peter did, that The Holy Spirit comes to us when we unfeignedly give ourselves to Christ. At the moment we believe that Jesus died to save us, we are filled with The Holy Spirit and He is astonishing. May we never forget those moments. We pray through Him, our Risen Lord and Savior, Amen.

Acts 10:44-48 - Gentiles receive the Holy Spirit

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. ⁴⁵ The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, ⁴⁷ "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." ⁴⁸ So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.