

(#35)

Modern perceptions of the "Holy Spirit" (and how he works), contrasted to what we find in Scripture.



Back then

- People were being saved.
- * The church was growing.
- God was accomplishing great things.

In the book of Acts:

Common factors

or patterns seemed

to be present.

THE PEOPLE WERE:

- ✓ Focusing on the Bible.
- ✓ Focusing on prayer.

GOD WAS:

✓ Sending the Holy Spirit.

RESULT?

✓ Amazing things were happening!



Most church-goers have their own "steps" that lead to nowhere.

PEOPLE ARE:

- ✓ Having "religious experiences" and calling it the "Holy Spirit."
- ✓ Making "decisions for salvation" without repentance

RESULT?

- √ "Church-goers" with no moral/spiritual changes in their lives.
- ★ Minimal focus on the Bible and prayer.
- ✓ Talk about spiritual growth, but not doing the things that make it possible.



TYPICAL MODERN-DAY CHURCH-GOERS

- ① LITTLE INTEREST IN THE PURSUIT OF "FOLLOWING JESUS."
- ✓ They do not study Scripture with (Prefer to submit Scripture the intent of submitting to what it says. to their own views.)

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- ✓ They have a minimal focus on prayer that is based on Scripture. giving them what they want.)

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- √ They are not interested in the discipline and training that makes spiritual emogrowth possible.
- (Prefer drama, emotional experiences, sensationalism.)
- √ They shrink back from persecution or discomfort caused by following Jesus.

(Prefer comfortable living.)

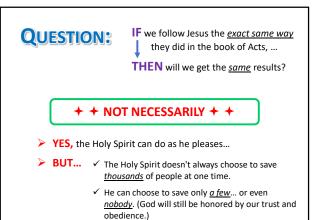
TYPICAL MODERN-DAY CHURCH-GOERS

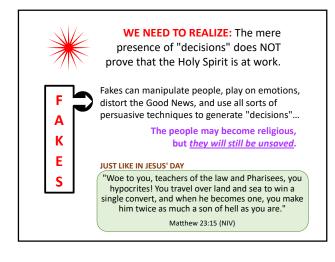
② IF THEY TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS...

- They modify the Good News, to make it less offensive, and more appealing to those who <u>don't</u> want to repent of their sin.
- They ignore God's sovereignty, which guarantees that <u>only</u> the undistorted Good News, as described in the Bible, will save people.

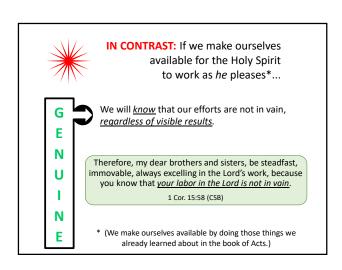
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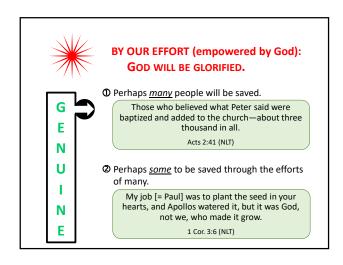
NOT following Jesus the way it is described in the book of Acts.



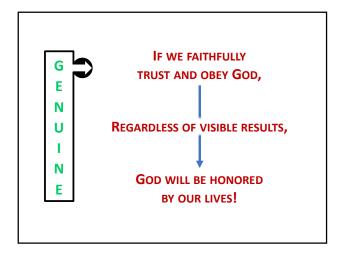


YES: Fakes do get "results." YES: People will be deceived into thinking they're saved (though they aren't). fakes may even do miraculous things... but that isn't "proof" that they are from God. .. the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, ... K 2 Thes. 2:9b (NIV) Ε Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name? Didn't we force out demons and do many miracles by the power and authority of your name?' Then I will tell them publicly, 'I've never known you. Get away from me, you evil people.' Matthew 7:22-23 (GW)













THE SPIRIT'S FOCUS:

- The Holy Spirit does not try to draw attention to himself.
- Though we may know when the Spirit is at work, he tends to work "behind the scenes," with the goal of directing people's attention to <u>Jesus</u>, and to <u>godly living</u>.

DO YOU WANT THE SPIRIT IN YOUR LIFE?

- Don't become preoccupied with trying to "get the Spirit."
- Rather, preoccupy yourself with holiness and godly living! (The Spirit will take care of the rest!)



SOME THINGS OCCURRED **SOMETIMES**:

- There were spectacular events... but not always.
 - There was persecution... <u>but not always</u>.
- There were fakes who needed opposed ... but not always.

SOME THINGS WERE A *NORMAL* OCCURRENCE:

• There were expressions of love for God and neighbor.

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Love for God and neighbor – a normal occurrence among God's people.

(Illustrated by this description of the early church.)

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47 (NIV)

THIS WEEK...

AS WE CONSIDER THE SPIRIT'S WORKING IN OUR LIVES:

FOCUS: NOT ON THE SPIRIT,

BUT ON THE <u>GODLY FRUIT</u> THAT THE SPIRIT BRINGS INTO THE LIVES OF GOD'S PEOPLE!

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:22-23a (ISV)

(When we are willing to do these, we know that the Spirit is present.)

Credits (1)

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- PICTURES (original sources; modifications may have been made)

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