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# Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks  
Baptist Church  
Grand Prairie, Texas

Lesson Leaders:

James Haymon  
Jose Cisneros

Class Leaders:

Inreach: Pat Hester  
Outreach: Joyce Kirkland  
Secretary: Mary Clark  
Deacon: C M Hester

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

**THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:**

The human spirit fails unless the Holy Spirit fills

**PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:**

Lord, fill us with Thy Spirit's might That we may live as in Thy sight; On all Thy children lay Thy hand That they may live as Thou hast planned. —Lloyd

**SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:**

4 Such confidence we have through Christ before God. 5 Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. 6 He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

(2 Cor 3:4-6 NIV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", Nov 28, 1994)

Series: **THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY COMES ALIVE**

UNIT: Giving Bold Testimony

NEXT WEEK

**A Dynamic New Witness**  
(Acts 9:19-31)

## The Ministry of the Spirit Acts 8:9-24

**Aim and Application of the Lesson**

The lesson teaches about the true **Ministry of the Spirit**. The **study's aim** is to understand how we receive the Holy Spirit and to recognize erroneous teachings about receiving the Holy Spirit. The **study's application** is rely on the Holy Spirit's ministry in our lives.

*(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)*

**Lesson Introduction and Background**

Just before ascending to Heaven, Jesus told the apostles that they were to testify about him "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). Acts 2-7 covers the first stage of the plan as the apostles took the lead in proclaiming Christ in Jerusalem; the result was that thousands accepted Jesus as Messiah (2:41; 4:4; 6:7). During this time, two non-apostles by the names Stephen and Philip rose to prominence as Spirit-filled leaders. Initially, these two were included in the group of seven appointed to manage the church's benevolence ministry (Acts 6:1-6). Both were also active as evangelists, and this work led to persecution: Stephen's death by stoning and Philip's departure from Jerusalem (7:59, 60; 8:1b-5). These circumstances resulted in Philip's being a key figure in the spread of the gospel. Leaving Jerusalem, he "went down to a city in Samaria" (Acts 8:5), where he found a receptive audience (8:6-8). Since the death of King Solomon in about 931 BC, the tribes of Israel had been divided into two groups, with the 10 northern tribes following kings who eventually ruled in a city of Samaria (1 Kings 12:25-30; 16:23-29; etc.). The rift between the two groups widened after many in the northern tribes were taken into exile in 722 BC and their territory re-colonized with non-Israelites (2 Kings 17:1-6, 24). That situation resulted in intermarriages, leading "pure blood" Jews to view their Samaritan neighbors as spiritually and racially impure (Ezra 4:1-5; Nehemiah 4:1, 2). Looking past historical differences, Philip followed the example of Jesus in outreach to the Samaritans (see John 4:1-42). Philip's message was confirmed with miraculous displays of power that included exorcisms and healings (Acts 8:6, 7). Through the power of Christ, the long-awaited messianic age had finally come even to Samaritans.

Visitors to the Vatican in Rome may be surprised to see an unusual painting that depicts a struggle between two men. One of the men seems to be levitating in the air while the other, standing on the ground in a crowd of people, points his hands toward Heaven. The painting reflects an early Christian legend that holds less hope for Simon the sorcerer than Acts 8 might allow. According to the legend, Simon founded a heretical sect and moved to Rome to propagate his teachings by continuing to practice sorcery. Simon Peter, hearing of the sorcerer's growing influence, went to Rome to challenge him yet again. Rather than repenting on this occasion, Simon attempted to prove his superior power by flying through the air. The apostle Simon Peter supposedly responded by calling on God to expose the man's wickedness, which resulted in Simon's falling from the sky and breaking his leg, an injury that led to his death. Of course, there is little reason to believe this legend, and the true ending of Simon the sorcerer's story cannot be known. But that does not detract from seeing two very different approaches to the gifts and power of God in today's text: that of Simon the sorcerer, who sought to use God to serve his own purposes, and that of Simon Peter the apostle, who did the exact opposite. The legacy of Simon Peter is that of a foundational figure who was instrumental not only in helping birth the church but also in protecting her purity. The selfishness of the other Simon, by contrast, has made his name a lasting symbol of greed and false motives

*(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)*

## NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

### **BEWARE OF DECEPTIVE SPIRITUAL POWERS (ACTS 8:9-11)**

#### *Deceptive practices (9)*

Deceptive practices that must be repented (Zech 1:6)

Deceptive practices that causes one not to dwell in God's house (Ps 101:7)

Deceptive practices that bring God's wrath (Ezek 6:11-13)

#### *Deceptive influence (10)*

Influence through false prophets that come as wolf in sheep's clothing (Matt 7:15)

Influence to turn away from the faith (Matt 24:10-13)

Influence through destructive heresies (2 Peter 2:1-2)

Influence through performing false signs and wonders (Matt 24:24)

#### *Deceptive results (11)*

Results that come out of doubt (James 1:6-8)

Results that come from walking in darkness (1 John 1:6)

Results that bear bad fruit (Matt 7:17-20)

### **ROLE OF BAPTISM (ACTS 8:12-14)**

#### *It starts with hearing God's Word (12)*

Hearing so that belief is confirmed (Rom 10:14)

Hearing so that faith is strengthened (Rom 10:17)

Hearing because it is the Word of God (1 Thess 2:13)

#### *It is accomplished through faith (13)*

Faith in the baptism into one Spirit (1 Cor 12:13)

Faith in the baptism and clothing with Jesus (Gal 3:27)

Faith in the baptism into a good conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:21)

#### *It is a outward sign for others (14)*

A baptism that signified repentance (Acts 19:1-7)

A baptism that symbolized being buried with Jesus (Col 2:11-12)

A baptism that symbolized death (Rom 6:4)

### **RECEIVING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (ACTS 8:15-17)**

#### *Through prayer (15)*

Pray to God for the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:11-13)

Prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 4:10)

Prayer for the thirst of the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-39)

#### *Through being born again (16)*

Born again through the Word (James 1:18)

Born again through the power of God, not man (John 1:12-13)

Born again through belief in Jesus (1 John 5:1)

#### *Through laying on of hands (17)*

To be filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17)

Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands (1 Tim 5:22)

For the receipt of the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:6)

### **MISUNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT (ACTS 8:18-24)**

#### *Misunderstanding of the source (18-19)*

Misunderstanding that could never be forgiven (Matt 12:24,31)

Misunderstanding that should be tested (1 John 4:1)

Misunderstanding that can be corrected by the Spirit of truth (John 15:26)

#### *Misunderstanding of the gift (20-21)*

Gift of the Holy Spirit is a deposit guaranteeing ownership of God (2 Cor 1:22)

Gift of the Holy Spirit is to signify being a child of God (Gal 4:6)

Gift of the Holy Spirit is a seal until redemption (Eph 1:13-14)

#### *Misunderstanding of the remedy (22-24)*

A repentance that results in sins being forgiven and a refreshing of the spirit (Acts 3:19)

A repentance that has as it foundation godly sorrow (2 Cor 7:10-11)

A repentance that causes one to forsake evil thoughts and ways (Isa 55:7)