

The Book of Acts

(NT6320)



**“ You shall be My
witnesses . . . unto
the ends of the
Earth”**

Acts 1:8

Prof. David H. Warren
Amridge University

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Acts chapters 7–8

What about Acts 8:16–20?

The **first person** that we know of who argued from Acts 8:18 that only the apostles could pass on miraculous gifts to others was John Chrysostom (writing about A.D. 400).

In commenting upon the distinction between the Seven Deacons of Acts 6:3–6 and the Apostles, **Chrysostom** says:

« . . . for they [i.e., the Seven Deacons] had received power to work miracles [Acts 6:6], but not also to impart the Spirit to others: this was the **prerogative** of the Apostles [Acts 8:18–19]. »

John Chrysostom, *Homily 18.3 on the Acts of the Apostles*, = *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, First series*, vol. 11, p. 115 (written about A.D. 400)

**But remember Chrysostom's
comment on 1 Cor 12:1–2:**

**« This whole place is very obscure:
but the obscurity is produced by our
ignorance of the facts. . . . »**

**John Chrysostom, *Homily 29.1 on First
Corinthians* = *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers, First
series, vol. 12, p. 168* (written about A.D. 400)**

The Traditional View

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- **Acts 2 (Pentecost):** The Apostles **alone** received Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4–5 = Acts 2:1–4), but the 3,000 receive the “gift” or indwelling (Acts 2:38–39 = Acts 5:32)

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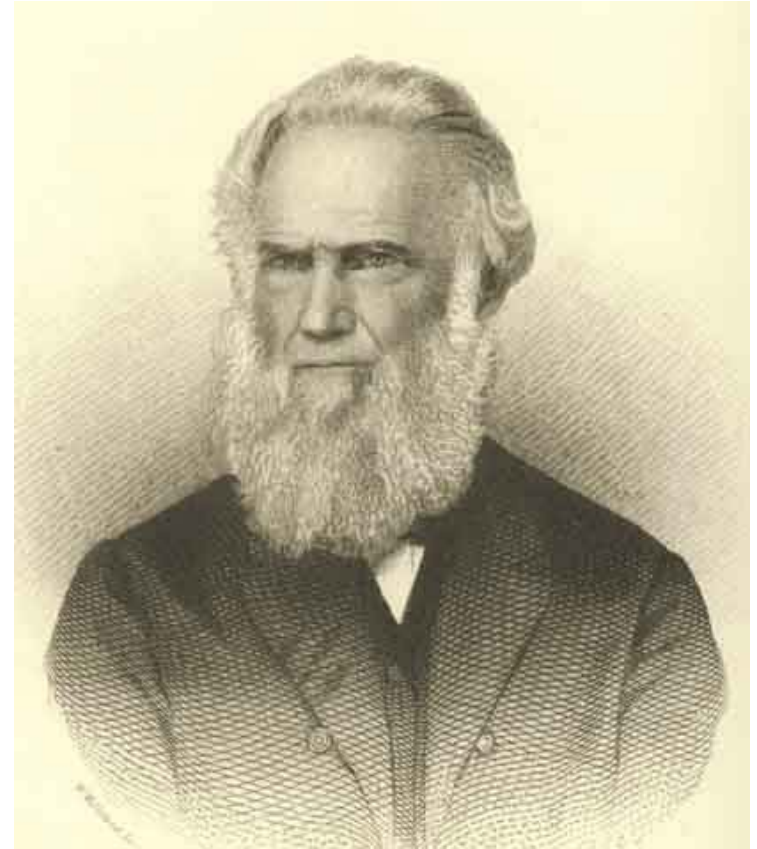
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- **Acts 19 (12 Ephesians):** The Ephesians received the “gift” or indwelling (at their baptism in Acts 19:5) and then received miraculous gifts at the laying on of Paul’s hands (Acts 8:6)

The Traditional View



John W. McGarvey
(1829–1911)



James Challen
(1802–1878)

The Traditional View

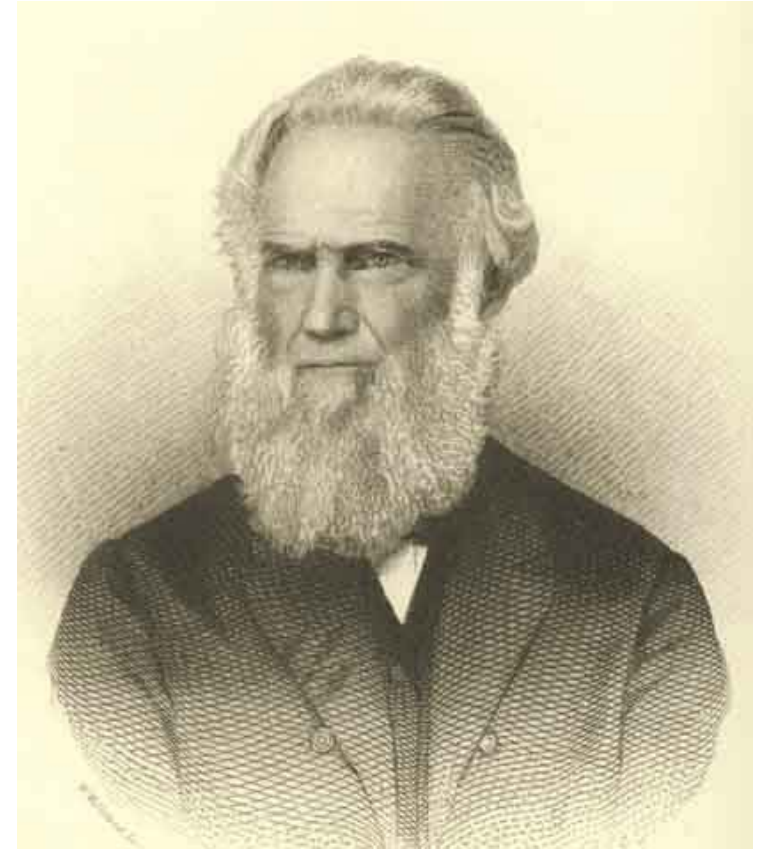


In **1863**, McGarvey published *A Commentary on Acts of Apostles*.

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The Traditional View

Four years before, in **1859**, Challen published *Baptism in the Holy Spirit and Fire*.



James Challen
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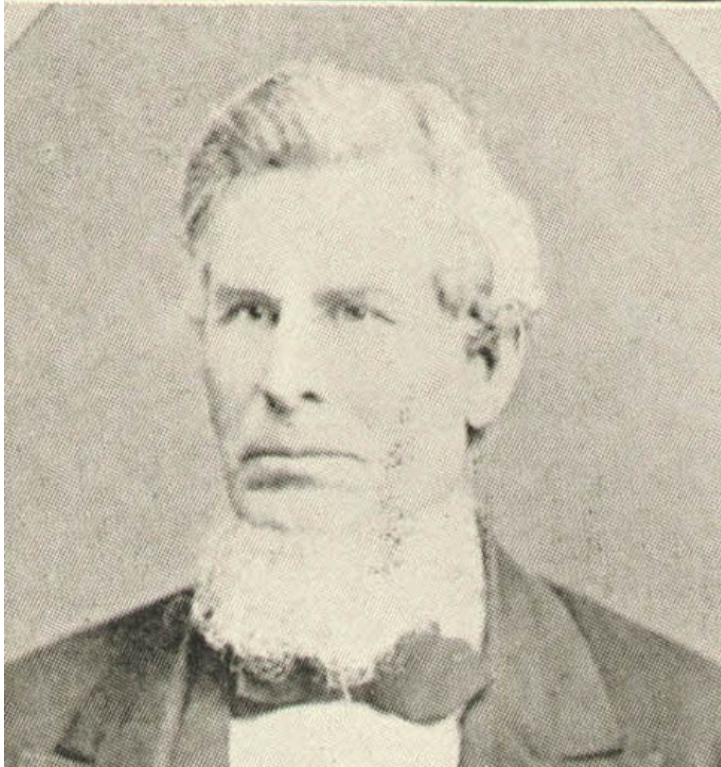
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- (1) The Apostles** at Pentecost in Acts 2
- (2) Cornelius**, his family, and his friends in Acts 10

An Alternative View



Moses E. Lard
(1818–1880)

In March of
1864, Lard
published an article
entitled “Baptism in
One Spirit into One
Body” in *Lard’s*
***Quarterly*.**

LARD'S QUARTERLY.

VOL. I.

MARCH, 1864.

No. 3.

SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE AS IT RELATES TO THE CHRISTIAN.

IN a former article it was stated that the subject of Spiritual Influence is distributable into two parts; the first relating to the sinner, the second to the Christian. In that article the first part was treated of; in the present paper we propose to treat of the second part. As pertinent to the object we now have in view we cite the following passage of Scripture:

Moses E. Lard

BAPTISM IN ONE SPIRIT INTO ONE BODY.

“FOR by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free: and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” 1 Cor. xii: 13.

The question, how is it that by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body? has, heretofore, caused no little perplexity; and as long as it is put in the words here used, it will never cause less. I propose to devote the present article to the solution of the difficulty. Whether I shall be successful or not must be left to the decision of the candid reader. I am anxious to awaken inquiry in regard to the question, and if in the end I shall be so fortunate as to elicit, from any source, its true solution, then will this preliminary piece have been written to good effect.

In order to keep my remarks within proper limits and to free

An Alternative View

In this study, Lard proposed that what is called “baptism in the Holy Spirit” in the Bible is nothing more than what we know as “the Gift of the Holy Spirit” or simply “the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.”

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- **The Gift (δωρεά) of the Holy Spirit—John 4:10 (= 7:37–39); Acts 2:38; Acts 8:20; 10:45; 11:17; Heb 6:4**
- **The Promise of the Holy Spirit—Acts 1:4; 2:33, 38–39; Gal 3:14; Eph 1:13**

J. W. McGarvey on Acts 8:16

(New Commentary on Acts, vol. 1, pp. 141–42)

- « . . . the Samaritans, having believed the gospel and been baptized, were . . . according to Peter’s answer on Pentecost (Acts ii. 38), pardoned and in possession of the “gift of the Holy Spirit.” »

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- According to McGarvey, the Samaritans already had the “gift of the Holy Sprit” = the non-miraculous indwelling of Acts 2:38

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- **But this assumption seems contradicted by Luke’s statement in Acts 8:20**
- **The “Gift” (δωρεά) was the promised Indwelling of the Holy Spirit—John 4:10 (= 7:37–39); Acts 2:33, 38–39; Acts 8:20; 10:45; 11:17; Heb 6:4**

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- **Unless Luke is trying to confuse us by using the very same language to describe different phenomena, he has Peter telling us here in **Acts 8:20** that the Samaritans had not yet received “the gift,” the non-miraculous indwelling of Acts 2:38, until the Apostles Peter and John had come to them.**

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- **The church was unified (Acts 9:31)**

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The Laying on of Hands

« We do not receive the Holy Spirit in the water. But having been cleansed in the in the water . . . , we are prepared for the Holy Spirit. . . . And then the hand is laid on us, invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit through a benediction. »



Tertullian
(writing about A.D. 198)

(Tertullian, *Concerning Baptism* 6.1; 8:1)

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**(4) imparting a spiritual (miraculous) gift
(*χάρισμα*) to another (1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6)**

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- **McGarvey once more: « In the preceding remarks on the incident before us, it has been assumed that the gift of the Spirit imparted was miraculous. This assumption is justified by the fact that it was a matter of observation to the bystanders, . . . » , and he cites Acts 8:18 (*New Commentary on Acts*, vol. 1, p. 145).**

But weren't miraculous gifts involved in Acts 8:17–18?

- **Yet Luke's language of "receiving" the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15–19; cf. John 7:39; 2:38; 10:47; 19:2; Rom 8:15; 1 Cor 2:12; Gal 3:2, 14 2:38) and the "gift" (δωρεά, Acts 8:20; cf. John 4:10 [= 7:37–39]; Acts 2:38; 10:45; 11:17; Heb 6:4) would seem to imply that he is talking about the same phenomenon as in Acts 2:38, the non-miraculous indwelling that all believers receive at their baptism.**

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- **Thus, here in Acts 8:15–20, Luke is perhaps talking about the ordinary, non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit that all Christians are to receive, but then he is also talking about an attendant circumstance that is miraculous in nature.**

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- **When you were immersed in water, *how* did you know that you received the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit?**

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- **When you were immersed in water, *how* did you know that you received the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit? (Because Scripture tells you so in **Acts 2:38; 5:32**).**

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- When you were immersed in water, *how* did you know that you received the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit? (Because Scripture tells you so in **Acts 2:38; 5:32**).
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- When you were immersed in water, *how* did you know that you received the non-miraculous indwelling of the Holy Spirit? (Because Scripture tells you so in **Acts 2:38; 5:32**).
- So *how* would the Samaritans in Acts 8:15–20 know? (Unlike us, they could not turn and read **Acts 2:38; 5:32**, since it was **not yet written** at that time!).

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- However, there was also a *miraculous* attendant circumstance, something that Simon could “see” (Acts 8:17–18).
- This miraculous attendant circumstance was *not* actually a part of the phenomenon of receiving the Holy Spirit itself.

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 - **What was this *miraculous* attendant circumstance? Speaking in tongues! (see Acts 10:44–46; 19:1–7).**
 - **Speaking in tongues was a “sign” intended for those who do not believe (1 Cor 14:22).**

The Sign of Speaking in Tongues (1 Cor 14:22)

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Should we add **Acts 8:17–18** to this list?

