VCBC SLG 2022 Fall Term
The Book of Acts
Session #7: The Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts—Chapters 10

I left out the notes on discussing if the Apostle Paul's had simply switched from one form of extremism to another as he was converted by Christ on the road to Damascus from the last lesson. So, here it is:

Extremist-mentality

One final thought that perhaps gets buried in your mind as we reflect on the life of the Apostle Paul and that is

"Was Paul not substituting one ideology with another as an extremist? Afterall does not the world liken religious zeal like opium?"

- It is true that Saul was an extremist who took his zeal for the Law inherited from his "fathers" to an extreme level, but as he puts it, it was out of "ignorance" that led him to reject Christ and ushered him as a persecutor of the church. In other words, it was a case of misguided "knowledge" (I Tim 1: 13)
- However, the basis of an extremist, as many psychologists put it, is a lack of identity and as some Christian psychologists would put it, a lack of meaningful purpose of life.
- Thus, Saul, as zealous as he was for the Law, never found fulfillment, peace and purpose of life.

Now that he has found Christ, as much as from the outside, he might seem to be the same extremist and religious zealot, it was totally different from the inside out:

- Study after study shows that an extremist is *cognitively deficient*, slowing in processing ideas and thus less capable of discerning truth from falsehood
    - Paul was not only cognitively sound, but in the words of King Agrippa he was of "great learning" (Acts 26:24)
    - Except that now, he did not only use his great learning to defend the cause of Christ, but he also totally surrendered his great mind and learning as inferior to God's knowledge and wisdom (I Cor. 2).
- An extremist is marked by *impulsive behavior*, but Paul did not only preach patience and self-control, he also demonstrated his submission to the will of God all the time, waiting and praying before God.
- An extremist seeks *sensation,* but Paul cautions believers to avoid sensationalism especially when it comes to charismatic manifestations like tongue-speaking (I Cor. 14)
- An extremist takes risky experience. Sure, Paul was not afraid of taking risk for the sake of the gospel, but never for the sake of making a name for himself, like an extremist. In fact, an extremist would go so far as to risk his life as a form of self-sacrifice, but Paul points out if one sacrifices oneself by being burned in the flame, if it is not done for agape love—i.e. out of love for people and obedience and love of God, then one is "nothing" (I Cor. 13:3).

No, Paul did not fit the modern profile of an extremist, and he was not replacing his former religious ideology with Christianity, because being a disciple of Jesus Christ to him is not an institutional ideology

or identification, but a love relationship with Jesus Christ "who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Galatians 2:20)

From now on, he lives for Christ

- Not as a self-fulfillment
- Not for self-gratification, and
- Not as self-identification

All because, as he puts it, "I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."

Therefore, since there is no greater love than one who lays down his life for his friends (John 15:13), to live and to die for Him as compelled by His love is not extremism, but rather being fully human after God's image!

I. Introduction to Lesson 7 on the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts

In the beginning of our study of the Book of Acts, I have mentioned that since the work of the Holy Spirit permeated throughout this book, it had been called the Acts of the Holy Spirit historically or the Gospel of the Holy Spirit.

If we put ourselves in the shoes of the Christians in the 1st century, we now not only have a much clearer and systematic knowledge of the Holy Spirit and His work, but we can also imagine how overwhelmed they might have been seeing and experiencing the work and manifestation of the Holy Spirit—such an overwhelming experience appears to be missing in the life of today's Christians.

When it comes to a "much clearer and systematic knowledge" of the Holy Spirit, we have to admit that much of it has been provided by the Book of Acts.

It is true that Luke does not spell out the work of the Holy Spirit as systematically as Paul does

- Paul even provides us with a list of the "fruit" of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 4: 22-23; and
- Points out clearly *positionally* that the Holy Spirit is the seal or deposit of our redemption in Ephesians 1:14; 4:30, and
- *Experientially* the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God's children enabling us to even call God, *Abba* Father in Romans 8: 15-16; Galatians 4: 6.

However, within the Book of Acts, the Holy Spirit is mentioned directly or indirectly over 58 times, giving us a fuller picture of not only of the work of the Holy Spirit, but also how He is manifested.

II. The Holy Spirit (and Trinity) in the Old Testament

(1) First, we have to understand that the Book of Acts testifies to the fact that the Holy Spirit in the New Testament is the same Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. There is no difference:

- Peter in Acts 1:16 affirmed that the Holy Spirit is the one who spoke "**through the mouth of David concerning (the prophecy about) Judas.**"
- The disciples together with Peter and John also affirmed in Acts 4:25 God spoke "through the mouth of…our father David" when they quoted from the writings in Psalm 2 about the raging of the nations against God's Anointed One.

- Paul in Acts 28: 25 also told his Jewish audience in Rome that it was the Holy Spirit who spoke through the prophet Isaiah the condemning words to the forefathers in of Isaiah 6:9ff.

Thus, in the over 58 times that the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Book of Acts, Luke does not distinguish between the Holy Spirit of the Old Testament from the One who actively manifests Himself through the lives, words and ministries of the Apostles and believers in the New Testament. It is the one same Spirit who is at work since the beginning of time and throughout the history of mankind.

(2) The Holy Spirit as the 3rd Person of the Trinity

As you probably know that one of the clearest revelations of God as "God in three persons" or the "Triune God" comes the words of our Lord Jesus as He commissions His disciples into the world to baptize "**in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit**" (Matthews 28:19). The Greek construction of the sentence makes it clear that Father, Son and the Holy Spirit have only one name, and in biblical times, a name "denoted the very nature and being of a person." (Keller, *Prayer*, 67)

[In Keller's book on prayers, I have found one of his arguments concerning the Trinity rather profound in that logically God could not have been called a God of love until He has created an object (like human) to love, except that by nature God is love exactly because He is of three persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—each is in complete union (and communication) with one another. By the way, the word "person" is a theological term coined by the early fathers in Latin which means "mask".]

Yes, throughout the Holy Scriptures, one cannot find the term "Trinity", and it is the same with the Book of Acts. However, just the same, the fact of the "Trinity" is made obvious throughout the book, working together as One

- Luke says in Acts 1:2 that Jesus, before being taken up to heaven was "giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles";
- Jesus tells the apostles to wait in Jerusalem "for the gift my Father promised…the Holy Spirit" in Acts 1:4-5;
- Peter testifies that, "Jesus…exalted to the right hand of God…has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear", referring to their speaking in tongues (Acts 2:33)
- In Acts 8: 39 Luke refers to the sudden departure of Philip in front of the Ethiopia Eunuch as being taken up by "the Spirit of the Lord" ("Lord" is the Greek translation of the word, "Yahweh")
- A most interesting reference to the Holy Spirit is found in Acts 16, as Paul and his companions sought to move from a rather successful ministry at Paul's 2nd missionary journey in Phrygia and Galatia westward to the province of Asia and was "kept by the Holy Spirit" from doing so, and while they "tried" to move northward to Bithynia, "but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them" (Acts 16: 6-7)

While we cannot be sure why the Book of Acts would choose to use different "names" to refer to the Holy Spirit, but as we have been assured by Jesus that "Father, Son and the Holy Spirit" share one name only, it only serves to reinforce the fact of the complete unity of "God in three persons".

- Thus, we find that when Ananias lied about the proceeds of the sale of his land, Peter charged him of lying to "the Holy Spirit" and when his wife did the same, Peter charged her of testing "the Spirit of the Lord" (Acts 5: 3, 9)

(3) Is "Personhood" a new phenomenon of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts?

I think, I have cited enough verses from the Book of Acts to prove the point of "God in three persons", now some scholars opine that while the Holy Spirit of OT is the same as the One in NT, the work in the two eras are markedly different. Let's explore this opinion a bit:

(a) In their opinion, it is only in the NT that the Holy Spirit takes on "personhood' as He speaks often to individuals:
    a. He "**told Philip to go to that chariot and stay near**." (Acts 8:29)
    b. He "**told Simon three men are looking for you**." (Acts 10:19)
(b) Also, the church is being encouraged (or comforted) by the Holy Spirit (Acts9:31)
(c) The Holy Spirit also told the church and said, "**Set apart Paul and Barnabas for the work**…" (Acts 13: 2) and
(d) As mentioned previously, the Holy Spirit can be lied to and tested against (Acts 5)

And so, scholars like Francois Boron opine that "**The Holy Spirit gains a personal status for Luke**." (Powell, *What*, 52)

I think they are right to a certain extent in that they have clearly pointed out that in Acts, it certainly proves beyond a doubt that the Holy Spirit has "personhood". However, if we care to observe the description of the Holy Spirit (in over 80 times) in the OT, we will find that just as Luke's depiction, the Holy Spirit has "personhood"

- The Holy Spirit *grieves* for our sins:
  In rebuking the Israelites, like what Isaiah says in Isaiah 60:10: "**Yet they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit**"
- The Spirit of the Lord *gives rest* to our souls:
  In recounting God's goodness to Israel, Isaiah 60:14 says, "**they were given rest by the Spirit of the Lord.**"
- The Holy Spirit is the Spirit *who sends*:
  "**Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke with him (Moses), and he took some of the power of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied—but did not do so again**." (Numbers 11:25)
- The Holy Spirit certainly *speaks* to individuals
  "**Then the Spirit came into me (Ezekiel) and raised me to my feet. He spoke to me and said: 'Go, shut yourself inside your house**.'" (Ezekiel 3:24)

Apart from the issue of "personhood", the Holy Spirit manifests in much the same way in both OT and NT

- Often the Spirit emboldens and empowers His servants to speak, both in the OT and in the NT
    - "**But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the Lord, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin."** (Micah 3:8)
    - "**After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly**." (Acts 4:31)

Indeed, if we care to study the work of the Holy Spirit in greater details in the OT, you will find that He did come upon people, fill people with Himself, enabled people to prophesy and more just as He continues to do in the N.T.

No, we do not have a different Holy Spirit in the New Testament.

III. The Distinct Ministry of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament

Having said that there is one distinct function of the Holy Spirit in the time of the New Testament that is highlighted by the word "**receive**" that is foreign to the work of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

- The reception of the Holy Spirit is highlighted by the Lord Jesus upon His resurrection as He imparts the Holy Spirit to the disciples:
  "**And with that He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit**." (John 22:20)
- Such is followed by Peter declaring to the first bunch of new believers at Pentecost saying.
  "**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**." (Acts 2:38)
- And this call to repentance which is invariably followed by the reception of the Holy Spirit into the believer's lives repeats itself throughout the Book of Acts the importance of which is revealed with these words of Peter: "**God, who knows the heart, showed that He accepted them (the Gentile believers) by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us…No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are**." (Acts 15: 8-11)
- Indeed, the reception of the Holy Spirit by the believers marks their salvation as Paul puts it: "**When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit…a deposit guaranteeing our (eternal) inheritance.**" (Ephesians 1: 13-14)

[The natural question that is being asked, as a result, is: since there was no apparent teaching and practice of the reception of the Holy Spirit unto salvation in the Old Testament, *how were OT believers saved and did they also have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit*?

This is obviously a huge theological issue that the OT itself has not provided as clear cut answer as does the NT, and since this issue is really academic (and of no relevance to us today), I will briefly draw your attention to the following:

1. All the OT believers were saved, just as we are, by faith alone, not by works—that is an unchanging biblical principle throughout salvation history (Paul argues extensively in Romans 4)
2. As much as they did not have the privilege of the knowledge of the effectual atoning sacrifice of Christ through His death on the cross, their faith in the effectual consequence of the animal sacrifice that foreshadowed the eventual sacrifice of Christ "imputes" the merit of the atoning work of Christ on behalf of all humankind—i.e. Christ's atoning sacrifice transcends all times;
3. While the OT believers might not be cognitively aware of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, it does not mean that the Holy Spirit did not dwell within them. David is one of the exceptions in that he appeared to be conscious of the presence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as he pled with God, "take not Thy Holy Spirit from me" (Psalm 51:11)

4. Perhaps, the OT believers were not as obsessed as we are about absolute clarity of theology—their simple faith allowed them to trust in God in every aspect of their lives, both in the here and now and the life after. Hence, we cannot find too much "theology" about resurrection and the life after in the OT. Thus, Abraham believed in God and was "credited" with righteousness (Gen. 15) and then he continued to walk with God on earth and yet, looked forward to the eternal city at the same time (Heb. 11)—without any questions about "indwelling of the Holy Spirit", because he knew God was with him and that was enough!
5. I tend to believe that the "obsession" with theologizing is a product of Greek's obsession with philosophy which had been exaggerated many times over because of the Enlightenment!]

IV. The Confusing Terms concerning the work of the Holy Spirit

Since, we are the product of Enlightenment, we still have to deal with what seems to be a perpetual confusion over the various terms used of the work of the Holy Spirit, and we shall attempt to deal with those mentioned in the Book of Acts in particular:

- The reception of the Holy Spirit:
  - Does it happen at the time of our decision to repent and believe in Christ?
  - Does it happen only at the time of baptism?
  - Does it happen upon the laying of hands of the Apostles at the time of the Book of Acts? If so, why?
- Does the speaking in tongue necessarily accompany (as a sign) of the reception of the Holy Spirit?
  - In other words, without being able to speak in tongue at the time of belief and/or baptism, does one really have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

Before, we attempt to address the above, we should remember that "we should not put the Holy Spirit in a box", because as Paul puts it, the Holy Spirit works "just as He determines." (I Corinthians 12:11).

- No, it does not mean that God does not have any spiritual principles and His Spirit works just as He pleases without principles—God is unchanging, and so are His words! We can be sure of this!
- But under His unchanging principles
  - He is not bound or limited by any circumstances
  - We are limited by our time and space
  - Not the Holy Spirit!

So, when it comes to the reception (i.e., the indwelling) of the Holy Spirit in us

- It only happens through our faith in Christ and
- He will dwell within anyone who believes in Christ, giving them eternal life and as a seal of their redemption
- This is an unchanging truth, God's truth!

However, the ways in which the Holy Spirit would dwell within the believers (i.es its manifestations), is truly determined by the Holy Spirit as we witness in the Book of Acts, the "varieties" in which this happened speak to the reason behind each variety. Such reasons, if we care to study the context of each

incident, are not hard to discern. So, it is important to refresh our mind with the background of the Book of Acts:

(1) The Background:

- After the ascension of our Lord, the task of the building up of the Kingdom of God through the spread of the gospel lies squarely on the shoulders of the Apostles who are the 1st-hand eyewitnesses of His life, ministry, teachings, death and resurrection
    - Therefor, it is important to establish the "authority" of these Apostles
    - Their authority was recognized beyond a doubt, even "Simon, the sorcerer" sought to bribe the Apostles in order to receive the power and authority to impart the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying of hands;
    - Such authority goes beyond the imparting of the Holy Spirit to the eventual need to establish orthodoxy of gospel truth to counter heresies at a later time.
    - While I might be a little too harsh on Peter's setting the criteria in choosing the replacement of Judas in Acts 1, but the criteria, in themselves are the basis of their authority as "**(they had) accompanied…the Lord Jesus (going) in and out, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us,"** only then **"one (can) be ordained to be a witness…of His resurrection**." (Acts 1: 21-22)
    - So, such was the basis of their authority, which Paul, in essence was fully qualified also as **"last of all He (Jesus) appeared to (him)."** (I Cor. 15: 8)
- We have also seen how slow the Apostles (and the Jewish believers whom they nurtured) had come to giving up their bias of a Jew-only gospel, as they stubbornly refused to accept a Gospel for all nations. Such as bias had become a huge obstacle in bringing the gospel beyond Jerusalem and Judea both geographically and ethnically, hampering the fulfillment of the Great Commission clearly given to them by our Lord (Matthew 28: 18-20; Acts 1:8)
    - This accounted for the main reason why the Holy Spirit has chosen to act in a variety of ways to show that Gentiles are equal sharers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

(2) The Varieties or variations of the reception of the Holy Spirit

- Take Acts 10: 44-48 as an example:
  "**While Peter was still speaking these words, the <u>Holy Spirit came on</u> all who heard the message. 45 The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. 46 For they <u>heard them speaking in tongues</u> and praising God. Then Peter said, 47 "Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. <u>They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."</u> 48 So he ordered that <u>they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ</u>. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days**."
    - These Gentile believers accepted the gospel message, even before Peter's call for repentance and the Holy Spirit knew their hearts and came upon them at the moment of their belief.
    - The indwelling of the Holy Spirit happened before baptism and their laying of hands (assumed to be part of the ritual of baptism)—thus making clear that baptism, as important as it is, is not a "sacrament" that conveys the grace of salvation)

- The Speaking of tongue makes it an unmistakeable outward sign that convinced Peter and the circumcised believers that these Gentiles believers are saved, just as they have been.

- But Acts 19: 1-6 serves as an example of contrast:

"**While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found <u>some disciples</u> 2 and asked them, "<u>Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed</u>?" They answered, "<u>No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.</u>"3 So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "<u>John's baptism</u>," they replied. 4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 On hearing this, they were <u>baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.</u> 6 When Paul <u>placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied</u>. 7 There were about twelve men in all**."

- Though they were called "disciples", it was clear that they had not received the Holy Spirit" and they only received "John's baptism"
- John's baptism, as Paul made clear, was only an expression of their willingness to repent of their sins, but did not invoke the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—meaning, they did not really know Christ, nor accept Him as their Lord and Savior—their baptism had nothing to do with Christ;
- While they were called "disciples", scholars in general believe that they were so called simply because they joined ranks with other disciples of Christ who had yet to be properly discipled until Paul's arrival in Ephesus.
- Just the same, once they were baptized by Paul in the name of Jesus with the laying of hands in the process (definitely after a much more detailed explanation by Paul of the gospel), expressing their willingness to acknowledge Christ as Lord and Savior,
    - The Holy Spirit came on them (meaning dwelled in them)
    - And this was evidenced by both the speaking in tongue (through which likely they prophesied).

When it comes to the reception of the Holy Spirit, this appears to be the norm for the most part in the Book of Acts which began with Peter's 1st message in Acts 2: 38-39:

"**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. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call**."

The purposes of this "norm"

- The initial vesting of such power in the gift of the Holy Spirit through the baptism conducted by the Apostles and their laying of hands, in particular
    - Serves to validate their authority as the Apostles sent by Christ so that
    - Believers must "**stubbornly adhere to the teachings of the Apostle**" (Acts 2:42), and
    - Reject any teachings contrary to the Apostles' teachings
- And in the latter example, it also fully validated Paul as a full-fledged Apostles of Jesus Christ.

(3) Speaking in Tongue

It appears that for the most part in the Book of Acts (up to chapter 19), the reception of the Holy Spirit is invariably accompanied by the speaking in tongues. A notable exception is the conversion of the

three thousand on the day of Pentecost. Also, after chapter 19, Luke did not record any more instances of tongue-speaking as a sign of the reception of the Holy Spirit. It is also note-worthy that none of the Scriptures (i.e., epistles) after the Book of Acts speaks of tongue speaking as the only sign that proves the reception of Holy Spirit into one's life, nor encourages the pursuing of tongue-speaking even as a must for growth in faith in Christ.

It is also of note that of all four marks of the life of the first believers to which they stubbornly devoted themselves—the Apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer—tongue-speaking was not one of them.

As I have touched on in previous lessons, the reason is rather obvious

- As far as the Gentile believers are concerned, this is the ONLY way that could convince the Jewish Christians (the Apostles included) that they are saved just as they are
- The Jewish believers believed and spoke in tongues as the believed, repented and were baptized
- The Holy Spirit attested to the genuine conversion and salvation of the Gentile believers following the same pattern
- But once this truth—as Paul puts it: "**There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus**" (Galatians 3:28)—has been settled, there is really no need for the Holy Spirit to use "tongue-speaking" as a sign of His indwelling in the believer's life. Afterall, when Paul says of the giving of "**the Spirit as a deposit**", he reminds us that "**We live by faith, not by sight**." (II Cor.5:5, 7)

Q. What about speaking in tongue, not so much as a sign of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, but as a normal experience in the life of a believer?

It is extremely clear; this is part of the experience of some of the believers of the New Testament. Paul himself spoke in tongues and although he cautioned the Christians in Corinth against excess and abuse leading to confusion in the three chapters of I Corinthians (chs. 12-14 must be read together because chs. 12-13 form the foundation upon which Paul cautions about the excess and abuse of tongue-speaking in the church in ch.14).

And there is no basis to claim that the gift of tongue-speaking has ceased in our days.

- Some deal at length to point out that the "tongues" spoken by the Apostle at Pentecost were clearly known "dialects" of places of the larger Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Greece and European regions of the world at the time, also understood by those Grecian Jews as their native tongues—understandable and interpretable!
- While those cautioned by Paul in I Corinthians were not necessarily known "dialects" of the world and are unintelligent to all, except those who have "**the gift of interpretation of tongues**" (I Cor. 12:10)

Irrespective of whether those tongues are known dialects or even "the tongues of angels" (I Cor. 13:1):

- They are only for private edification and the speakers should "**speak to himself and God**" (I Cro. 14:28), i.e. keep it to themselves in the privacy of their own devotion;
- And if for whatever reason, the Holy Spirit inspires you to speak in tongue in public, Paul insists that this is "**a sign not for believers, but for unbelievers**" (I Cor. 14:22) as attested to at Pentecost,

and must be capable of "interpretation" without which the speaker "**should keep quiet**". (I Cor. 14:28), or it will create confusion in the church.

Because the teaching in this respect is quite clear

- I will caution that we should not rule out tongue-speaking in our days for the private edification of individual believers, although one should never pursue it as a gift, but is given as the Holy Spirit so determines;
- Thus, one should never brag about such a gift at all.
- And when someone does speak in tongue in public, the discernment of its source obviously includes:
    - The provision of someone to interpret by the Holy Spirit.
    - The obvious benefits, not for believers, but for "unbelievers" who are present; and
    - The message so interpreted must be in tune with the truth already revealed in the Scriptures.

I have met and/or served with believers who spoke in tongue and they fall into two categories (and allow me to be bold to describe them as follows)

- The Right-minded ones:
    - they would keep their experience to themselves, and seldom talk about it, only if it is really necessary so that they would not give an erroneous impression that they were, perhaps, more spiritual
    - In fact, they would be the first to admit that such is just an occasional experience that happened at the prerogative of the Holy Spirit and they did not love God more or become holier as a result.
- The Misguide ones:
    - Not only would they use such an experience to gauge their spirituality, they made it their pursuit the absence of which would likely plunge them into some kind of depression and doubt about their self-worth before God;
    - They also would likely use it to gauge the spirituality of other believers, and
    - As long as they continue to experience this phenomenon, they care less about the serious study and the proper understanding of the Word of God.

Having said that I have found such charismatic pursuits or experiences (whether it be tongue-speaking and other form of visible manifestations of the Spirit)

- Appear to have been used by God in our days to help draw non-believers to come to know Him, because of the increasing brokenness of families and relationships
- Such feeling-oriented experiences somehow fill temporarily the void of brokenness in certain individuals
- However, as much as it does serve to draw people emotionally to God, if such pursuit is not followed by a proper understanding of the gospel, it does not lead to true conversion, and definitely not proper growth in faith in Christ
- As they lack discernment and are easily swayed by the latest wind of false teachings (Eph. 4:14)

(4) Meanings of the Different Terms Used of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts

1. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Used twice from the same quote from the mouth of Jesus

(A) 1 :4-5 "**On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit**."."

(B) 11: 15-16 Repeated by Peter in response to his experience with Cornelius: "**As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. 16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'"**

The implications:

- (A) Jesus seems to be referring to the Pentecost experience which is not the conversion reception, as these Apostles had already received the Holy Spirit back in John 20:22, and Peter did not seem to relate this Pentecostal experience to the words of Jesus in Acts 1:4-5.
- (B) But at the Holy Spirit came upon each of the listeners in Cornelius' household, Peter understood it as referring to the conversion reception by the Gentiles.

Conclusion: It's intended to be a general term to describe the "wholesale" coming upon a group of people in response to their repentance and belief just as droves of people came to be baptized by John in the River Jordan.

2. The Coming-upon of the Holy Spirit

Used in five places:

(A) 1:8 To denote the Pentecostal type of being filled with H.S. in order to empower them to bear witness for Christ:
"**When the Holy Spirit comes on you..,"**

(B) 8: 16 To refer to the impending reception by Samaritan believer converted under Philip:
" **because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**."

(C) 10:44 To describe Gentile believers' conversion reception in Cornelius household:
"**While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message**."

(D) 11: 15 Peter referred to (C) experience (see 1. B above)

(E) 19:6 John's disciples' reception after Paul's laying of hand
"**When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied**."

Conclusion: A general term to describe the activities of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers, including both at time of conversion, and time of empowering for gospel work.

3. The Filling of the Holy Spirit

Used 10 times:

(A) Special empowerment to accompany witnessing in boldness:

- 4;8 "**And Peter filled with the Holy Spirit and said to them**" being emboldened to witness when persecuted
- 4:31 "**And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly**." (Upon the release of Peter and John)
- 9: 17 Ananias was told by the Lord to have Saul's eyes opened, and that Paul would be filled with the Holy Spirit (referring to being powered to preach the gospel after his conversion)

(B) The special signs demonstrating the power of the Holy Spirit

- 2:4 "**All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues**" at Pentecost
- 7:55 Stephen seeing the heaven open before Martyrdom
- 13:9 Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit with power to blind the eyes of Elymas.

(C) As a lifestyle

"**Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom…They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit**…" (Acts 6: 3-5)

- 6:3 Lives of deacons as so described + filled with wisdom
- 6:5 Life of Stephen as so described + filled with faith

"**And the disciples (at Pisidian Antioch) were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit (though Paul and Silas were expelled from the city)** Acts 13:52

- Believers' condition so described + filled with joy

Conclusion: The special demonstration of the power Holy Spirit in the persons being filled is obvious, sometime expressed in signs and wonders, other times in the emboldening for the purpose of witnessing for Christ. However, it is also used to describe a life that is consistently governed by the Holy Spirit.

4. The Out-pouring of the Holy Spirit

Used 4 times;

- Twice in the quote of Joel in 2: 17 & 18 which Peter used to explain the tongue-speaking phenomenon at Pentecost
  '**In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days"** (2: 17-18)
- In the same speech, Peter talked about the Father giving the Holy Spirit to Jesus who was "**Exalted to the right hand of God, He has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear**." (2:33) referring to the same phenomenon being a pouring out of the Spirit, but this time

attributing Jesus as the One as the source of this pouring out.

- The 4th time is when Peter retold the conversion experience of the Gentiles in Cornelius household:
  "**The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles.**" (10:45)

Conclusion: Again a general term describing the activities of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the believers, both at conversion and in special empowering!

5. Reception or giving of the Holy Spirit

Used 9 times: 2:33; 2:38; 5:32; 8:15-17; 8:18-19; 10:47; 15:8 & 19:2 (see below)

- Apart from the first instant which refers to Jesus' reception of the Holy Spirit from the Father,
- The rest refers to the conversion reception by believers.

In conclusion:

I do think that under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Luke uses these terms rather in a general sense and does not mean to "pigeon-hole" the term from any one theological point of view, except in the use of the category of words "receive, received, given or giving", Luke clearly refers to the time of conversion when the Holy Spirit comes into the lives of individual believers.

2: 38 Peter replied, "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."
5:32 "We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."
8: 15-17 "When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit…then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit."
8: 19-19 "When Simon saw that the Spirit was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money and said, "Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."
10:47 "Then Peter said, Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."
15:8 "God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us."
19:2 "There he found some disciples 2 and asked them, Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"