

**3:1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.**

**2 Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith?**

**3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?**

**4 Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?**

**5 Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith—**

### **Intro:**

Against the Judaizers that had led the churches in Galatia astray, Paul has relayed his history to establish that he is indeed an authoritative representative of God and that his preaching is the truth about God. He is an independent witness from the Jerusalem apostles, yet his gospel was fully approved by the Jerusalem apostles. In chapter three he turns his attention to the people of Galatia and rebukes them for being so easily duped.

### **One Question:**

Paul is willing to narrow his case down to one question. He is so confident that he can rest his argument on one simple question. He says to the Galatians ‘allow me this one question only’ answer this one thing because the answer to this question should establish you in the truth. If this one question is so significant that Paul can hang his whole argument on this one thing then we would do well to pay close attention to what it is and attempt to understand it. Paul is putting all his chips on the table; all his eggs in one basket

### **The Question: Receiving the Spirit**

Paul’s one question is a multiple choice question. It has one of two possible answers. There is no choice C or D. The question he asks is not one of a theoretical nature. It is not one that we all can have differing opinions on. His question is a question of historical nature – it is rooted in the experiences of his readers. And Paul could be confident in this one question because this experience is universal to all believers. His question is ‘how did it happen for you?’ did you perform some work of law that impressed God to the point that he decided to give you the Spirit? Was it out of works of law that you received the Spirit?

### **The Assumption:**

Paul makes a grand assumption here. He assumes that the Galatians had experienced the Holy Spirit. He doesn’t ask them if they had received the Holy Spirit. He presupposes that they had and he asks them on what basis did you receive Him.

**Have YOU received the gift of the Holy Spirit?**

**On what basis have YOU received the Holy Spirit?**

**How do you know?**

### **The Spirit is not an Accessory! Not Optional; Necessity of Spirit Birth:**

**John 3:3-7** Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is **born again** he cannot see the kingdom of God.” 4 Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” 5 Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is **born of** water and **the Spirit**, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is **born of the Spirit** is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘**You must be born again.**’

**Romans 8:9-17** You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the **Spirit of God dwells in you**. Anyone who does not **have the Spirit of Christ** does not belong to him. 10 But if **Christ is in you**, although the body is dead because of sin, the **Spirit is life** because of righteousness. 11 If **the Spirit** of him who raised Jesus from the dead **dwells in you**, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through **his Spirit who dwells in you**. 12 So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to

the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have **received the Spirit** of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

**2Co 11:4** For if someone comes and proclaims another **Jesus** than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different **spirit** from the one you received, or if you accept a different **gospel** from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.

### **Assumption of the Indwelling Spirit:**

**John 14:17** even **the Spirit** of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and **will be in you**.

**1Co 3:16** Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that **God’s Spirit dwells in you?**

**1Co 6:19** Or do you not know that your body is a temple of **the Holy Spirit within you**, whom you have from God? You are not your own,

**2Ti 1:14** By **the Holy Spirit who dwells within us**, guard the good deposit entrusted to you.

**1Co 12:13** For **in one Spirit we were all baptized** into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and **all were made to drink of one Spirit**.

### **Spirit as a Gift:**

**Ro 5:5** and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through **the Holy Spirit who has been given to us**.

**1Co 2:12** Now we have **received** not the spirit of the world, but **the Spirit who is from God**, that we might understand the things **freely given** us by God.

**2Co 1:22** and who has also put his seal on us and **given us his Spirit in our hearts** as a guarantee.

**2Co 5:5** He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has **given us the Spirit** as a guarantee.

**1Th 4:8** Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who **gives his Holy Spirit** to you.

**1Jo 3:24** Whoever keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by **the Spirit whom he has given us**.

**1Jo 4:13** By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he **has given us of his Spirit**.

**Joh 3:34** For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for **he gives the Spirit without measure**.

### **How? The Hearing of Faith**

Galatians 3:2 Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or **by hearing with faith?**  
Ambiguous phrase: the act of hearing; that by which one hears (ears); what is heard (report, message)

Act of believing (faith); or what is believed (message) [LMorris]

ears that believe; Hearing combined with faith; the message of faith;

hearing the gospel and believing it; or the gospel itself (which is presented to be heard and believed) [FFBruce]

### **Condition of Belief to receive:**

**Lu 11:13** If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will **the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit** to those who **ask** him!”

**John 3:14-18** And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, 15 that **whoever believes in him** may have **eternal life**. 16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that **whoever believes in him** should not perish but have **eternal life**. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might **be saved** through him. 18 **Whoever believes in him** is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

**John 7:39** Now this he said about the Spirit, whom **those who believed in him were to receive**, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

**Eph 1:13-14** In him you also, **when you heard** the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, **and believed** in him, **were sealed** with the promised **Holy Spirit**, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

**John 1:12** But to all who did **receive him**, who **believed in his name**, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were **born**, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of **God**.

**I John 5:1** Everyone who believes that **Jesus is the Christ has been born of God**, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.

**Acts 2:37-41** Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 And Peter said to them, “**Repent** and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and **you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” 41 So those who **received** his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

**Acts 10:43-47** To him all the prophets bear witness that **everyone who believes in him** receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” 44 While Peter was still saying these things, **the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word**. 45 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. 46 For they were hearing them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter declared, 47 “Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who **have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?**”

**Ac 11:15-16** As I began to speak, the **Holy Spirit fell on them** just as on us at the beginning. 16 And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, ‘John baptized with water, but **you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit**.’

**Ac 15:8** And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by **giving them the Holy Spirit** just as he did to us,

**Ga 3:14** so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might **receive the promised Spirit through faith**.

## **Obedience?**

**Ac 5:32** And we are witnesses to these things, and so is **the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him**.”

**Ro 1:5** through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the **obedience of faith** for the sake of his name among all the nations,

**Ro 16:26** but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the **obedience of faith**—

**Ac 17:30** The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,

**Joh 6:29** Jesus answered them, “This is **the work of God**, that you **believe** in him whom he has sent.”

## **Exception 1:**

**Acts 19:1-6** And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the inland country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. 2 And he said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” 3 And he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They said, “Into John’s baptism.” 4 And Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.” 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.

Exception to the rule or they hadn’t believed yet? Paul assumed that when they believed they would have received the Holy Spirit. When they answered that they hadn’t, that caused Paul to probe a little deeper – what exactly was did you believe? What was the content of your faith? Who are you following? they were disciples of John – and Paul made it clear that John would point them to Jesus.

## **Exception 2:**

**Acts 8:14-19** Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, 15 who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, 16 for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 17 Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. 18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money, 19 saying, “Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.”;

Exception to the rule or they hadn’t believed yet? Verse 5 says Phillip proclaimed the Christ to them; in verse 12 it says they believed Phillip as he preached about the kingdom of God and the

name of Jesus and they were baptized. These clearly were believers. Back in verse 1 we see the context – Stephen had been killed. Saul was causing serious problems for the church. All but the apostles had left Jerusalem, and they preached the word wherever they went. Phillip happened to go to Samaria – a place that was despised by the Jews.

God sovereignly withheld the gift of the Spirit from these believers until the Jerusalem apostles came – both for their benefit and for the benefit of the apostles – to preserve the unity of the Church.

**Conclusion:**

**Have YOU received the gift of the Holy Spirit?**

**On what basis have YOU received the Holy Spirit?**

**How do you know?**