

When Was Cornelius Saved?

There is so much confusion concerning the Holy Spirit among religious people. The best approach anyone can take is to go back to the Bible and see what it says. Cornelius will help us to better understand the work of the Holy Spirit.

A number of details are given about the Samaritans in Acts 8:12-17 which will help us understand. Notice that they were baptized, but did not receive gifts of the Spirit immediately. Even though Philip, who had the gifts of the Spirit, was present, these people had to wait until apostles came from Jerusalem because the Holy Spirit only came by their hands (Acts 8:18). However, at the beginning and for Cornelius the Spirit came directly by an act of God (cf. Acts 11:15). Hence, we must conclude that receiving the gifts of the Spirit by the hands of the apostles was not baptism in the Spirit. Otherwise, Peter would have been reminded of more recent baptisms in the Spirit, instead of referring back to Acts 2. Furthermore, since baptism in water came before receiving the Spirit in Acts 8 and it came after receiving the Spirit in Acts 10, we must conclude that the two have separate, unrelated purposes. Water baptism saves us (1 Peter 3:21) and Holy Spirit baptism confirmed the word of God (Hebrews 2:4).

If the Holy Spirit is guiding and teaching all of us, He would not contradict today what He taught back then. If there is a difference, then the conclusion must be that it is not the Holy Spirit. If you believe in Holy Spirit baptism, what evidence is given to you by God to support your claim? Cornelius began speaking in other known, verifiable languages as evidence that he received the Spirit. Can you do that?

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