

## Th122 Foundation Doctrines

### *Lesson Th122 – 19 Laying on of Hands: Imparting the Baptism in the Holy Spirit*

The students sat at their desks as the teacher opened the textbook and began to speak. “Today I have a wonderful gift to give you,” she began. Her students suddenly looked up, giving her their attention.

One young girl raised her hand with a question: “What is the gift?” she asked.

A broad smile crossed the teacher’s face as she said, “It is the gift of knowledge.” A few of the children smiled back at her. Some of the children groaned to themselves. For them school was not fun or interesting. For them it was simply work that they preferred not to do. These students had no idea of the value of what the teacher held in her hands. The gift of knowledge never grows old and remains with a person their entire life.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful to have a tremendous gift that you could give to people? The gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is second only to the gift of salvation. It is a free gift that Christ has promised to every believer who will receive it. In the New Testament Book of Acts, we read about a man who desired a gift that he could give, for *his own* benefit.

Now the city of Samaria was the ancient capital of the northern kingdom of Israel, which would become known as the region of Samaria. Jerusalem was the capital of the southern kingdom of Judah or Judea. The descendants of King David ruled Judah from Jerusalem. A variety of kings, most very wicked, had ruled the northern kingdom of Israel. This had led to deep cultural hatred between the two regions.

Soon after the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the 120 disciples in Jerusalem, a great persecution came upon the church. A Jewish religious leader, a Pharisee named Saul of Tarsus, went about arresting believers and throwing them into prison. Many of the believers in Jerusalem fled throughout Judea and Samaria, taking the gospel with them. One such godly man was Philip. He went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed Jesus Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip, and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. For with shrieks, demon spirits came out of people. Many who were paralyzed or lame were healed, so there was great joy in that city.

Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great. All the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, “This man is rightly called the Great Power of God.” They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his sorcery. But they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. So they were baptized in water, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them. They had simply been baptized in water in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the Apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

Peter answered: "May your money perish with you, because you thought you could buy the gift of God with money! You have no part or share in this ministry, because your heart is not right before God. Repent of this wickedness and pray to the Lord in the hope that he may forgive you for having such a thought in your heart. For I see that you are full of bitterness and captive to sin."

Then Simon answered, "Pray to the Lord for me so that nothing you have said may happen to me." After they had further proclaimed the word of the Lord and testified about Jesus, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel in many Samaritan villages (Acts 8:1-25).

This is an amazing story that teaches us two very important truths. First, we learn that people can receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands. We also learn that gifts from God cannot be purchased, but are freely given and must be freely received. Every Spirit-filled believer can offer to pray and lay hands on a fellow believer to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit. We must remember that it is not we who give the baptism, but rather Christ, the Baptizer. Remember the school teacher who offered to give the gift of knowledge to her students? Her students had to be willing to receive her teaching. In the same way, those who desire to receive the gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit must be willing to open their hearts to receive in faith.

This story is **important** because you have learned that God uses Spirit-filled believers to lay hands on other believers and pray for them to be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that God's gifts cannot be bought. They must be received in faith, as God freely gives them to those who ask. Christ is the Baptizer, but he often uses us to lay hands on other believers so that they may be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Shall we **review** what this lesson has taught?

1. How can we impart the gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit to another person? [Pause 5 seconds]

A. If you said that we can lay hands on them that they might receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, then you are correct.

2. What happened to the people in Samaria when Peter and John laid hands on them? [Pause 5 seconds]

A. If you said that the people received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, you are correct.

3. Is it possible to purchase gifts from God? [Pause 5 seconds]

A. If you said, “No, gifts from God are freely given and must be freely received,” then you answered correctly.

Your **assignment** for this lesson is to listen to it as many times as is necessary to learn the story. Then, if you have not yet received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, seek out your pastor or mentor and have them lay hands on you to receive this wonderful gift.