

Receipt of The Holy Spirit By The Disciples of Jesus

“And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the holy ghost.”

John 20:22

When did the Disciples receive the Holy Spirit?

I do not believe they actually received the Spirit at the time mentioned in John 20:22. Consider John 14:16 and 17. Part of the promise is “That He may abide with you forever.” Although the Holy Spirit dwelt in times past with those whose “faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom 4:5), the new promise stated also that “He shall be in you.” David’s grief stricken cry in Psalm 51:11 was (in part) “take not thy Holy Spirit from me.” Samson was a man of faith (Heb 11:32), but at a time of failure “Wist not that the Lord was departed from him” (Judges 13:25-16:20).

The disciples were men of faith who knew and had the Spirit dwelling with them, but not *in* them. The indwelling came at Pentecost. God’s time and procedure had to be observed. At retirement one might say to sons, “Take my business and do well with it.” Before they received it in fact, and to fulfill the giving, legal procedures which are time consuming must be observed.

Ironside says, “It was not that He actually gave them the Spirit at that time, but they would understand later at Pentecost, when the Spirit actually descended and abode upon them and dwelt with them, that He was given by their exalted Lord.”

Pettingill further states, “We ought not to take the experience of the apostles and first disciples as the norm and pattern of our own experience. They were saved before the cross and before the New Testament advent of the Holy Spirit; we are saved long afterwards.”

In the present (age) dispensation every believer:

1. Is born of the Spirit (Jn 3:3-7; Jas 1:18; 1 Pt 1:23-25)
2. Is baptized by Him into the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:12, 13; Rom 6:1-3; Gal 3:27)
3. Receives Him as the Anointing by whom we are to be let into the truth (1 Jn 2:20-27; Jn 14:16, 17; 16:12-15)
4. Is sealed by him unto the day of redemption (2 Cor 1:21, 22; Eph 1:13; 4:30)
5. Is indwelt by Him (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19, 20; Rom 8:9)

All of these things are true of every believer; but not every believer is filled with the Spirit. This we are commanded to be:

“Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”
Ephesians 5:18

As we yield to Him, He fills us, and as He fills-us, He controls us and transfigures us “into the same image from glory to glory” (2 Cor 3:18).