

PTON
diction

TITLE:

Have You Received the Holy Ghost Since You Believed?

SUBTITLE:

The Apostolic Pattern, Context, and Fulfillment of the Holy Spirit

SECTION 1 DISCERNING DIVINE SEASONS THROUGH BIBLICAL PATTERN

Scripture reveals that God does not always move in the same intensity at all times, but He does move in **appointed moments** that require spiritual discernment. These moments are not arbitrary; they are aligned with divine purpose and human readiness.

The narrative in **John 5:1–9** provides more than a miracle story, it reveals a pattern of divine timing.

John 5:4 (KJV) “For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water...”

The phrase “*a certain season*” indicates that divine intervention was **periodic, not constant**. The water did not always carry healing virtue. It was only when heaven initiated movement that opportunity was activated.

This introduces a critical theological principle: **God’s availability is constant, but His manifestation can be seasonal.**

The man at the pool had been there for thirty-eight years, yet proximity alone did not produce transformation. What he lacked was not access, but **alignment with the moment**.

When Jesus arrives, He bypasses the system entirely and heals him directly. This reveals a transition:

- From **seasonal intervention** to **incarnational authority**
- From waiting for movement to encountering the One who is the source of movement

This same principle carries into the book of Acts. The outpouring of the Spirit is not random, it is the fulfillment of prophecy, timing, and divine orchestration.

To steward a divine season means:

- Recognizing when God is initiating something
- Responding with urgency and faith
- Refusing to treat sacred moments as ordinary

SECTION 2: ACTS 19 IN HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

To fully understand Paul's question, we must understand the context of Acts 19.

Acts 19:1 (KJV) "...Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus..."

Ephesus was not a neutral city. It was a **center of pagan worship**, particularly devoted to Artemis (Diana). It was also a hub of philosophy, commerce, and spiritual confusion.

Paul encounters **"certain disciples"** but disciples of what?

The text reveals that they had only received the baptism of John.

Acts 19:3 (KJV) "...Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism."

John's baptism was:

- A baptism of repentance
- Preparatory, not complete
- Designed to point forward to Christ

Luke 3:16 (KJV) "John answered... saying... I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh... he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

This is critical.

These disciples were:

- Repentant
- Expectant
- Incomplete

They had responded to **preparation**, but had not yet experienced **fulfillment**.

This is why Paul's question is necessary.

Acts 19:2 (KJV) "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?"

He is identifying a gap between:

- Revelation they had received
- Fulfillment they had not yet experienced

SECTION 3: THE PROGRESSIVE REVELATION OF THE SPIRIT IN SCRIPTURE

The infilling of the Holy Spirit is not introduced suddenly in Acts. It is the culmination of a progressive revelation that begins in the Old Testament.

Old Testament: The Spirit Upon

In the Old Testament, the Spirit comes **upon** individuals for specific purposes.

Judges 14:6 (KJV) “And the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him...”

This empowerment was:

- Temporary
- Task-specific
- Not universal

Prophetic Promise: The Spirit Within

The prophets begin to shift the expectation.

Ezekiel 36:26–27 (KJV) “A new heart also will I give you...And I will put my spirit within you...”

This is revolutionary.

God is no longer promising external empowerment, but **internal transformation**.

Joel 2:28 (KJV) “I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh...”

This expands the scope:

- Not just leaders
- Not just prophets
- But all flesh

Gospels: The Promise Clarified

Jesus builds on this expectation.

John 7:37–39 (KJV) “...this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive...”

Notice again:

Belief is not the end, it is the qualification for receiving.

Acts: The Promise Fulfilled

Acts 2:1–4 (KJV) “...they were all with one accord in one place... And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost...”

Acts is not introducing a new doctrine, it is fulfilling a long-anticipated promise.

SECTION 4: ACTS 2 THE PROTOTYPE EXPERIENCE

Acts 2 is not just an event, it is a **prototype**.

Everything that happens there establishes the pattern for what follows.

Let's examine it carefully.

1. Unity Precedes Outpouring

Acts 2:1 (KJV) "...with one accord..."

Unity is not optional, it is preparatory.

2. Divine Initiative

Acts 2:2 (KJV) "...suddenly there came a sound from heaven..."

The Spirit is not manufactured, it is given.

3. Visible Manifestation

Acts 2:3 (KJV) "...cloven tongues like as of fire..."

There is a visible dimension.

4. Audible Evidence

Acts 2:4 (KJV) "...began to speak with other tongues..."

There is an audible dimension.

This establishes a principle:

When the invisible God fills a visible vessel, there will be observable evidence.

SECTION 5: ACTS AS A CONSISTENT PATTERN, NOT AN ISOLATED EVENT

Some attempt to isolate Acts 2 as unique, but Scripture reinforces it as a pattern.

Acts 8 Samaria

Acts 8:17 (KJV)“...they received the Holy Ghost.”

Though tongues are not explicitly stated, something observable occurred because Simon saw it.

Acts 8:18 (KJV)“And when Simon saw...”

There was visible evidence.

Acts 10 Gentiles

Acts 10:44–46 (KJV)“...the Holy Ghost fell...For they heard them speak with tongues...”

This confirms that the same experience extends beyond Jews.

Acts 19 Disciples of John

Acts 19:6 (KJV)“...they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

This is decades after Acts 2.

The pattern remains unchanged.

SECTION 6: CORINTHIANS IN CONTEXT: ORDER, NOT ORIGIN

The Corinthian church was spiritually active but doctrinally immature.

Paul is not establishing the origin of spiritual experiences, he is correcting their misuse.

1 Corinthians 14:23 (KJV)“...if therefore the whole church be come together... and all speak with tongues...”

The issue is not tongues, it is **disorder in public expression**.

Paul introduces structure:

- Limit number of speakers
- Require interpretation
- Maintain edification

This is not contradicting Acts, it is regulating behavior in corporate settings.

SECTION 7: THE TONGUE AS THE POINT OF SURRENDER

James provides theological insight into why the tongue is central.

James 3:2 (KJV)“...if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man...”

The tongue governs the whole body.

James 3:4 (KJV)“...ships... are turned about with a very small helm...”

The tongue is the steering mechanism of life.

When the Spirit takes control of the tongue, it signifies:

- A shift in authority
- A transfer of control
- A surrender of self

This is not emotional expression. This is **spiritual submission made audible**.

SECTION 8: RECEIVING: THE INTERSECTION OF PROMISE AND RESPONSE

Receiving the Spirit is where divine promise meets human response.

Acts 2:38 (KJV) establishes the framework, but **Luke 11:13 (KJV)** reveals God's disposition:

God is not reluctant, He is willing.

The delay is rarely on God's side.

Barriers exist in the human heart:

- Intellectual resistance
- Fear of loss of control
- Misunderstanding of the experience

The act of receiving is not passive.

It requires:

- Faith that trusts the promise
- Surrender that yields control
- Obedience that aligns with instruction

SECTION 9: THE SPIRIT AS ONGOING TRANSFORMATION, NOT MOMENTARY EXPERIENCE

The Holy Spirit is not the climax of salvation, it is the beginning of a transformed life.

Romans 8:11 (KJV)“...he that raised up Christ... shall also quicken your mortal bodies...”

The same power that raised Christ now operates within the believer. This produces:

- Spiritual sensitivity
- Moral transformation
- Divine empowerment

Galatians 5:22–23 (KJV) describes the fruit, not as effort, but as **evidence of indwelling life.**

The Spirit does not merely visit. It cultivates.

CLOSING EXHORTATION

From prophecy to fulfillment, from promise to pattern, Scripture is consistent.

The question is not theoretical, it is personal.

Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?

This is the dividing line between:

- Knowing about God
- Being inhabited by God

Between:

- External religion
- Internal transformation

God is not inviting you to a moment. He is inviting you to **indwelling reality**.

FILL IN THE BLANKS

1. Divine seasons require spiritual _____ and alignment.
2. The disciples in Acts 19 were sincere but _____.
3. The Spirit in the Old Testament came _____, but in the New Covenant comes _____.
4. Acts 2 establishes a _____, not just an event.
5. Tongues are the audible sign of _____ to God.
6. Corinthians regulates _____, not the initial experience.
7. The Holy Spirit produces ongoing _____, not just a moment.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. How does understanding Acts 19 change the way you view belief and spiritual completeness?
2. Why is the pattern in Acts essential for doctrinal clarity today?
3. What is the significance of the shift from “Spirit upon” to “Spirit within”?
4. How does surrendering the tongue reflect deeper spiritual submission?
5. In what ways should the indwelling Spirit be evident beyond the initial experience?