



THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES HOLY SPIRIT

For a long time, I've thought of the Gospels as a record of Jesus' work on earth and the book of Acts as a record of the Apostles' work after Jesus left. Jesus' wisdom, power, and plan carried the Gospel narrative and advanced the Kingdom of God. But it was not the Apostles' wisdom, power, or plan that led to the Church's exponential growth in the 1st Century, it was the Holy Spirit's.

This was not missed by Luke (the author of Acts). Almost all of the key scenes in the book include a mention of the Spirit's presence and participation.

Why is this important? If we de-emphasize the work of the Holy Spirit in the Acts story, we will be tempted to think the early Church's successes were primarily the result of human effort and innovation. This view of the story can be detrimental to the modern Church because it trains our minds to read the story of our lives and our church with an overvaluation of human effort and an underappreciation of the work of God in the world.



THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE BOOK OF ACTS:

Below, is a list of references to the Holy Spirit's work in the book of Acts. It is not a comprehensive list and the reader should not assume the Spirit's work was limited to these instances. We have every reason to believe the Holy Spirit worked in many ways that are not directly recorded in Luke's writing.

CHAPTER 1

1. Jesus gave the Apostles commands "through the Holy Spirit" (1:2).
2. The Apostles were instructed to stay in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit (the promise of the Father) showed them how to proceed (1:8).
3. The Holy Spirit, through prophecy and through the Apostle Peter, called for the nomination of a new Apostle to fill Judas' place (1:15-16).

CHAPTER 2

1. The Holy Spirit "filled" the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, giving them the ability to speak in other languages (2:4).
2. The Spirit gave Peter a comprehension of the Old Testament Scriptures, which enabled him to preach to the Pentecost crowd (2:14).
3. Those who repented and were baptized received the "gift of the Holy Spirit" (2:38).
4. The Holy Spirit empowered the Apostles to perform miracles among the people (2:43).

CHAPTER 3

1. Peter healed a lame man with the Spirit's power. The miracle brought attention to Peter and John, and Peter took the opportunity to preach (3:7).
2. The Holy Spirit gave Peter and John the words to preach to the Jews who assembled in the Temple (3:11).





CHAPTER 4

1. As a result of Peter and John's preaching (in chapter 3) 5,000 people were baptized (4:4).
2. When Peter and John were arrested by the priests and elders, Peter boldly proclaimed faith in Christ after being "filled with the Holy Spirit" (4:8).
3. The Holy Spirit inspired David to prophecy about the unstoppable nature of the Kingdom of God (4:25).
4. When the disciples prayed for boldness and courage, the room where they were gathered shook, "and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (4:31).

CHAPTER 5

1. The Holy Spirit revealed Ananias and Sapphira's lie to Peter (5:3).
2. The Apostles worked "signs and wonders regularly" among the people. Multitudes of sick and afflicted people were healed (5:12-16).
3. The Holy Spirit helped the Apostles with their defense when they were questioned by the high priest (5:29).
4. The Spirit acted as a witness, alongside the Apostles, to the life, resurrection, and glorification of Jesus (5:32).

CHAPTER 6

1. The disciples selected 7 men to care for the widows in the Church. One of the requirements was that each man had to be "full of the Spirit" (6:3).
2. The Holy Spirit empowered Stephen to do "great wonders and signs among the people" (6:8).
3. The Holy Spirit assisted Stephen in refuting his critics from the synagogue of the Freeman, the Cyrenians, the Alexandrians, and those of Cilicia and Asia (6:9).

CHAPTER 7

1. The Spirit directed Stephen's defends to the Jewish council after his arrest (7:2).
2. As Stephen was being stoned, the Spirit gave him a vision of the "glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God" (7:55).





CHAPTER 8

1. The Holy Spirit, through Philip, taught the people of Samaria and performed miracles (8:6).
2. Unclean Spirits were cast out and the paralyzed and lame were healed (8:7).
3. After many were baptized in response to Philip's teaching, Peter and John prayed for the Holy Spirit to be given to the Samaritans. In answer to their prayer, the people received the Spirit when the Apostles "laid their hands on them" (8:14-17).
4. The Spirit instructed Philip to approach the chariot of the Ethiopian Eunuch (8:29).
5. The Holy Spirit assisted Philip in his comprehension and communication of the scriptures when teaching the Ethiopian Eunuch (8:35).
6. After baptizing the Ethiopian Eunuch, the "Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away" to another location (8:39).

CHAPTER 9

1. Jesus sent Ananias to Paul so that he could regain his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit (9:17).
2. The Spirit assisted Paul in "proving that Jesus was the Christ" (9:20-22).
3. The Holy Spirit comforted the saints in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria and they multiplied (9:31).
4. Peter healed Aeneas, a paralyzed man, in Lydda which turned the hearts of many to the Lord (9:35).
5. The Holy Spirit, through Peter, raised Dorcas from the dead in Joppa (9:40).

CHAPTER 10

1. The Holy Spirit told Cornelius to send men to find the Apostle Peter (10:5; 10:20).
2. The Holy Spirit revealed Peter's location to Cornelius (10:32).
3. The Spirit told Peter to accompany Cornelius' men to Caesarea (10:20).
4. The Holy Spirit "fell on all" Cornelius' household indicating they ought to be baptized and become disciples (10:44-45).
5. Cornelius' family was given the ability to speak in tongues by the Spirit (10:46).





CHAPTER 11

1. Peter confirmed his actions at Cornelius' house were a direct result of communication with the Spirit (11:12).
2. Peter recounted how the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles in Cornelius' house (11:15).
3. This outpouring of the Spirit's power was prophesied by Jesus when he said, "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (11:16).
4. The Spirit accompanied the preaching of the men who came from Cyprus and Cyrene to preach in Antioch (11:20-21).
5. Barnabas was a man who was "full of the Holy Spirit" (11:24).
6. Agabus, a prophet, "foretold by the Spirit" that there would be a great famine over all the world" during the reign of Claudius Caesar (11:28).

CHAPTER 13

1. The Holy Spirit gifted some men to be prophets and teachers in Antioch (13:1).
2. The Spirit told the disciples in Antioch to set Barnabas and Saul (Paul) aside for a special work (13:2).
3. Paul and Barnabas were "sent out by the Holy Spirit" on their first missionary journey (13:4).
4. Paul was "filled with the Holy Spirit" when confronting Elymas, a wicked magician (13:9).
5. The Spirit's power blinded Elymas for a period of time (13:11).
6. The Spirit assisted Paul in his preaching in Antioch in Psidia, so much so that the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord (13:14-44).
7. After Paul and Barnabas were run out of town in Antioch, the text says the "disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit" (13:52).

CHAPTER 14

1. The Holy Spirit witnessed to the preaching of Paul and Barnabas in Iconium with signs and wonders (14:3).
2. With the power of the Spirit, Paul healed a crippled man in Lystra (14:8-10).
3. The Holy Spirit allowed Paul to survive being stoned and to continue preaching Jesus the next day (14:19-20).





CHAPTER 15

1. Paul and Barnabas told the council in Jerusalem about all the things the Holy Spirit had accomplished through them among the Gentiles (15:12).
2. The Holy Spirit guided the council's decision on whether to require the Gentiles to be circumcised (15:28).

CHAPTER 16

1. The Spirit prohibited Paul from preaching in Asia (16:6).
2. The Spirit prohibited Paul from preaching in Bithynia (16:7).
3. The Holy Spirit directed Paul to Macedonia through a night vision (16:9).
4. Paul cast out a spirit of divination in Philippi (16:18).

CHAPTER 17

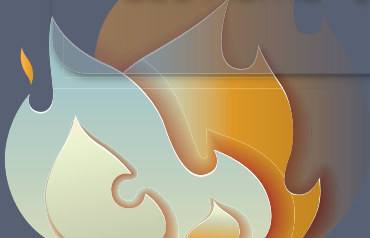
1. The Spirit assisted Paul as he reasoned with the Thessalonians in the synagogue (17:2-3).
2. The Holy Spirit assisted Paul as he preached to the Athenians at the Areopagus (17:22-31).

CHAPTER 18

1. The Holy Spirit assisted Paul as he taught in Corinth for 1.5+ years (18:11).
2. The Spirit assisted Apollos in refuting the Jews in Achaia (18:27-28).

CHAPTER 19

1. Paul laid his hands on 12 disciples in Ephesus, and they received the Holy Spirit (19:6).
2. The Spirit gave them the ability to speak in tongues and to prophesy (19:6).
3. Paul was aided by the Spirit as he taught in Ephesus for 2 years and 3 months (19:8).
4. The Holy Spirit gave Paul the ability to work miracles. Handkerchiefs and aprons that Paul touched were blessed with healing power (19:11-12).
5. "Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, 'After I have been there, I must also see Rome'" (19:21).





CHAPTER 20

1. The Spirit, through Paul, raised Eutychus from the dead after he fell out of a window (20:9-10).
2. Paul was “constrained by the Spirit” to go to Jerusalem (20:22).
3. The Holy Spirit indicated to Paul that imprisonment and afflictions awaited him in Jerusalem (20:23).
4. The Spirit revealed to Paul that he would not see the Ephesian brethren again face-to-face (20:25).
5. The Holy Spirit appointed the elders at Ephesus to care for the Church of God (20:28).

CHAPTER 21

1. The brothers in Tyre were warned by the Spirit of the dangers Paul would face in Jerusalem (21:4).
2. The Holy Spirit empowered the 4 daughters of Philip the evangelist to prophesy (21:9).
3. Agabus, a prophet, was informed by the Holy Spirit that Paul would be arrested if he went to Jerusalem (21:11).

CHAPTER 22

1. The Spirit assisted Paul as he spoke to the Jewish mob who almost killed him (22:1-21).
2. After his conversion, God appeared to Paul in a trance in the Temple and told him to leave Jerusalem because they Jews would not accept his testimony. Paul was told he would be sent “far away to the Gentiles” (22:18).

CHAPTER 24

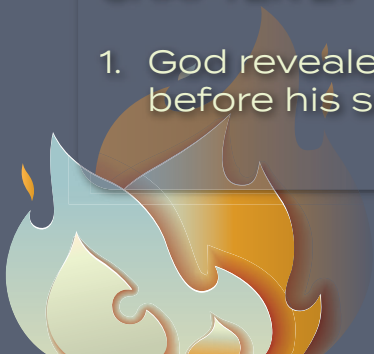
1. The Spirit assisted Paul as he made his defense before Governor Felix (24:10-21).

CHAPTER 26

1. The Spirit assisted Paul as he made his defense before Governor Festus and King Agrippa (26:1-29).

CHAPTER 27

1. God revealed the fate of the ship, cargo, and passengers to Paul before his ship was wrecked (27:22, 31, 34, 44).





CHAPTER 28

1. The Holy Spirit prevented the effects of a poisonous bite Paul received from snake (28:5).
2. The Spirit enabled Paul to heal Publius' sick father and other infirmed people on the island of Malta (28:8-9).
3. The Holy Spirit, through Isaiah, prophesied that the Jews would not accept the gospel of Jesus (28:25-27).
4. The Holy Spirit assisted Paul as he taught those who visited him in Rome (28:17-31).

