

Church – The Beginnings, Part 59
Acts 19:1-7 – Paul and the Disciples of John the Baptist
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NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP

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Acts 19:1-7

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 baptized?" So, they said, "Into John's baptism." ⁴ Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized 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 baptized 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.

1. **Proof Text for ... a Doctrine? ... that came about in the late 1800's / early 1900's somewhat based upon doctrines put forth by John Wesley? Can Foundational Doctrines come from the book of Acts? The Answer is: NO. The Book of Acts is a History. The Apostles' Doctrines are Found in the N.T. books of Romans through Jude (ref. Acts 2:42 → "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine ...") → so what can we learn from Acts 19:1-7?**
2. **Disciples? By verse 3 we find out who's disciples they were: → John the Baptist's Disciples**
3. **Who did we meet in Acts 18 that was a Disciple of John the Baptist? Apollos**
Remember that Aquila and Priscilla led him to Christ (i.e. Salvation) in the synagogue (see Acts 18:24-26 - Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. ²⁵ This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.)
So – putting two and two together – since Apollos was in Ephesus, at that time, he was more than likely either a part of this small group of disciples, or he was their leader. He was mighty in the Scriptures before he was saved, accurate and eloquent with the Word of God before he was saved in Christ. The connection of Apollos with the 12 men (disciples of John the Baptist is obvious). Before Aquila and Priscilla "took [Apollos] aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately" - in the New Testament sense, Apollos was NOT Born Again in Christ, he was not Saved – he was not a part of the New Covenant of the Messiah of Israel.
And in the same way, neither were those other Disciples of John the Baptist. All John the Baptist could do is use the Old Testament Scriptures (the Messianic Prophecies of the Messiah's First Coming) to point lost sinners to "The Lamb who takes away the sins of the World". So, all of Disciples of John the Baptist were sinners, who got baptized, recognized that they were sinners and that there was a Messiah who was to come to pay for their sins. But they did not go to the foot of the blood-stained Cross and Trust in Christ personally for their salvation – they did not trust in Christ and His Crucifixion, Death, Burial and Resurrection for their Eternal Salvation, their Forever Forgiveness – they were stuck in the "IN BETWEEN" – in theological LIMBO between Two Covenants. Apollos and the 12 Disciples of John the Baptist were stuck in between.
4. **REMEMBER that SALVATION by the Gospel is the Focus of the Book of Acts – Paul was sent to be used of God to "save the lost" among the Gentiles – and so, this event is about that. Lest we forget.**
5. **Why did Paul ask: "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" (Acts 19:2)**
Paul walks into their gathering and is led to ask this question. Why?

Pastor Andy's Speculation – I think as Paul was led by the Holy Spirit regarding His Gospel Mission of Christ – he sensed that something (or someone) was missing in their gathering – the common indwelling presence of Christ via the Holy Spirit within each believer.

6. **Let's look at Paul's Question a little Deeper:**

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

Paul's Question Implies a **Normal Way** of Lost Sinners to be Saved, in Christ.

The word **“when”** you believed – implies a sequence of events.

1. You **Believe [Personally Trust]** in Christ for your salvation [**First**]
2. Then, you **Receive** the Holy Spirit (**immediately after** Believing)

This is seen in the **Doctrinal Passage** of Ephesians 1:13-14:

In [Christ] you also TRUSTED, AFTER you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having BELIEVED, you were SEALED with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Eph. 1:13-14 states the following

1. You **Heard** the **Word of Truth**, the **Gospel** of your **Salvation**
2. You **Trusted** in **Christ AFTER** you heard the **Word of Truth**, The **Gospel** of your **Salvation**
*** The Holy Spirit's Conviction Power after Hearing the Gospel → John 16:8-9 ***
3. **After** you **Trusted** in **Christ** – you were **Sealed** with/by the Holy Spirit
The Holy Spirit came into your life, and dwells there forever – you are sealed
(**John 14:17** → the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells **WITH** you and will be **IN** you.)

(Compare with **Titus 3:4-7** – quoted in PowerPoint)

We've seen only one other case like this – when Philip went to Samaria (Acts 8:4-25).

It took the Apostles Peter and John to come down from Jerusalem to “legitimize” what Philip was preaching for real salvation to occur. The Samaritans were at one point under the spell of Simon the Magician (the Great Power of God) – but to them, a new act came into town with new and more powerful “magic” [i.e. Miracles] by Philip. The Samaritans switched their “amazement” allegiance from Simon to Philip – but that was not Saving Faith in Christ. There are **reasons** why the Holy Spirit is not inside of a person →
they are **NOT Saved** because they have **NOT**:

1. **Heard** the **Word of Truth**, the **Gospel** of their **Salvation**
and/or
2. **Trusted** in **Jesus Christ** for their **Salvation**
(based upon His Crucifixion, Death, Burial, and Resurrection, etc.)

That stands for Acts 8 (Philip in Samaria) and here, 12 Disciples of John the Baptist.

These 12 Disciples of John the Baptist had **NOT** heard the Gospel of Christ, up to that point, only the **“teachings of John the Baptist”**. So, they would **NOT** have been able to Trust in Christ – and His Crucifixion, Death, Burial and Resurrection as Enough – for their salvation. They had not had any **Gospel Opportunity** until Paul preached to them, just like Aquila and Priscilla did to Apollos (their fellow disciple of John the Baptist). Salvation, Doctrinally, Biblically – in Christ – follows, always, the same steps – **NO ACCEPTIONS, NEVER:**

1. The Lost Sinner **Hears** the **Word of Truth**, the **Gospel** of their **Salvation**
2. He/She **Trusts** in **Christ AFTER** he/she hears the **Word of Truth**, The **Gospel**
3. **After** he/she **Trusts** in **Christ** – he/she is **Sealed** with/by the Holy Spirit

7. **After they heard this ... they spoke with tongues and prophesied ...**

So, we've looked at Doctrine and the Consistent Pattern of HOW people are to be saved, etc. Why is this so different? This scene reminds us somewhat of Acts 2 (upper room 120 Disciples), Acts 8:4-25 – Philip in Samaria, and Cornelius' Household in Acts 10 (ref. Acts 11).

Acts 19:4-7 - Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized 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."

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

This does **not** seem to happen in all cases of individual or group conversions to Christ from Acts 2 to Acts 19. Thus, not every case of salvation of an individual nor of groups all have these same behaviors by those who are being saved. Thus, God must be doing this for a reason, since it is not the NORM for all cases of salvation as recorded in the book of Acts. We only have 4 cases like this (3 mentioned above and this one in Acts 19) out all the many cases of salvations in many cities where churches were planted. This begs the question as to similarity, pattern, and what is God seeking to communicate, etc. Also, we must remember this is History – a recording of what happened, not of what should always happen, etc. What should always happen would be found within Romans through Jude – where the Apostles' Doctrines are found written, etc.

Common Facts with all 4 Cases: (Acts 2, Acts 8, Acts 10, Act 19)

a. Not Saved Yet – Yet, they are Prepared for Salvation – Waiting for Salvation

Those 12 Disciples of John the Baptist admitted that they've never even heard of the Holy Spirit → this is one of the first indicators that they weren't saved, in the New Testament sense. They were **waiting for the Messiah** – whom John the Baptist pointed out.

b. New GROUP – First sampling of that Group Coming To Christ – together – still a group

They weren't a part of the synagogue, but **their own little group** of Disciples of John the Baptist. So, they were Hebraic-based in the teachings that they've embraced. They were a defined **Group** – the Disciples of John the Baptist.

c. There was at least one Jew present – whether a Jew who follows Yeshua or not.

So, we can conclude this → These are the Common Factors that were **UNIQUE**.

The most important is the last Factor – Jews were present – and/or will hear about it.

In the law it is written: "With men of other tongues and other lips I will speak to this people; and yet, for all that, they will not hear Me," says the LORD. (Isaiah 28:11-12)

This verse seems to validate what the Jews were seeing as the Gospel was spreading, when it would penetrate a new People Groups that had never heard the Gospel before – we see Tongues occur. Starting with the **Acts 2 (Jews/Israel)** – what occurred in the Upper Room with the 120 was a **sign** to those on the Street below – some mocked, but others listened.

In **Acts 8 (Samaritans)** – "news about what was happening in Samaria reached the ears of the church in Jerusalem"

In **Acts 10 (Cornelius' household - Gentiles)** – the reaction back in Jerusalem – when the Messianic Jews – Disciples of Jesus – heard about Cornelius' and his household's salvation – When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life." (Acts 11:18)

Acts 1:8 → You will be my Witnesses: Jerusalem/Judea (**Israel**), **Samaria**, the Uttermost Parts of the earth (i.e. **Gentiles**) ...

The **Disciples of John the Baptist** is the **Last Group** to get this special kind of Attention, all the others got theirs already. Israel, the Samaritans, and the Gentiles.

The Spread of the Gospel is the Focus – this Group got Saved in Christ, as well.

For further study on how this passage has been **misused**, please go to: <https://NLFJI.org/BOH>