

Paul Questions Twelve Men

by Paris Reidhead

In this sermon, Paris Reidhead explores the significance of Paul's questioning of twelve men regarding their baptism and reception of the Holy Spirit, emphasizing the importance of true repentance and faith in Christ for salvation.

Duration: 51:55

Scripture: Acts 19:1-8, Acts 19:11-12

Topics: "Apostle Paul"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the process of salvation and the role of the Holy Spirit in awakening sinners to their danger and convicting them of their crimes. The preacher emphasizes the importance of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as the means of justification and regeneration. The sermon also highlights the invitation for individuals to come forward and seek help in their spiritual journey. The preacher concludes with a benediction and encourages the congregation to turn to Acts 19 for further reflection on the topic.

Transcript

Will you turn please to Acts the 19th chapter? Acts the 19th chapter, we're speaking tonight on this theme, Paul questions twelve men. I'll read the first twelve verses, in order that the word and context might be before us, might hold and engage our hearts. Listen carefully.

And it came to pass that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul, having passed through the upper coast, came to Ephesus, and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John was early baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after them, that is, on Christ Jesus.

When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied. And all the men were about twelve.

And he went into the synagogue and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened and believed not, but spake

evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one tyrannist. And this continued by the space of two years, so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul, so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. You'll notice perhaps that we're scheduled to speak in the future on this subject by Paul's hand. This is the portion from which it comes.

But our concern tonight is with this first portion of the word here in the early verses of this nineteenth chapter. Paul questions twelve men by asking them, Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said unto, Then they said unto John's baptism.

Then Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. There are several questions here asked by Paul, and we're concerned about all of them. The first is the last question, the question in verse three.

Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said unto John's baptism. John came preaching repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. There is one coming after me who is preferred before me, the latchet of whose shoes I am unworthy to loose.

He it is that baptizeth you with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Now, the history of these disciples is obscure. We do not know whether they had been present at John's preaching.

If so, it would have been extremely unlikely that they could say we've not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, because John preached saying that Christ would baptize them with the Holy Ghost. But this much we do know, that to these disciples in Ephesus had come the testimony of the necessity of repentance, and obviously there had been a genuine work wrought in their heart. Now, this I want to establish right at the very outset, for that when they heard that which Paul had to say concerning the name in which they were to be baptized, Paul was prepared to immediately baptize them in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Now, the word clearly teaches from page to page and chapter to chapter and book to book that baptism is a picture of an inward work, or as we've often said, the outward symbol of an inward work. No, it was not baptismal regeneration that was being set forth here. They were not being baptized unto forgiveness.

They were not being baptized unto pardon. But because that work of repentance and faith had been genuine, they were being baptized as a testimony to their faith in Christ, a testimony to their complete break with all that had engaged them in the past. Now, this is extremely important, for if they had not been able to have answered this second question to the satisfaction of Paul, the first question would have had no relevance and no value and no meaning.

And so when Paul has asked them, Unto what were ye baptized? And they have answered, Unto John's baptism. Certain things are absolutely clear. They aren't particularly clear because of what you have here, but they're clear because of what is associated with John's baptism.

Whether or not they heard John, they certainly heard the meaning of his baptism, that it meant a complete break with the past. This is always implicit in baptism. Missionaries in India have told us that it is quite easy at times to get secret believers, those who are intellectually convinced that the Gospel is true.

But when it comes to the matter of baptism, this is where they draw back and rebel because their community understands that baptism cuts them off from the past and unites them to that which is new. Therefore, it is the missionary is wise who does not count as a believer anyone who is unwilling to submit to baptism because if they are unwilling, it is quite evident that they do not understand the nature of repentance. And lest someone should think that this was superficial and unimportant, let's remember what's involved in repentance, a change of mind, a change of will, a change of direction, a change of action.

All of this is implicit. So essential is it that Christ said, except you repent, you will perish. And just as he said you must be born again, he said you must repent.

It has the same force, the same strength. Repentance, however, is prerequisite to and in point of time previous to in its beginning to forgiveness and the new birth. And so these people to whom Paul speaks had such insight from God, such revelation from God, through whatever testimony they had heard, whether it was from the lips of John or from someone that had come with the message of John to their hearts, their response was genuine.

Now this is no little thing. This is no little thing. And my heart leaps when I read that Paul was prepared after he questioned them, and probably the conversation was far more extensive than is recorded here, Paul was prepared to baptize them.

He was prepared to baptize them. And then, in water, there had been a good work done. The work had been done so well that apparently there is no need for the Spirit of God to indicate that Paul had to correct it, reinforce it, or strengthen it.

He accepted it. I think that we have had in the 20th century, and this I've alluded to or stated as frankly and strongly as I know how, a tragic thing happened where people have intellectually consented to the scheme or plan of salvation without having repented. They have embraced the words of eternal life without having received the person who is himself life eternal.

And there is evidence on every hand that we have cultivated by these means in the last hundred years a Christian culture in which people have become acquainted with evangelical truth and evangelical testimony and have failed to meet him on that basic work of the Spirit of God in the human heart of repentance. Not only this, but it has actually been a fail. I remember in my early years as a student and a young preacher that I had listened to my teachers in vain against repentance and say that anyone who preached repentance in this time was actually heretic because repentance was Jewish and had nothing to do with the Church, that Paul never preached repentance.

All he preached was belief on the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, I have related to you those three scriptures which completely contradict this in Acts 17, Acts 20, and in Acts 26 where at Mars Hill he said, God commanded all men everywhere to repent. And at taking leave of the Ephesians he says, I was with you night and day from house to house teaching repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

And in Acts 26 before Agrippa he said, I delivered unto them of Damascus and of Jerusalem the Jews and the Gentiles, how that they must repent and turn to God and bring forth works meet for repentance. You see, repentance is not a work. If you define it as sorrow, then of course it does have the quality of work and sorrow might have some meter by which it could be measured.

But repentance is a change of attitude, a change of purpose, a change of direction, a recognition of the enormity of sin and an inward purpose no longer to continue in it. A change from governing and ruling one's life to turning that same life over to the rightful governor and ruler. And so this has happened in these people.

This has taken place. There's no question about that. There is, to my knowledge, absolutely no question about the fact that they had heard of Christ.

Not that they were to be baptized in his name, but I am satisfied that they had sufficient knowledge of Christ because, remember, it's a good while, it's a good time after the Ascension of Christ when Paul gets to Ephesus. And I am myself absolutely convinced that here in 56 A.D., some 33 or 36 years after the Ascension of Christ, that these people have heard that the one of whom John spoke was Christ Jesus. And they have repented and they have received him as Lord.

They have submitted to his sovereignty. They have embraced his saviorhood. I personally am absolutely convinced from the careful study of this portion that these people were not hearing for the first time now of Christ, but he is by the structure of the words is simply saying that they were to be baptized in the name of one of whom John preached, whom they knew to be Christ Jesus.

And they had not learned that they were to be baptized in his name, but rather that they were to believe on him and their baptism was John's baptism. Now, the reason I am so convinced of this is that immediately Paul baptizes them. And were there any question at all as to whether or not they had savingly received Christ, then there would be reason to suppose that this was, as some would try to construct it, baptismal regeneration and they were being baptized in order to be saved, which would be an anomaly, the only place the scriptures would so be taught and would give grounds for great problems.

No, these people had learned that the essence of sin is self-rule, self-will, self-government. They had learned that if they were to ever know God savingly, they must be willing to turn the rule and government of their life over to Christ, that he was the rock upon which they must fall, and that in falling from that time on, he was to rule. They had been baptized with John's baptism, testifying to the renunciation of their right to rule, the receiving of Jesus Christ as the right and proper sovereign of their hearts.

Now, this is important. This is tremendously important, because here are people that have believed with all that that word believe has in saving significance, saving connotation. We know what happens when one savingly receives Christ.

We've reviewed it in the past. We should think of it again. In order that our minds may be clear, we may think together on it.

First, the Spirit of God awakens a sinner to his danger. Secondly, he convicts the sinner of the nature of his crime. Thirdly, he brings that sinner to repentance.

Fourthly, he quickens faith, faith that leads across the centuries and the pages to personally embrace Jesus Christ as Lord and as Savior. And in response to that hard faith, he's justified in heaven. All the past

counted to Christ, all his sin laid upon Christ, and the righteousness of Christ counted to him.

He's justified. But at the moment that he is justified in heaven, he is regenerated in his heart. This regeneration is by the Spirit of God.

It is the Spirit of God who comes into that believer's heart, making real the presence of Christ in saving work. And it is the Spirit of God that testifies that he's been born of God. I am convinced that all of this has happened in these people, that the Spirit of God has regenerated them, that they have the witness of the Spirit, that they're disciples of Christ, and that they are thus there having their life in accord with the rule and government and principles, as they've learned that rule and government and principles, of the Lord Jesus Christ.

They have not been baptized in his name, but rather in John's baptism. And so they are now to be initiated by Paul into the fact that baptism is a testimony of our relationship to Christ. It's an outward symbol of an inward work.

And without further instruction, without further dealing, he takes them into the water. They're baptized that very day. Thus, if this is the case, and I strongly affirm it is, then the Spirit of God was in them.

But the point that you must understand is this, that one does not even need to know that there be a Holy Spirit to come that far. It is not faith in the Holy Spirit that saves one. It's faith in the finished work of Christ, enabled by the Holy Spirit.

Now let me strengthen the point with you. Is it necessary to know that there be such a person as God manifest in his triunity and his omnipresence as Holy Spirit? They saw God in his authority on the throne. They saw Jesus Christ as God come in the flesh.

This is the testimony concerning Christ. They have submitted to the will of God in manifesting Christ and to the will of Christ in their life. They are disciples who are walking in obedience to the mind and will of Christ.

All of this they are. And yet they can be such, born of the Spirit, knowing they're children of God, and correctly affirm that they do not even know that there be a Holy Spirit. I want that point clear, if it's possible to make it, that it is not necessary for one to have faith personally placed in the Spirit of God in order to have been gloriously saved by the power of the Spirit of God.

For it is the Spirit of God that awakens, but he doesn't say, I, the Holy Spirit, am awakening. The only thing he does is cause the sinner to say, what's the matter with me? Something's wrong between me and God. And then he's the Spirit of God convicts, when he has come he will convict.

And then it is this same sinner that cries out, I know what's wrong between me and God, I'm a sinner. Now, it's the Spirit of God that did that, but he didn't identify himself in the doing of it, he did it. He caused the sinner to see it, but he didn't speak of himself.

And it is the Spirit of God that induces this one to repent, to throw down the arms of his rebellion and the weapons of his warfare, and say, Jesus Christ shall rule my life, I won't be a rebel or an anarchist anymore, I will commit myself to his government. It's the Spirit of God that does that, but he doesn't identify himself. It's a relationship between the sinner and Christ.

It's the Spirit of God that enables him to look across 2,000 years and see a Jew hanging on a cross outside of a little city, despicable in the eyes of the Romans, and that that man hanging on that cross was God come to atone for the sins of a race of sinners. It is the Spirit of God that takes away the fog and the smog and the atheism and agnosticism and infidelity and unbelief and doubt, and enables one's heart to leap across 2,000 years of history and embrace that man as their all-sufficient Savior. Now, it is, of course, understandable why our generation of unawakened sinners risking to us preach think that the Gospel's nonsense.

How can the death of a man 2,000 years ago have any relevance to me living in the 20th century is an honest question. And the answer is there isn't any real relevance in his eyes until he comes to realize that that man is God, God come in the flesh, and that he came for the purpose of redeeming sinners, and the only way that he can possibly become relevant is when the sinner realizes the sin and realizes this man died for him and reaches out across the centuries to embrace him with an embrace that's all-encompassing and all-dependent. When that happened, then I said these two miracles happen.

In heaven he's justified, for God counted all of his sin laid upon Christ. And then now, though in response to his faith and so receiving Christ as Lord and as Savior, God counts all the righteousness of Christ to him. And he is justified.

His legal standing before God is as sinless and holy as that of Christ. But while he's justified legally at that moment, at the same moment, he's regenerated by the Holy Ghost and God comes into his heart. And he partakes of life in the person of God by the Spirit, and it is thus said that Christ is in him.

But all of this is done, I say and affirm again, without his so much as knowing that the agent by which it is affected is God the Holy Spirit. Now, it is quite possible then for this to happen and for people to be able to say, due to the absence of teaching and instruction, we have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, and to have been genuinely born of God. Because God has not made it requisite that one know about the Holy Spirit to have saving relationship with Christ.

Let's see that. That's the first thing. Now, what is the second question that was asked by Paul as he questions these twelve men? If you'll turn to the second verse, you'll see it as it is in the King James or whatever version you're using.

And I want you to notice every word, because every word is significant. Have you, have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed? The revised version has it, and I don't like it as well. Did you receive the Holy Ghost when you believed? I think there's no more justification in the text for that than there is for this, so we'll deal with what we have before us here.

Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed? Now, let's take the word that is the, the crux of this whole matter, the fulcrum on which the lever of truth has to rest. It's the verb, in this sense, received. You see, it's very difficult from this particular translation to recognize that this is an active verb, for it usually carries with it a passive sense, as we would commonly use it, have received, would be in us a passive idea, something that happened without any particular action on your part.

But actually, this would be far better translated if we were to read it as follows. Have you taken the Holy Ghost since you believed? Have you taken, have you taken? The word here, this infinitive word, labete, as you find it, where Christ on the night of the resurrection said, labete hagios numitas, take the Holy Ghost, has in it the idea of taking, the same strength and structure here. Have you taken? It didn't say, did he

come, when you believed, as is stated, because if they believed, he came.

You see, if he believed, he came. But if one savingly receives Christ, the Spirit of God has joined himself to that person bringing life. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he's none of his.

He didn't say that. He didn't say, have you received, in that passive sense, did he come when you believed, because that would be a contradiction of terms. If he hadn't come, they hadn't savingly believed.

Hadn't come to bring life in regenerating effect. That isn't what he said. He said, have you taken? Have you taken the Holy Ghost since you believed? Or did you take him when you believed? If you wish to go back to that.

What does he say? You remember that I gave you a chart, I think some of which remain here to the present, in which I stated that there were two aspects. They're born of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit offers Christ to the repentant sinner.

The Holy Spirit offers Christ to the repentant sinner. Isn't that what we just dwelt on? The work of the Spirit of God offering Christ to the sinner and savingly uniting that sinner to Christ. But you see, it was the work of the Spirit of God to present to the sinner Christ.

But now what are we? We're moving into another area. A completely different area. We now find that it is the Lord Jesus Christ who is offering the Holy Spirit in his fullness to the saint.

For you see, the saint was born of the Spirit, but he wasn't born full of the Spirit. He was born of the Spirit, but he wasn't born full of the Spirit. For the Spirit of God came with that work which was essential to uniting that one to Christ, which was to savingly impart divine light.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ is saying that the one who awakened you, the one who convicted you, the one who brought you to repentance and to faith, the one who justified you and regenerated you, the one who told you that you could call Almighty God, Abba, Father, the one who told you you were a child of God, this one is God, God the Spirit. And now the Lord Jesus Christ is offering himself through the person of the Spirit to this believer. This, I say, is the aspect that's presented here.

Not so much did he come to bring life, because this is synonymous with believing. But have you been aware of the meaning of this truth that the promise is to you and to your children, to as many as far off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call, that he is giving the Holy Spirit in his fullness to his people. Are you aware of that? Have you taken, have you been instructed, have you been taught, do you realize that it isn't just repentance and faith and justification and regeneration and certainty that if you die you'll go to heaven.

This is of primary interest to you because you're concerned about your destiny. But Paul, and I might put words in his mouth to have him say, are you interested in what God's concern for you is? God's interest in you. It wasn't just to take you where he is when you die, but that he might come where you are while you're alive with all the liberty and all the freedom that he desires and that he deserves.

Are you prepared therefore, have you been aware of the fact that the one who came, Now we come to quantitative problems. You say, well, how can a person have received the Spirit at life, at new birth, how can you receive the Spirit of God at new birth and then later take him? After all, he's a person, and a person can't come in parts. Therefore, if he came in, he came in as a person.

And as a person, didn't he come? And the answer to that is yes, of course. There's no problem here, however, because you see the word is said, as he is, so are we in the world. Now remember, Mary was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost and one cell in her body was quickened by the Holy Spirit.

And that Holy Thing born of her was Emmanuel, God come in the flesh, and he was God from the moment of his birth, even before that. So you remember that when she came into the presence of Elizabeth, John in her womb leaped, for there was Emmanuel being clothed upon with humanity and personality, ours. And the mystery of the fact that the babe that lay in Mary's arms and drew life from her breast was none other than God is incomprehensible to the mind that's limited by things of time and sense.

But this is the faith of our fathers and the faith of our own heart, that he was God and those three kings that knelt at his manger bed and worshipped him were driven of God from their paganism to come to the place where God had invaded humanity and they worshipped God as they gave gifts to him. And from that time he was indwelt by the fullness of the Godhead bodily. But there be no mistake about that, no question about that.

This is true. From that time. Now you know that at the Council of Nicaea, and we have the Nicæan Creed, incidentally, in the front of our hymn book and I'm so glad and I hope that you'll memorize it and learn it.

But at the Council of Nicaea, you needn't turn to it for it's only partially relevant at the moment, at the Council of Nicaea this issue was settled. For there were heretics that said Jesus Christ did not have a human body. Did you know that? Did you know that? Did you know that that was one of the great heresies of the early church? Christ did not have a human body? You're aware of that? Oh yes.

That his body was an imaginary body, it looked like a body, it appeared to be, but it wasn't real. That was one of the aspects of the Arian heresy that was so devastatingly effective in destroying the faith of many. Then there was another side of the same heresy which said yes, oh no, he had a human body but that's all he had.

He was just a man until at his baptism the spirit of God came upon him and then it was God-man. For until that time he was just a man. Now that was the heresy that twisted and wracked the church for decades, scores of years.

And at the Council of Nicaea that matter was settled for the Fathers declared that he was a very God, a very God, a very man, a very man. His humanity perfect, he was God in all the perfection of divine character. Now, this means that the Christ Jesus, God come in the flesh, was perfectly God, perfectly man, in every sense of the word.

And yet, and yet, he wasn't ready for his ministry until the Holy Ghost came upon him. And at his baptism, which was a picture of death to his rights, the right to his rights, oh he had died to them before the foundation of the world, but he is acting out now what had transpired when he is putting himself, allowing himself to be put beneath the water as did others in saying, I have accepted the limitations of my humanity. He couldn't be baptized in a sense of death to sin as it would appear to us, because in him there was no sin.

But to what could this death be related? To the fact that from eternity past he'd been God and by him all things were done that were made that were made. And now for the purpose of redemption, he'd taken upon himself a body like yours and so he accepted the limitation of that body. And he is outwardly saying

to the Father by his baptism, Father, I am now accepting the limitations of my humanity publicly.

Ten years now or twelve he's been a carpenter, a master carpenter, engaged in pleasing the Father by pursuing his trade. And now he's saying, Father, everything that I've done I've done to please you and all that I shall do hereafter shall be done by you. And he is relinquishing publicly the right to his rights.

For he was to say subsequently, I don't speak of myself, I speak as I receive commandment of the Father. I don't do the works, the Father that dwelleth in me he doeth the work. And thus our Lord Jesus is bringing to issue now the fact that the means by which God's work is to be done in the world from that time forward is by men who have gladly and completely abandoned the right to their rights and have surrendered all to God.

And it would be God working through them rather than men working for God. And so our Lord was baptized and the Spirit of God descended upon him in the form of a dove. Remember that.

John said, I saw. Oh, a visualization of what had happened, but our Lord says it happened. What was it? Wasn't the Spirit of God in him? Yes.

How could the Spirit of God be in him and not come upon him? I'll tell you how. Because he's God. That's how.

He's God. And when you reason from the human to the divine, your reasoning is fallacious because God has to reveal how he has God worked. You can't reason.

When a person comes, he comes in all of his personality and he's there because the analogy breaks down. God isn't like me or you. He's God.

And thus he was in Christ, in nature, making him very God of very God, and he hadn't come upon him to clothe that divine human nature for service. And in the same manner, when you were regenerated, God the Holy Spirit joined himself to your spirit, causing you to become a new creation, partaking of his life. But it remained for you to understand that God wanted you to join Christ in death, to reckon yourself to be dead, to consciously relate yourself to the cross by realizing he died for you, but he also died as you.

He wanted you to present your body to him, that it would no longer be you using God, but God using you, no longer you working for the Lord, but the Lord working through you, just as it was no longer Christ working for the Father, but the Father working through you. This is what he wanted. This is what he taught.

And so he said, have you taken the Holy Spirit, yourselves to the cross in abandonment, presenting your bodies to him? Have you reached out and taken him to be the life of your life and the power of your power, the strength of your strength? Have you consciously recognized that the one who came bringing life wants to cover you and clothe you? That's why our Lord said in Acts 1.8, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you. He didn't say come in, he said upon. It's an epi of an upon anointing, an upon covering, an upon endowment.

Not in, he came in at regeneration. Now it's an upon, covering, clothing, anointing. And his question wasn't, has he come? The question was, have you taken? There's a difference.

I might come to you and say, well, I hear that she's in need and I have a little extra. I'll just go to the bank and deposit it. And the \$100 that I put into your account, you've received.

Oh yes, you received it. But it doesn't do you a bit of good until the month comes around and your record shows that somebody deposited \$100 to your account. And you say, well, I don't know who it was, but I'm terribly grateful.

And then you take it. But until you've taken it, what you've received has no relevance to you. Do you see? And so it was that he said, have you taken the Holy Spirit? Now where did he have to come from? Where did he have to come from? Where does the Spirit of God come from when he comes to clothe you and immerse you and submerge you and anoint you? Where did he come from? Oh, in him we live and move and have our being.

All geographical limits that you place upon God are erroneous. God's as near to you now as he is to the angels in glory. He's here.

But you see, you don't see him with your eyes or hear him with your ears or taste him with your tongue or feel him with your fingers. He's not the air. The air is in his presence just as you're in his presence and all things are imminent in his presence.

But God, you see, it isn't that he has to come from somewhere. It's like a bottle in the ocean. And the ocean's all around the bottle, but there's a cork in it.

And all you need to do to have the bottle filled with ocean is take the cork out. Where does the ocean come from? Well, it isn't so much that it comes from somewhere. It's relationship to what's in it.

And so you're in Christ through faith in his finished work. But now when you recognize that God by the Holy Spirit wants to fill you, it isn't that he has to come from so far. He's there.

It's a matter of your attitude. It's a matter of your taking. It's a matter of your recognizing that he wants to fill you with himself.

And so he said, have you taken? Well, that's a good question. It's one you have to ask your own heart. Have you taken? Have you taken? The Holy Spirit sent you, believe.

Did he come? Have you taken him? Have you taken him? Have you realized that this is the gift of the Father? And the gift is the promises to you and to as many as the Lord our God shall call. If you're called of God, promises to you. Have you taken? That's what Paul said.

That's what God asked. Received in one sense, yes. But we're using the word now in its active significance, its active sense.

Have you taken him? You invited him. You reached out in appropriating faith. Your faith joined to the faith of others.

Now, as there was genuine evidence of God's work of grace in their hearts, regenerating these people, when they came up out of the water, I'm sure he spoke to them and encouraged them, taught them, instructed them. And he laid his hands upon them, joining his faith to theirs, giving them that release that came from his encouragement and his identification, enabling them, seeking to help them to reach out and take the fullness of the Spirit of God and the Holy Ghost came on them. There was an awareness.

It wasn't that he had to come from so far, but they were aware of his presence and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Now, shortly, I'm not just sure when, I'm going to speak directly to the matter of

tongues, a sign, or a gift. I haven't yet chosen in my heart whether I should use this next week, but shortly.

And I shall give due notice on it because I believe that it is a matter of tremendous importance. But let's not become involved with that now. Let's just notice the text, what happened.

They spake with tongues and prophesied. Some of them spoke with tongues and some of them prophesied, but it came on all of them, you see. Some of them spoke with tongues and some of them prophesied, and it came on all of them.

They didn't all speak with tongues, they didn't all prophesy. The whole structure is that some, that some spoke with tongues and some prophesied. And what's the significance we see? When the Spirit of God comes upon you with an anointing, baptism, or with an endowment, or in filling, or the crisis of the deeper life, or you call it what you will because I've long since lost interest in terms.

Somebody comes to me and says, well, that isn't what we were taught, but you know that's what happened. Well, I just, all I can do is rejoice and say, well, praise the Lord. All I'm concerned about is what happened.

I'm not going to ask you to accept my terminology. All I want you to do is to know that He has met your heart. You've reached out to take Him, to invite Him, to fill you.

Now this is true exactly as it is here. The Spirit of God came on them. There it is again, epi, upon.

This is a clothing, an anointing, an endowment. You might be greatly benefited if you were to read that little book that I've recommended so many times from F.D. Meyer, *The Christ Life for the Self Life*, and the chapter on the anointing of the Spirit. Tremendous blessing.

Or you might like to read Andrew Murray's splendid little volume, *The Full Blessing of Pentecost*. For this is nothing new, you know. This isn't just discovered, these glorious truths.

Either 1900, this has been the currency of the Church. This has been the history of the Church. And oh, how your heart would be thrilled if you'd read Gilchrist Lawson's little book, *Deeper Experiences of Famous Christians*, and find that the whole continuity of Church history has been that God has answered hungry hearts.

And when they've been prepared to meet him on his terms and conditions, he's been prepared to meet their need and fulfill his purpose. You see, the normal Christian life is to be filled unto all the fullness of God. Now, you were born of his Spirit, but you weren't born full of the Spirit.

And he says, be filled with the Spirit, in that Christ may take up his lasting dwelling place, that you might be filled unto all of the fullness of God. Now, my dear, the great concern of your heart ought to be Paul's question. Let's go back to it.

Have you taken the promised Holy Spirit, inviting him to possess you, to control you? Oh, how sad I am when people are seeking an experience so they can use God. It isn't that, my dear. It isn't that somehow you get a corner on God so you can use him.

It's quite the contrary. It's God getting a complete hold upon you so that he can use you. And like our Lord Jesus who said, I can do nothing of myself.

I can only do what I see the Father do. This is to be your relationship. This is to be your relationship.

How wonderful it is. And here is the word. This is his word.

So simple, so clear. Well, we will deal with it in the days to come, the question that I see rising up out of this. And I shall hope, I don't know, either I will have it mimeographed before or after for the sake of those who might like the scripture references.

But I rather thought I might have gotten to it tonight, but I haven't. But I've come far enough to press to your heart this, that God wants you to be a normal Christian filled with his fullness. This is his desire.

And I'm not interested in your biography. Oh, dear, someone says to me, well, I'm not just sure where the world lies. His old brother Bias would say, honey, I don't care about that.

I don't care about that. All I want to know is, are you walking in the fullness of God? That's the important thing. That's the important thing.

You can, you know, and you should. And less than this is abnormal, second best. So let's go on together, shall we? And not be detoured by anything less than himself.

Once it was the blessing. Now it is the Lord. Once the gift I wanted.

Now the giver owned. Just himself, just himself. All in, all forever.

That's what we want. See him only the Lord Jesus, as he's manifest and revealed to us through the word, by the spirit. Well, let's pray.

We're grateful for thy word, our father. The word's a lamp unto our feet, and the light unto our way. There is a way, way of holiness, and the way for every man, though a fool need not err therein.

When men err, it's not because the word is obscure or difficult to understand. Error isn't in truth. There's no truth that tend to error.

We know that, father. Error's in the hearts of men. There's no truth that tend to excess.

Excess is in the hearts of men. No truth that tend to imbalance. Imbalance is in the hearts of men.

And our heart cry to thee tonight is, thou by thy spirit shall enable everyone to answer, I have taken the Holy Spirit offered by the Lord Jesus Christ to fill me and possess me and control me and live through me the life of Christ, presenting my body to him as a temple, my will, my whole being to him, that he might live in me his own life. Oh, grant that this shall be answered to that end, and grant that we shall understand the word and teach us how to teach and how to help. And might the day come not far away, Lord, when we'll be able to help people here just as much as Paul was able to help these dear people.

We look to thee to teach us how that we can become by word and practice everything thou dost want us to be. Now seal to our hearts what we've read. Grant, Lord, we'll ever stay in the word.

Don't get us out of it. Don't let us get out of it. We know our hearts better than we do, and if we even should want to, hold us back, Lord.

Trip us up and bring us back right into the center of the word. We thank thee for this. Lord, should there be some who now are speaking that do not know the Lord Jesus Christ, might this be the night, might they be just chained to their seat and unable to leave, to live repentant and open their hearts to receive Christ.

We give an invitation, you know, always. Sometimes we invite you to come forward during the service, and sometimes we invite you to come forward after the service and make known your need, but we're always giving an invitation. We want to help you.

Tonight we're going to say that if you have a need, come forward, come to me, one of us, after the service, and we'll be so glad to help you in every way we can, praying with you and open the word to you. But now we're going to stand the benediction. All the young people, college and career group, will go upstairs to the time of fellowship there.

Let us stand. Now may the love of God the Father, the communion and fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be in abide with each of us now until we meet again. Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25062.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/paris-reidhead/paul-questions-twelve-men/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net