

Joel Lesson 28

Last week we looked at God's great promise to pour out his Spirit on all flesh, and I explained why I have chosen to view that promise as broadly as the Bible will allow me to view it.

When we ended, we were looking at how God poured out his Spirit on all flesh, including even the disobedient, through the proclamation of the gospel. And we looked at an example of that in Acts 2, where all who were there that day miraculously heard the gospel proclaimed in their own language.

And I think one thing that event confirms for us is that pouring out the Spirit on all flesh does not mean that all flesh will experience the same thing.

The gospel is for all flesh. Salvation in Christ is available for all flesh. The blessings of God are available for all flesh. But not everyone will enjoy those blessings; not everyone will be saved. Some who hear the gospel will receive the Spirit of God, while others who hear the gospel will reject the Spirit of God.

Hearing the gospel in your own language was a great blessing from God, but those who obeyed what they heard received many more blessings from God. And then, later in Acts, some of those first century Christians received even more blessings from God when they received a miraculous gift through the laying on of an Apostle's hands.

And what about today? I think in one way the situation is the same, but in another way the situation is different.

The situation is the same in the sense that the great blessing of God's Spirit is poured out on all flesh through the proclamation of the gospel, with those who obey the gospel receiving greater blessings from God.

But the situation is different in the sense that those great blessings are not as varied today as they were in the first century. We do not receive the various miraculous gifts today that some received in the first century received through the apostles' hands.

But that doesn't mean we all receive the same gifts from God even today. Paul, for example, lists seven gifts in Romans 12, only one of which (prophecy) is a miraculous gift:

Romans 12:6-8 - Having **gifts** that **differ** according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if **prophecy**, in proportion to our faith; if **service**, in our serving; the one who **teaches**, in his teaching; the one who **exhorts**, in his exhortation; the one who **contributes**, in generosity; the one who **leads**, with zeal; the one who does acts of **mercy**, with cheerfulness.

And don't we all know people today with those gifts? Service? Teaching? Exhorting? Giving? Leading? Doing acts of mercy? When I go down that list, I think of names of people here today who fall into those categories. And how does Paul describe them? As "gifts that differ according to the grace given to us." They are not miraculous gifts, but they are gifts.

And, even in the first century, being filled with the Holy Spirit did not always result in the performance of *overt* miraculous signs. For example, Luke 1:15 tells us that John the Baptist was "filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb," but John 10:41 tells us that "John did no sign" (although John was, of course, a prophet).

And so, although we do find miraculous gifts in the first century church, even there it was certainly not one size fits all.

But today, we no longer live in the age of miraculous gifts - and for good reason: we no longer need miraculous gifts today.

Remember where we started with this prophecy from Joel 2. We started by looking at people who were prophesying, seeing visions, and dreaming dreams. But how were the people to know that those prophecies, visions, and dreams were really from God? The answer is miracles.

And, again, we don't have to leave Acts 2 to see that. Why did the people in Acts 2 listen to the Apostles? Why did some of them believe the Apostles? What made them decide that what the Apostles were telling them was in fact a message from God?

It was a miracle. It was the fact that those Galileans were suddenly able to speak every language on earth. The miracles confirmed that Peter's words were God's words.

Think about it this way - what if you said something about God today, and somebody then asked you, "How can I know that what you are telling me is true"? How would you answer that question? You would open your Bible and show that person the evidence.

Now take that situation back in time to the first century. You are in the first century church, you say

something about God, and somebody then asks you, “How can I know that what you are telling me is true”? How would you have answered that question at that time?

You could have pointed to the Old Testament for some of what you were saying, but what about those things that were not revealed in the Old Testament? How would you answer?

Would you tell the person that you heard it from someone named Paul? Would you say, “I have a letter in my pocket from this person named Paul that arrived in the mail yesterday?” How convincing would such evidence have been? But what if you performed a miracle as evidence?

In the first century, the Old Testament was evidence, and the early church used the Old Testament that way. Apollos in Acts 18:28 “powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.”

But the New Testament was not yet that sort of evidence - it was too recent, and it wasn’t even completed. And so what did God do?

Hebrews 2:3-4 - How shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation? It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard, **while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.**

Miracles had a special purpose for a special time. But that all changed when the last word of the New Testament was penned. In short, the New Testament, once completed, could be used along with the Old Testament as evidence without any need for signs and miracles.

The fact that we rely on the Bible today as authoritative evidence for what we are saying proves that we do not need signs and miracles. We are using the Bible today for the same reason that the early church used signs and miracles.

If we think we need signs and miracles as evidence today, then it must be because we do not think that the word of God is sufficient for that purpose. But is that what the Bible says about itself? No, it is not.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.**

And for our neighbors today who think they are being guided directly by the Holy Spirit, I suspect the spirit that is really guiding them is their own spirit.

And we know that is true when they are being guided to do things opposed to the teaching of Scripture. When what we teach changes with the culture, we can be certain that we are being guided by the spirit of the world and not be the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:12).

So am I guided today by the Holy Spirit? Absolutely I am, but **not** directly by the Spirit. I am guided by the Spirit today **only** indirectly through the written word of God.

1 Corinthians 2:12-13 - 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. And we impart this in **words** not taught by human wisdom but **taught by the Spirit**, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

- Does the Spirit **lead** me today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.
- Does the Spirit **comfort** me today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.
- Does the Spirit **draw** people to God today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.
- Does the Spirit **guide** me today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.
- Does the Spirit **teach** me today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.
- Does the Spirit **reprove** me today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.
- Does the Spirit **correct** me today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.
- Does the Spirit **train** me today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.
- Does the Spirit **speak** to me today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.
- Does the Spirit **empower** me to live a godly life today? Absolutely, but **only** through the written word of God.

The gospel is “the power of God for salvation” (Romans 1:16). The “implanted word” “is able to save your souls” (James 1:12).

The Handout for Lesson 28 shows many of the blessings that we enjoy today because we have the written word of God. When I started making that handout, I had some verses in mind, and I thought I could probably fill the front side of a regular size sheet of paper with the blessings we have because we have the Bible.

But as I kept searching, I kept finding more and more verses showing us more and more blessings we have from the word of God - until finally I had filled the front and back of a *legal* sized sheet of paper. Even then I could have kept going. **I didn't run of blessings - I ran out of space!**

And as we study the verses on that handout, here is the lesson that I think we should take to heart when it comes to our study of the Holy Spirit: **If anyone's view of the Holy Spirit causes that person to think less of the written word of God in any way or less about the written word of God in any amount, then we can be 100% certain that that person's view of the Holy Spirit is a false view.**

The purpose of miraculous gifts was to provide the written word and confirm the written word - not to replace the written word!

And if someone is waiting around to receive a nudge of some sort from the Holy Spirit, then that person just needs to open his Bible and read it. That is the only way that the Spirit of God nudges anyone today - by the written word of God. **And the more verses you know, the more nudges you get!**

Psalm 119:11 - I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

We could say much more on that topic! Next week, our handout will focus on blessings we have from the Holy Spirit - one of which is the written word of God!

We have finished our look at the promised pouring out of God's Spirit on all flesh. Let's look next at the promise gift of the Holy Spirit for those who obey the gospel.

What is the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38? And how is that gift related to Joel's prophecy?

To begin, let's all just admit that this topic can be very confusing.

The exact phrase “gift of the Holy Spirit” is found only twice in the Bible - and one of those verses (Acts 2:38) promises the “gift of the Holy Spirit” to those who have been baptized, while the other verse (Acts 10:45) describes the “gift of the Holy Spirit” as having been received prior to baptism.

Are those two gifts the same gift? Can they be the same gift? In Acts 11:17, Peter describes the gift as “the **same** gift” that God “gave to us **when we believed** in the Lord Jesus Christ.” Is that gift the same gift that we see in Acts 2:38? And when did Peter believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? Wasn’t that long before Acts 2?

As I said, the questions here can be very complicated!

So, what is the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38?

Yes, there are many different opinions about the answer to that question in the religious world, but there are also many different opinions about the answer to that question in the church.

And, in my opinion, some (but not all) of those proposed answers fall in the realm of opinion because there is no verse in the Bible requiring us to draw a line through them.

So, as with the various views about the pouring out of the Spirit of God, all I can do here is look at the various views, look at the evidence, and then give you my opinion along with the basis for my opinion.

And I plan to apply the same rule in Acts 2:38 that I applied in Acts 2:17. I want to be as broad here in Acts 2:38 as the Bible will allow me to be.

Why? Because I think that approach is the safest approach given that Peter’s entire sermon began with a promise of “pouring” out God’s Spirit on “all flesh.” When I think about “pouring out” and when I think about “all flesh,” I am thinking in broad terms.

So, when it comes to the promise of salvation and the promised blessings from God, I want to be as broad as the Bible will allow me to be. When it comes to the gift of the Holy Spirit, I don’t want to find just one blessing that is included in that great gift, and then stop. I want to find all of the blessings revealed in the Bible that are or could be included in that great gift.

And so I plan to keep thinking in broad terms as long as the Bible allows me to keeping thinking in broad terms.

What do I mean by that? How could the Bible cause me to narrow things here in Acts 2:38?

Well, look at the first word Peter says in verse 38: “**repent!**” That word imposes at least one condition on what follows, and so we see a **narrowing** of the promise right from the start.

Yes, the Spirit may have been poured out on **all** flesh, but this promise in verse 38 has now added a condition - repentance. And the next thing Peter says adds another condition - baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

That is what I mean when I say that I won't narrow things unless the Bible requires me to narrow things. And when it comes to repentance and baptism, the Bible has required me to narrow things.

I know that sometimes we are accused of being unloving when we stand up for the truth about God's plan of salvation, but, in fact, the most **unloving** thing I could ever do to anyone would be to convince that person that he is right with God when he is not right with God.

Yes, we must preach the truth in love, but I have always like what R.L. Whiteside said on that subject:

“Much is said about preaching the truth in love and so it should be preached. But in love of what? The preacher should so love the truth that he will not sacrifice any of it nor pervert it, and he should so love people that he will not withhold from them even one unpleasant truth. He that does either of these things loves neither the truth nor the people.”

Yes, there is a promise in Acts 2:38, but it is not an unconditional promise. We find two conditions at the beginning of that verse - repentance and baptism. And when we look at the entirety of God's word on the subject of salvation, we find some additional conditions.

So what then is the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38? What are our options?

- Some say that the gift of the Holy Spirit is not the Holy Spirit himself but rather is a gift from the Holy Spirit, and they identify that gift as either salvation, eternal life, the Bible, or miraculous gifts.
- Others say that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit himself, and they identify that gift as the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, either personally or representatively through the word. For those that consider the indwelling to be personal, some hold that it is the miraculous indwelling

enjoyed only during some portion of the first century while others hold that it is a non-miraculous indwelling still enjoyed by Christians today. Some say that the gift of the Holy Spirit was or is always accompanied by miraculous gifts, while others say it was not or is not.

I'm not sure that list exhausts all of the different opinions, but I think that list includes most of them.

Let's start with a threshold issue - **is the gift of the Holy Spirit a gift from the Holy Spirit, or is the gift of the Holy Spirit the Holy Spirit himself given as a gift?**

The grammar in verse 38 would allow either interpretation, but in my opinion the broader context does not. In my opinion, the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit himself rather than something the Holy Spirit gives to us.

Why is that my opinion? Because, while the grammar in verse 38 might allow either interpretation, the grammar in other related verses does not.

In Acts 5, for example, Peter responded to the High Priest with what appears to be a short summary of what Peter proclaimed in Acts 2.

Acts 5:29-32 - But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, **and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.**"

And the grammar in Acts 5:32 is very clear - the Holy Spirit himself is the gift. I think the same is true in Acts 2:38.

And, of course, we could cite other verses as well.

Acts 15:8-9 - And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by **giving them the Holy Spirit** just as he did to us, and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.

Romans 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.**

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

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

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

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

And, so, in my opinion, the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 is the Holy Spirit himself given by God as a gift.

And, in some ways, that makes our task easier. If the question is what is the gift of the Holy Spirit, then the answer is now very simple: **the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit!** The Holy Spirit himself is the gift.

So, if the question is whether the gift of the Holy Spirit is miraculous gifts, the answer is no - it is not. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit.

Or if the question is whether the gift of the Holy Spirit is the sealing or the guarantee, again the answer is no - it is not. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit.

Now, it may be that miraculous power was a blessing that came from this gift, or that the sealing and the guarantee were blessings that came from this gift - but they are not the gift itself. **The gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit given as a gift.**

I think all that means is that we need to rephrase our question. Rather than asking what the gift is, we should be asking what it means when receive that gift. I think we can assume that great blessings of some sort are involved when someone receives the gift of God's Spirit - but what are those great blessings? I think that is our question.

But before we look at the blessings that came or come with that great gift, let's look at another threshold issue. **To whom was or is the gift given?** Was the gift in Acts 2:38 only a first century gift, or is the gift in Acts 2:38 still given today?

In my opinion, the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 is a gift for all Christians for all time. In my opinion, I have that promised gift today.

Why is that my opinion? That is my opinion about Acts 2:38 because of Acts 2:39.

In verse 38, Peter proclaims a promise from God:

Acts 2:38 - 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.

And, in verse 39, Peter describes who that promise is for.

Acts 2:39 (ESV) - 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.

Acts 2:39 (KJV) - For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, **even as many as** the Lord our God shall call.

That statement by Peter in verse 39 about who the promise in verse 38 is for includes four groups of people.

- **“You”** - that is, the people listening to Peter in Acts 2.
- **“Your children”** - that is, the descendants of the people listening to Peter in Acts 2.

Yes, I could read the word “children” narrowly in verse 39 to exclude some people from receiving this promise, but remember my rule! I will not understand this promise narrowly unless the Bible requires such an understanding, and here it does not.

The Bible sometimes uses the word “children” to mean descendants, such as in Exodus 20:5 - “visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the **children** to the third and the fourth generation” and in Romans 9:7 - “not all are **children** of Abraham because they are his offspring.” And so I will understand the word that way here absent a verse telling me to do otherwise.

- **“All that are far off”** - that is, the Gentiles.

Peter may have initially understood this phrase to mean Jews living outside of Jerusalem, but I think Acts 10 and Ephesians 2:13 tell us that it means the Gentiles.

- **“Everyone** whom the Lord our God calls to himself” (ESV) or **“Even as many as** the Lord our God shall call” (KJV) - that is, everybody else if anyone is not already included in the prior categories.

And, again, my plan is to read that final phrase as broadly as I can, which is pretty easy here given that the phrase includes the word “everyone.”

And even if “children” meant literal children earlier in the list, I think all of the descendants would still be included in this final catch-all phrase.

In my opinion, that final phrase is a summary of the preceding phrases. For whom is the promise? The promise is for Jews (you and your descendants), the promise is for Gentiles (those who far off), and (in summary) the promise is for everyone God calls (both Jew and Gentile).

If my goal is to understand verse 39 as broadly as I can without violating the Scriptures, then I think that is it. The promise is for everyone God calls.

And I think that translation “as many as” in the KJV is very instructive. The promise in verse 38 is to **“as many as** the Lord our God shall call.”

The Greek word translated “everyone” or “as many as” in verse 39 is the word *hosos* (Strong’s # 3745). It is the same Greek word that we find in Galatians 3:27.

Galatians 3:27 - For **as many of you** as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

In each case, I think we are seeing a numerical equality. Acts 2:39 says that the number of people receiving the promise equals the number of people called by God. And Galatians 3:27 tells us that the number of people baptized into Christ equals the number of people who have put on Christ. Each verse uses that Greek word meaning “as many as.”

We find that same Greek word in other verses as well:

John 1:12 - But to **all** who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Acts 13:48 - And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and **as many as** were appointed to eternal life believed.

Romans 8:14 - For **all who** are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

I think the same Greek word is used the same way in Acts 2:39.

And I think we all understand the promise that way for the promise of forgiveness in the first half of Acts 2:38. I simply understand the promise of the gift in the second half of Acts 2:38 that same way.

If there is a time limit on the promise of the Spirit in Acts 2:38, then how do we avoid imposing that same time limit on the promise of forgiveness found in that same verse?

And, finally, let's compare what Peter says in Acts 2:39 with what Peter quotes from the prophet Joel in Acts 2:21.

Acts 2:39 - "Everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

Acts 2:21 - "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Aren't those two verses two sides of the same coin? Don't we see both those whom God calls through the gospel and those who answer that call? And don't we see salvation from sin with both calls - those whom God calls and those who call upon the name of the Lord?

In summary, my opinion about the breadth of the promise in Acts 2:38 is largely determined by my understanding of the breadth of the recipients of the promise in Acts 2:39. If our question is to whom was the promise directed, I think Peter answers that question in verse 39.

But what is this gift of the Holy Spirit that, in my opinion, is promised to all who obey the gospel for all time?

And, again, the question is not really what the gift is - the gift is the Holy Spirit - but rather the question is what are the blessings that come from being given that gift.

What are the blessings that someone receives when that person receives the gift of the Holy Spirit promised in Acts 2:38? That is our question.

Before we answer that question, I think we need to look at some more evidence - and especially at some evidence that has been rather hotly debated over the years: the Samaritans in **Acts 8** and the household of Cornelius in **Acts 10**.

Let's start with Acts 8. In that chapter, Saul's persecution of the church caused a scattering of those who were preaching the word. One of those preachers, Philip, went to Samaria, where he proclaimed the gospel and performed miracles. Many who heard Philip believed and were baptized, including even a magician named Simon.

When the Apostles in Jerusalem heard what was happening in Samaria, they sent Peter and John. Let's read what happened next:

Acts 8:14-17 - Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them **that they might receive the Holy Spirit, for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

What can we conclude from those verses? There are two primary views:

- The first view is that the Samaritans had not received the Holy Spirit in any way prior to the arrival of Peter and John. And, because we know the Samaritans had believed and been baptized, the logical conclusions of this first view are that we do not receive the Holy Spirit in any way at our baptism and that we, today, cannot receive the Holy Spirit at all given the lack of Apostles.
- The second view is that Acts 8 is focused on the receipt of miraculous gifts and that the receipt of the Holy Spirit and the falling of the Holy Spirit upon the Samaritans are both describing their receipt of miraculous gifts from the Apostles. But, according to this second view, that does not mean the Samaritans did not receive the Holy Spirit in some other way at their baptism.

If you read the six collections of articles from the Firm Foundation that I posted to StudyJoel.com, then you read three collections that hold to the first view and three other collections that hold to the second view.

And, once again, all I can do is give you my opinion along with the basis for my opinion. And my opinion is that the second view is the better view.

Why? We have already looked at one big reason - Acts 2:39.

If I were to adopt the first view, then I would have to limit Acts 2:39 to include only first century Christians. But that is not what I see in Acts 2:39. Instead, I see “everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” And so Acts 2:39 is one reason why I prefer the second view of Acts 8.

But there is also a second reason why I hold that second view about Acts 8 - and that second reason is Acts 9.

What happened in Acts 9?

Saul’s persecution of the church in Acts 8 was why Philip went to Samaria, and those persecutions by Saul are continuing at the beginning of Acts 9. But then Saul heads out for Damascus, and, as they say, the rest is history!

Jesus appears to Saul on that road to Damascus, and Jesus commands Saul to continue on his way to that city where he would be told what he needed to do. Paul is left blinded by that experience, and after arriving in the city, he neither eats nor drinks for three days.

In verse 10, we meet Ananias, who was a disciple living in Damascus. Jesus appears to Ananias in a vision and tells him where to find Saul. Let’s read what Ananias then does:

Acts 9:17-18 - So Ananias departed and entered the house. And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road by which you came **has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.**” And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and **he regained his sight.** Then he rose and was **baptized.**

According to verse 17, Ananias (who, like Philip in Acts 8, was **not** an Apostle) came to do **two things** for Saul - restore his sight and cause him to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And then in verse 18, **two things** happen: Saul’s sight is restored and Saul is baptized.

Was Saul filled with the Holy Spirit at his baptism? I think he was. Ananias was sent to Saul by Jesus specifically for that purpose - “so that you may regain your sight **and be filled with the Holy Spirit.**” Did Ananias accomplish that purpose? I think he did.

And if that was true of Saul when he was baptized and before he met any Apostles, then can't we then say that the same was true for the Christians in Acts 8 if we simply replace Ananias with Philip?

So where are we? I am explaining why I prefer the second view about Acts 8 - the view that the receipt of the Holy Spirit that had not yet happened in Acts 8 was the receipt of miraculous gifts. And so far my reasons for preferring that second view are **Acts 2:39** and **Acts 9:17-18**.

Another reason why I prefer the second view is how the Bible describes those outside of Christ.

Jude 1:19 - It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, **devoid of the Spirit**.

Romans 8:9 - 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.**

If the Samaritans in Acts 8 had not received the Spirit in any way at all after they were baptized, then couldn't we say that they were devoid of the Spirit and that the Spirit did not dwell in them? But, if so, how would such Christians have been any different from those out in the world?

And couldn't we ask the same questions about that Ethiopian eunuch? Was he devoid of the Spirit when he went on his way rejoicing after his baptism in Acts 8:39? In my opinion, **the Ethiopian eunuch received exactly what Acts 2:38 offered - forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.**

Are those my only reasons for preferring that second view about Acts 8? They are not, but they are the only reasons that I will list for now. Later will we look at some things that I believe the Holy Spirit does for all Christians for all time - and those activities by the Holy Spirit will provide some additional reasons for my view about Acts 8.

#JOEL