

CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

THE CHURCH AND THE HOLY GHOST

It was at this point that a New Testament living organism/organization was about to be born. The disciples were going to be the instruments through which it would come. Jesus, however, knew that this New Covenant organism/organization would be established on the Absolute knowledge and faith of who He is, so He questioned His disciples about this fact.

MATTHEW 16:13-19

13 WHEN JESUS CAME INTO THE COASTS OF CAESAREA PHILIPPI, HE ASKED HIS DISCIPLES, SAYING, WHOM DO MEN SAY THAT I THE SON OF MAN AM?

14 AND THEY SAID, SOME SAY THAT THOU ART JOHN THE BAPTIST: SOME, ELIAS; AND OTHERS, JEREMIAS, OR ONE OF THE PROPHETS.

15 HE SAITH UNTO THEM, BUT WHOM SAY YE THAT I AM?

16 AND SIMON PETER ANSWERED AND SAID, THOU ART THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD.

17 AND JESUS ANSWERED AND SAID UNTO HIM, BLESSED ART THOU, SIMON BARJONA: FOR FLESH AND BLOOD HATH NOT REVEALED IT UNTO THEE, BUT MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.

18 AND I SAY ALSO UNTO THEE, THAT THOU ART PETER, AND UPON THIS ROCK I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH; AND THE GATES OF HELL SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT.

19 AND I WILL GIVE UNTO THEE THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN: AND WHATSOEVER THOU SHALT BIND ON EARTH SHALL BE BOUND IN HEAVEN: AND WHATSOEVER THOU SHALT LOOSE ON EARTH SHALL BE LOOSED IN HEAVEN.

After the questioning was over, Jesus gave the disciples the keys of the kingdom of heaven and proclaimed to them was going to be built on revelation knowledge. Since Jesus had just ascended into heaven, the question was: "How are the disciples going to continue to receive revelation knowledge without Jesus here to give it to them?" The answer is that the Holy Spirit would come to earth to continue the ministry of Jesus. The only difference would be that it would be done through believers as they operated under the anointing of the Holy Ghost.

JOHN 14:12

12 VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU, HE THAT BELIEVETH ON ME, THE WORKS THAT I DO SHALL HE DO ALSO; AND GREATER WORKS THAN THESE SHALL HE DO; BECAUSE I GO UNTO MY FATHER.

Jesus had given this information to the disciples, they just had to remember what He had told them.

JOHN 14:16-17

**16 AND I WILL PRAY THE FATHER, AND HE SHALL GIVE YOU ANOTHER COMFORTER, THAT HE MAY ABIDE WITH YOU FOR EVER;
17 EVEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH; WHOM THE WORLD CANNOT RECEIVE, BECAUSE IT SEETH HIM NOT, NEITHER KNOWETH HIM: BUT YE KNOW HIM; FOR HE DWELLETH WITH YOU, AND SHALL BE IN YOU.**

JOHN 14:26

26 BUT THE COMFORTER, WHICH IS THE HOLY GHOST, WHOM THE FATHER WILL SEND IN MY NAME, HE SHALL TEACH YOU ALL THINGS, AND BRING ALL THINGS TO YOUR REMEMBRANCE, WHATSOEVER I HAVE SAID UNTO YOU.

JOHN 16:7-11

**7 NEVERTHELESS I TELL YOU THE TRUTH; IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR YOU THAT I GO AWAY: FOR IF I GO NOT AWAY, THE COMFORTER WILL NOT COME UNTO YOU; BUT IF I DEPART, I WILL SEND HIM UNTO YOU.
8 AND WHEN HE IS COME, HE WILL REPROVE THE WORLD OF SIN, AND OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND OF JUDGMENT:
9 OF SIN, BECAUSE THEY BELIEVE NOT ON ME;
10 OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, BECAUSE I GO TO MY FATHER, AND YE SEE ME NO MORE;
11 OF JUDGMENT, BECAUSE THE PRINCE OF THIS WORLD IS JUDGED.**

Here Jesus was assuring the disciples that they were not going to have to carry the weight of the ministry all by themselves. Rather, the Holy Spirit would be here to help them minister and, not them alone, but all believers would be entitled to receive the Holy Spirit for the purpose of helping them fulfill the plan and ministry that God had placed on their lives. What I am saying is that this promise is for us today just as it was for the disciples two thousands years ago. Like the disciples, we are to share the plan of salvation so that others can be added to the Body of Christ. These people of God who have been newly won to the kingdom are to be called the ecclesia, that is, the church.

JOHN 16:13-14

**13 HOWBEIT WHEN HE, THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, IS COME, HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH: FOR HE SHALL NOT SPEAK OF HIMSELF; BUT WHATSOEVER HE SHALL HEAR, THAT SHALL HE SPEAK: AND HE WILL SHEW YOU THINGS TO COME.
14 HE SHALL GLORIFY ME: FOR HE SHALL RECEIVE OF MINE, AND SHALL SHEW IT UNTO YOU.**

ACTS 1:8

8 BUT YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER, AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU: AND YE SHALL BE WITNESSES UNTO ME BOTH IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDAEA, AND IN SAMARIA, AND UNTO THE UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH.

Notice the word "shall." Being a witness, producing fruit is not an option. We must be soul winners if we are going to be rewarded when we get to heaven. Also note that we are to be witnesses to the whole world. Unfortunately, the Christians grouped together in Jerusalem rather than witnessing to the world. They were being disobedient. Are we doing the same?

We know that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost to remain here on earth.

ACTS 2:1-47

1 AND WHEN THE DAY OF PENTECOST WAS FULLY COME, THEY WERE ALL WITH ONE ACCORD IN ONE PLACE.

2 AND SUDDENLY THERE CAME A SOUND FROM HEAVEN AS OF A RUSHING MIGHTY WIND, AND IT FILLED ALL THE HOUSE WHERE THEY WERE SITTING.

3 AND THERE APPEARED UNTO THEM CLOVEN TONGUES LIKE AS OF FIRE, AND IT SAT UPON EACH OF THEM.

4 AND THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST, AND BEGAN TO SPEAK WITH OTHER TONGUES, AS THE SPIRIT GAVE THEM UTTERANCE.

5 AND THERE WERE DWELLING AT JERUSALEM JEWS, DEVOUT MEN, OUT OF EVERY NATION UNDER HEAVEN.

6 NOW WHEN THIS WAS NOISED ABROAD, THE MULTITUDE CAME TOGETHER, AND WERE CONFOUNDED, BECAUSE THAT EVERY MAN HEARD THEM SPEAK IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE.

7 AND THEY WERE ALL AMAZED AND MARVELLED, SAYING ONE TO ANOTHER, BEHOLD, ARE NOT ALL THESE WHICH SPEAK GALILAEANS?

8 AND HOW HEAR WE EVERY MAN IN OUR OWN TONGUE, WHEREIN WE WERE BORN?

9 PARTHIANS, AND MEDES, AND ELAMITES, AND THE DWELLERS IN MESOPOTAMIA, AND IN JUDAEA, AND CAPPADOCIA, IN PONTUS, AND ASIA,

10 PHRYGIA, AND PAMPHYLIA, IN EGYPT, AND IN THE PARTS OF LIBYA ABOUT CYRENE, AND STRANGERS OF ROME, JEWS AND PROSELYTES,

11 CRETES AND ARABIANS, WE DO HEAR THEM SPEAK IN OUR TONGUES THE WONDERFUL WORKS OF GOD.

12 AND THEY WERE ALL AMAZED, AND WERE IN DOUBT, SAYING ONE TO ANOTHER, WHAT MEANETH THIS?

13 OTHERS MOCKING SAID, THESE MEN ARE FULL OF NEW WINE.

14 BUT PETER, STANDING UP WITH THE ELEVEN, LIFTED UP HIS VOICE, AND SAID UNTO THEM, YE MEN OF JUDAEA, AND ALL YE THAT DWELL AT JERUSALEM, BE THIS KNOWN UNTO YOU, AND HEARKEN TO MY WORDS:

15 FOR THESE ARE NOT DRUNKEN, AS YE SUPPOSE, SEEING IT IS BUT THE THIRD HOUR OF THE DAY.

16 BUT THIS IS THAT WHICH WAS SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET JOEL;

17 AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THE LAST DAYS, SAITH GOD, I WILL POUR OUT OF MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH: AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS:

18 AND ON MY SERVANTS AND ON MY HANDMAIDENS I WILL POUR OUT IN
THOSE DAYS OF MY SPIRIT; AND THEY SHALL PROPHECY:
19 AND I WILL SHEW WONDERS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, AND SIGNS IN THE EARTH
BENEATH; BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOUR OF SMOKE:
20 THE SUN SHALL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS, AND THE MOON INTO
BLOOD, BEFORE THAT GREAT AND NOTABLE DAY OF THE LORD COME:
21 AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS, THAT WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL ON THE
NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.
22 YE MEN OF ISRAEL, HEAR THESE WORDS; JESUS OF NAZARETH, A MAN
APPROVED OF GOD AMONG YOU BY MIRACLES AND WONDERS AND SIGNS,
WHICH GOD DID BY HIM IN THE MIDST OF YOU, AS YE YOURSELVES ALSO
KNOW:
23 HIM, BEING DELIVERED BY THE DETERMINATE COUNSEL AND
FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD, YE HAVE TAKEN, AND BY WICKED HANDS HAVE
CRUCIFIED AND SLAIN:
24 WHOM GOD HATH RAISED UP, HAVING LOOSED THE PAINS OF DEATH:
BECAUSE IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE THAT HE SHOULD BE HOLDEN OF IT.
25 FOR DAVID SPEAKETH CONCERNING HIM, I FORESAW THE LORD ALWAYS
BEFORE MY FACE, FOR HE IS ON MY RIGHT HAND, THAT I SHOULD NOT BE
MOVED:
26 THEREFORE DID MY HEART REJOICE, AND MY TONGUE WAS GLAD;
MOREOVER ALSO MY FLESH SHALL REST IN HOPE:
27 BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT LEAVE MY SOUL IN HELL, NEITHER WILT THOU
SUFFER THINE HOLY ONE TO SEE CORRUPTION.
28 THOU HAST MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; THOU SHALT MAKE
ME FULL OF JOY WITH THY COUNTENANCE.
29 MEN AND BRETHREN, LET ME FREELY SPEAK UNTO YOU OF THE
PATRIARCH DAVID, THAT HE IS BOTH DEAD AND BURIED, AND HIS
SEPULCHRE IS WITH US UNTO THIS DAY.
30 THEREFORE BEING A PROPHET, AND KNOWING THAT GOD HAD SWORN
WITH AN OATH TO HIM, THAT OF THE FRUIT OF HIS LOINS, ACCORDING TO
THE FLESH, HE WOULD RAISE UP CHRIST TO SIT ON HIS THRONE;
31 HE SEEING THIS BEFORE SPAKE OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST, THAT
HIS SOUL WAS NOT LEFT IN HELL, NEITHER HIS FLESH DID SEE
CORRUPTION.
32 THIS JESUS HATH GOD RAISED UP, WHEREOF WE ALL ARE WITNESSES.
33 THEREFORE BEING BY THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD EXALTED, AND HAVING
RECEIVED OF THE FATHER THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY GHOST, HE HATH
SHED FORTH THIS, WHICH YE NOW SEE AND HEAR.
34 FOR DAVID IS NOT ASCENDED INTO THE HEAVENS: BUT HE SAITH
HIMSELF, THE LORD SAID UNTO MY LORD, SIT THOU ON MY RIGHT HAND,
35 UNTIL I MAKE THY FOES THY FOOTSTOOL.
36 THEREFORE LET ALL THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL KNOW ASSUREDLY, THAT
GOD HATH MADE THAT SAME JESUS, WHOM YE HAVE CRUCIFIED, BOTH
LORD AND CHRIST.

37 NOW WHEN THEY HEARD THIS, THEY WERE PRICKED IN THEIR HEART, AND SAID UNTO PETER AND TO THE REST OF THE APOSTLES, MEN AND BRETHREN, WHAT SHALL WE DO?

38 THEN PETER SAID UNTO THEM, REPENT, AND BE BAPTIZED EVERY ONE OF YOU IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS, AND YE SHALL RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

39 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.

40 AND WITH MANY OTHER WORDS DID HE TESTIFY AND EXHORT, SAYING, SAVE YOURSELVES FROM THIS UNTOWARD GENERATION.

41 THEN THEY THAT GLADLY RECEIVED HIS WORD WERE BAPTIZED: AND THE SAME DAY THERE WERE ADDED UNTO THEM ABOUT THREE THOUSAND SOULS.

42 AND THEY CONTINUED STEDFASTLY IN THE APOSTLES' DOCTRINE AND FELLOWSHIP, AND IN BREAKING OF BREAD, AND IN PRAYERS.

43 AND FEAR CAME UPON EVERY SOUL: AND MANY WONDERS AND SIGNS WERE DONE BY THE APOSTLES.

44 AND ALL THAT BELIEVED WERE TOGETHER, AND HAD ALL THINGS COMMON;

45 AND SOLD THEIR POSSESSIONS AND GOODS, AND PARTED THEM TO ALL MEN, AS EVERY MAN HAD NEED.

46 AND THEY, CONTINUING DAILY WITH ONE ACCORD IN THE TEMPLE, AND BREAKING BREAD FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, DID EAT THEIR MEAT WITH GLADNESS AND SINGLENESS OF HEART,

47 PRAISING GOD, AND HAVING FAVOUR WITH ALL THE PEOPLE. AND THE LORD ADDED TO THE CHURCH DAILY SUCH AS SHOULD BE SAVED.

Once again, let me remind you that this experience is for us today. Look back at verses 38 and 39. These verses make it clear that all Christians can receive this gift of the Holy Ghost. And just like the church growth that occurred immediately after the Day of Pentecost, we can expect a similar growth in our churches today.

When we study the work of the Apostle Paul, we will learn about the Fruit of the Spirit and the operation of the Holy Ghost in church services. But for now, let us look at some of the occasions when the Holy Spirit was poured out on other individuals or groups of people.

ACTS 10:1-48

1 THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN IN CAESAREA CALLED CORNELIUS, A CENTURION OF THE BAND CALLED THE ITALIAN BAND,

2 A DEVOUT MAN, AND ONE THAT FEARED GOD WITH ALL HIS HOUSE, WHICH GAVE MUCH ALMS TO THE PEOPLE, AND PRAYED TO GOD ALWAY.

3 HE SAW IN A VISION EVIDENTLY ABOUT THE NINTH HOUR OF THE DAY AN ANGEL OF GOD COMING IN TO HIM, AND SAYING UNTO HIM, CORNELIUS.

4 AND WHEN HE LOOKED ON HIM, HE WAS AFRAID, AND SAID, WHAT IS IT, LORD? AND HE SAID UNTO HIM, THY PRAYERS AND THINE ALMS ARE COME UP FOR A MEMORIAL BEFORE GOD.

5 AND NOW SEND MEN TO JOPPA, AND CALL FOR ONE SIMON, WHOSE SURNAME IS PETER:

6 HE LODGETH WITH ONE SIMON A TANNER, WHOSE HOUSE IS BY THE SEA SIDE: HE SHALL TELL THEE WHAT THOU OUGHTEST TO DO.

7 AND WHEN THE ANGEL WHICH SPAKE UNTO CORNELIUS WAS DEPARTED, HE CALLED TWO OF HIS HOUSEHOLD SERVANTS, AND A DEVOUT SOLDIER OF THEM THAT WAITED ON HIM CONTINUALLY;

8 AND WHEN HE HAD DECLARED ALL THESE THINGS UNTO THEM, HE SENT THEM TO JOPPA.

9 ON THE MORROW, AS THEY WENT ON THEIR JOURNEY, AND DREW NIGH UNTO THE CITY, PETER WENT UP UPON THE ROOFTOP TO PRAY ABOUT THE SIXTH HOUR:

10 AND HE BECAME VERY HUNGRY, AND WOULD HAVE EATEN: BUT WHILE THEY MADE READY, HE FELL INTO A TRANCE,

11 AND SAW HEAVEN OPENED, AND A CERTAIN VESSEL DESCENDING UNTO HIM, AS IT HAD BEEN A GREAT SHEET KNIT AT THE FOUR CORNERS, AND LET DOWN TO THE EARTH:

12 WHEREIN WERE ALL MANNER OF FOURFOOTED BEASTS OF THE EARTH, AND WILD BEASTS, AND CREEPING THINGS, AND FOWLS OF THE AIR.

13 AND THERE CAME A VOICE TO HIM, RISE, PETER; KILL, AND EAT.

14 BUT PETER SAID, NOT SO, LORD; FOR I HAVE NEVER EATEN ANY THING THAT IS COMMON OR UNCLEAN.

15 AND THE VOICE SPAKE UNTO HIM AGAIN THE SECOND TIME, WHAT GOD HATH CLEANSED, THAT CALL NOT THOU COMMON.

16 THIS WAS DONE THRICE: AND THE VESSEL WAS RECEIVED UP AGAIN INTO HEAVEN.

17 NOW WHILE PETER DOUBTED IN HIMSELF WHAT THIS VISION WHICH HE HAD SEEN SHOULD MEAN, BEHOLD, THE MEN WHICH WERE SENT FROM CORNELIUS HAD MADE INQUIRY FOR SIMON'S HOUSE, AND STOOD BEFORE THE GATE,

18 AND CALLED, AND ASKED WHETHER SIMON, WHICH WAS SURNAMED PETER, WERE LODGED THERE.

19 WHILE PETER THOUGHT ON THE VISION, THE SPIRIT SAID UNTO HIM, BEHOLD, THREE MEN SEEK THEE.

20 ARISE THEREFORE, AND GET THEE DOWN, AND GO WITH THEM, DOUBTING NOTHING: FOR I HAVE SENT THEM.

21 THEN PETER WENT DOWN TO THE MEN WHICH WERE SENT UNTO HIM FROM CORNELIUS; AND SAID, BEHOLD, I AM HE WHOM YE SEEK: WHAT IS THE CAUSE WHEREFORE YE ARE COME?

22 AND THEY SAID, CORNELIUS THE CENTURION, A JUST MAN, AND ONE THAT FEARETH GOD, AND OF GOOD REPORT AMONG ALL THE NATION OF THE JEWS, WAS WARNED FROM GOD BY AN HOLY ANGEL TO SEND FOR THEE INTO HIS HOUSE, AND TO HEAR WORDS OF THEE.

23 THEN CALLED HE THEM IN, AND LODGED THEM. AND ON THE MORROW PETER WENT AWAY WITH THEM, AND CERTAIN BRETHERN FROM JOPPA ACCOMPANIED HIM.

24 AND THE MORROW AFTER THEY ENTERED INTO CAESAREA. AND CORNELIUS WAITED FOR THEM, AND HAD CALLED TOGETHER HIS KINSMEN AND NEAR FRIENDS.

25 AND AS PETER WAS COMING IN, CORNELIUS MET HIM, AND FELL DOWN AT HIS FEET, AND WORSHIPPED HIM.

26 BUT PETER TOOK HIM UP, SAYING, STAND UP; I MYSELF ALSO AM A MAN.

27 AND AS HE TALKED WITH HIM, HE WENT IN, AND FOUND MANY THAT WERE COME TOGETHER.

28 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, YE KNOW HOW THAT IT IS AN UNLAWFUL THING FOR A MAN THAT IS A JEW TO KEEP COMPANY, OR COME UNTO ONE OF ANOTHER NATION; BUT GOD HATH SHEWED ME THAT I SHOULD NOT CALL ANY MAN COMMON OR UNCLEAN.

29 THEREFORE CAME I UNTO YOU WITHOUT GAINSAYING, AS SOON AS I WAS SENT FOR: I ASK THEREFORE FOR WHAT INTENT YE HAVE SENT FOR ME?

30 AND CORNELIUS SAID, FOUR DAYS AGO I WAS FASTING UNTIL THIS HOUR; AND AT THE NINTH HOUR I PRAYED IN MY HOUSE, AND, BEHOLD, A MAN STOOD BEFORE ME IN BRIGHT CLOTHING,

31 AND SAID, CORNELIUS, THY PRAYER IS HEARD, AND THINE ALMS ARE HAD IN REMEMBRANCE IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.

32 SEND THEREFORE TO JOPPA, AND CALL HITHER SIMON, WHOSE SURNAME IS PETER; HE IS LODGED IN THE HOUSE OF ONE SIMON A TANNER BY THE SEA SIDE: WHO, WHEN HE COMETH, SHALL SPEAK UNTO THEE.

33 IMMEDIATELY THEREFORE I SENT TO THEE; AND THOU HAST WELL DONE THAT THOU ART COME. NOW THEREFORE ARE WE ALL HERE PRESENT BEFORE GOD, TO HEAR ALL THINGS THAT ARE COMMANDED THEE OF GOD.

34 THEN PETER OPENED HIS MOUTH, AND SAID, OF A TRUTH I PERCEIVE THAT GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS:

35 BUT IN EVERY NATION HE THAT FEARETH HIM, AND WORKETH RIGHTEOUSNESS, IS ACCEPTED WITH HIM.

36 THE WORD WHICH GOD SENT UNTO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, PREACHING PEACE BY JESUS CHRIST: (HE IS LORD OF ALL:)

37 THAT WORD, I SAY, YE KNOW, WHICH WAS PUBLISHED THROUGHOUT ALL JUDAEA, AND BEGAN FROM GALILEE, AFTER THE BAPTISM WHICH JOHN PREACHED;

38 HOW GOD ANOINTED JESUS OF NAZARETH WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND WITH POWER: WHO WENT ABOUT DOING GOOD, AND HEALING ALL THAT WERE OPPRESSED OF THE DEVIL; FOR GOD WAS WITH HIM.

39 AND WE ARE WITNESSES OF ALL THINGS WHICH HE DID BOTH IN THE LAND OF THE JEWS, AND IN JERUSALEM; WHOM THEY SLEW AND HANGED ON A TREE:

40 HIM GOD RAISED UP THE THIRD DAY, AND SHEWED HIM OPENLY;

41 NOT TO ALL THE PEOPLE, BUT UNTO WITNESSES CHOSEN BEFORE OF GOD, EVEN TO US, WHO DID EAT AND DRINK WITH HIM AFTER HE ROSE FROM THE DEAD.

42 AND HE COMMANDED US TO PREACH UNTO THE PEOPLE, AND TO TESTIFY THAT IT IS HE WHICH WAS ORDAINED OF GOD TO BE THE JUDGE OF QUICK AND DEAD.

43 TO HIM GIVE ALL THE PROPHETS WITNESS, THAT THROUGH HIS NAME WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH IN HIM SHALL RECEIVE REMISSION OF SINS.

44 WHILE PETER YET SPAKE THESE WORDS, THE HOLY GHOST FELL ON ALL THEM WHICH HEARD THE WORD.

45 AND THEY OF THE CIRCUMCISION WHICH BELIEVED WERE ASTONISHED, AS MANY AS CAME WITH PETER, BECAUSE THAT ON THE GENTILES ALSO WAS Poured OUT THE GIFT OF THE HOLY GHOST.

46 FOR THEY HEARD THEM SPEAK WITH TONGUES, AND MAGNIFY GOD. THEN ANSWERED PETER,

47 CAN ANY MAN FORBID WATER, THAT THESE SHOULD NOT BE BAPTIZED, WHICH HAVE RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST AS WELL AS WE?

48 AND HE COMMANDED THEM TO BE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. THEN PRAYED THEY HIM TO TARRY CERTAIN DAYS.

It took Peter going to the house of Cornelius before the gates were really open to the Gentiles.

ACTS 19:1-6

1 AND IT CAME TO PASS, THAT, WHILE APOLLOS WAS AT CORINTH, PAUL HAVING PASSED THROUGH THE UPPER COASTS CAME TO EPHESUS: AND FINDING CERTAIN DISCIPLES,

2 HE SAID UNTO THEM, HAVE YE RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST SINCE YE BELIEVED? AND THEY SAID UNTO HIM, WE HAVE NOT SO MUCH AS HEARD WHETHER THERE BE ANY HOLY GHOST.

3 AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, UNTO WHAT THEN WERE YE BAPTIZED? AND THEY SAID, UNTO JOHN'S BAPTISM.

4 THEN SAID PAUL, JOHN VERILY BAPTIZED WITH THE BAPTISM OF REPENTANCE, SAYING UNTO THE PEOPLE, THAT THEY SHOULD BELIEVE ON HIM WHICH SHOULD COME AFTER HIM, THAT IS, ON CHRIST JESUS.

5 WHEN THEY HEARD THIS, THEY WERE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS.

6 AND WHEN PAUL HAD LAID HIS HANDS UPON THEM, THE HOLY GHOST CAME ON THEM; AND THEY SPAKE WITH TONGUES, AND PROPHESED.

There are a couple more times when the Holy Spirit baptized some people, but the Scripture does not say they spoke with tongues. However, the Bible does indicate that there was a phenomenon of some sort which may have been speaking in tongues.

ACTS 4:29-31

29 AND NOW, LORD, BEHOLD THEIR THREATENINGS: AND GRANT UNTO THY SERVANTS, THAT WITH ALL BOLDNESS THEY MAY SPEAK THY WORD, 30 BY STRETCHING FORTH THINE HAND TO HEAL; AND THAT SIGNS AND WONDERS MAY BE DONE BY THE NAME OF THY HOLY CHILD JESUS.

31 AND WHEN THEY HAD PRAYED, THE PLACE WAS SHAKEN WHERE THEY WERE ASSEMBLED TOGETHER; AND THEY WERE ALL FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST, AND THEY SPAKE THE WORD OF GOD WITH BOLDNESS.

ACTS 8:14-28

14 NOW WHEN THE APOSTLES WHICH WERE AT JERUSALEM HEARD THAT SAMARIA HAD RECEIVED THE WORD OF GOD, THEY SENT UNTO THEM PETER AND JOHN:

15 WHO, WHEN THEY WERE COME DOWN, PRAYED FOR THEM, THAT THEY MIGHT RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST:

16 (FOR AS YET HE WAS FALLEN UPON NONE OF THEM: ONLY THEY WERE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS.)

17 THEN LAID THEY THEIR HANDS ON THEM, AND THEY RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST.

18 AND WHEN SIMON SAW THAT THROUGH LAYING ON OF THE APOSTLES' HANDS THE HOLY GHOST WAS GIVEN, HE OFFERED THEM MONEY,

19 SAYING, GIVE ME ALSO THIS POWER, THAT ON WHOMSOEVER I LAY HANDS, HE MAY RECEIVE THE HOLY GHOST.

Obviously, Simon witnessed something that was more than just Peter and John laying hands on some people. It may have been that it was speaking in tongues.

But for now, we can easily understand that God chose speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. In my opinion, the reason He did this is because it brings the tongue, which is the wickedest member of our bodies, under subjection when we speak in tongues.

JAMES 3:8

8 BUT THE TONGUE CAN NO MAN TAME; IT IS AN UNRULY EVIL, FULL OF DEADLY POISON.

This gift of the Holy Spirit was for so much more than just speaking in tongues. That was only one operation of the Spirit of God which was to assist the church in ministering to the lost and making disciples of the believers, both Jew and Gentile.

When Christ was here on earth, the church, in the full New Testament sense, did not exist. That is why Christ spoke of it as still future. It took Pentecost to bring the believers into one Spirit and one body. This is why we say that the church started at Pentecost. Actually, Pentecost just brought about a new era in the life of the church. This new beginning of the church took place entirely on Jewish ground. Only Israelites were recipients of the Spirit and only Jews were hearers of the preached word. For this reason, Pentecost was not in all respects the beginning of the present-day church. Israel was not set aside because of the failing to accept Christ while He was here. It was not until Israel refused the Holy Spirit, who had glorified before them the Messiah as having gone to heaven exalted.

Finally Israel had even murdered Stephen who, filled with the Holy Spirit, had testified to the resurrection, and thereby had confirmed this martyr's words.

ACTS 7:51

51 YE STIFFNECKED AND UNCIRCUMCISED IN HEART AND EARS, YE DO ALWAYS RESIST THE HOLY GHOST: AS YOUR FATHERS DID, SO DO YE.

The Spirit of God was given to these Gentiles as a like gift which had been given to the Jews. He came upon them in a like manner and without distinction.

ACTS 15:11

11 BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THROUGH THE GRACE OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST WE SHALL BE SAVED, EVEN AS THEY.

ACTS 15:9

9 AND PUT NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US AND THEM, PURIFYING THEIR HEARTS BY FAITH.

This was God's way of annulling the Old Testament distinction between clean and unclean. The "middle wall of partition," which separated Jew and Gentile, "was done away, not only in principle, but also historically. From that time the Gentile, without membership in the national Israel, partook fully in the same salvation as had been offered to the Jews.

ACTS 28:28

28 BE IT KNOWN THEREFORE UNTO YOU, THAT THE SALVATION OF GOD IS SENT UNTO THE GENTILES, AND THAT THEY WILL HEAR IT.