

**Monday, 24 September 2018 Acts 9:31**

*So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.*

This was not revival, this was the advancement of the Kingdom of Heaven in accordance with the order laid out by Jesus in Acts 1:8 *"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."* I have always read the latter phrase as indicating the spread of the Gospel into all the regions of the earth, but the Greek word, 'eschatos' also carries the sense of time. We are directed to continue faithfully in the task until He comes again.

To be in the comfort of the Holy Spirit also implies that we are in communion with the Spirit. Is our lack of communion with the Spirit, our lack of unity in the Body (Eph 4), inhibiting the advancement of the Kingdom in western Church today?

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**Tuesday, 25 September 2018 Acts 10:9-20**

*The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven. Now while Peter was inwardly perplexed as to what the vision that he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Simon's house, stood at the gate and called out to ask whether Simon who was called Peter was lodging there. And while Peter was pondering the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are looking for you. Rise and go down and accompany them without hesitation, for I have sent them."*

The 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of Acts records an event that should carry far more weight than it does in the Western Church; the ingrafting of the Gentiles into the family of the LORD, God, the Almighty. It is crucial that we recognize that this is a Spirit-directed adoption from the beginning. We, the Gentile believers, have access to, receipt of, blessed by every promise of God. However, we are also called to live lives of obedience to His Word and seek to honor Him in every aspect of our lives.

**Wednesday, 26 September 2018 Acts 10:34-41**

*So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation, anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.*

The Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval has been in existence since 1902 with significant modifications from time to time as needed to keep it in accord with current law and practices. Our Holy Spirit Seal of Approval has been in existence from before the Beginning **without** modification and will continue beyond the end of time. It is not stamped as a seal on our foreheads but must be evident in every aspect of our lives.

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**Thursday, 27 September 2018 Acts 10:44-47**

*While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"*

These Gentiles received the Holy Spirit before saying the Sinner's Prayer, even before they were baptized. How can that be? Might it be that receipt of the Holy Spirit, the establishment of a Line of Communication was established as He, the LORD, God, the Almighty, chose? Does He see the condition of the heart, knowing when that moment of conviction comes, the I believe moment? Don't I have to be careful not to make salvation dependent upon works, even something as precious and sacred as confessing with my mouth that Jesus is Lord and Savior?

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**Friday, 28 September 2018 Acts 10:44-47**

*While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold*

water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"

*Could this be an understatement by Luke? This precious gift of an intimate relationship with the LORD, given to them, a group of faithful Jews, the Chosen People of Yahweh, and now to a bunch of heathens. What is going on here? If this is a possibility, I need to keep it firmly in mind as I carry the message of the Good News out from the sacrosanct walls of a church.*

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**Saturday, 29 September 2018 Acts 10:44-47**

*While Peter was still saying these things, the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word. And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles. For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"*

I must remember that the Spirit fell upon Jesus of Nazareth after baptism; here it is before. The two examples seem to invalidate the argument that baptism must precede the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. I also believe that both are in support of the position that the presence of the Holy Spirit is the true and valid guarantor of salvation.

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**Lord's Day, 30 September 2018 Psalm 119:1-3**

*Blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD! Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, who seek Him with their whole heart, who also do no wrong, but walk in His ways!*

What a blessing, Lord, to enjoy today, to realize the increase promised for tomorrow, and to anticipate the completion upon reaching that New Heaven and New Earth. Day by day, You walk with me along the Way, guiding me into a life shaped by Your testimonies and supporting me as I stumble.

You are a most gracious Savior, seated at the right hand of the Almighty, directing my every footstep and forgiving me when I acknowledge my deliberate miss-steps. You are indeed without equal.

# VOICES TOGETHER

Daily Meditations from the Scriptures



September 24-30, 2018

**Prayer of the week, based on Paul's prayer in: 1 Corinthians 16:23**  
*The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you.*

*This is a necessary and sufficient statement. There is nothing that I can add to these words from Paul to make it more appropriate for each of us to pray for our fellowships. Let us each use this week as we meditate upon the richness of our Lord and how it is displayed through our communities.*

**To fear or not to fear, that is the question.**

The fear of the Lord, an expression that occurs many times in Scripture, 142 in the ESV in various forms, is not well understood in the Church today. For many, the phrase represents a weak and flabby description of an overly saccharine spiritual being of some sort. It certainly does not include the concept of the LORD, God the Almighty who spoke all things into being and who controls all things.

Join with me in examining the fear of the LORD and seeking an understanding of life in the Kingdom of Heaven in the here and now as guided by that fear.

Voices Together is published daily on the website of the Fellowship of Ailbe, [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org); along with material by other writers to encourage and assist in our walks as disciples of Jesus Christ. These messages can also be received as daily emails or in a monthly printed version by sending a request to:

Pastor John Nunnikhoven, The Church at Prison, Inc.  
PO Box 8318, Essex Junction, VT 05452 or to [prior@ailbe.org](mailto:prior@ailbe.org)

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