Christ receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. This was a gift common to all baptised into Christ, including these Samaritans. They must have received the common gift of the Holy Spirit.

Yet we read that they had not received the Holy Spirit and did not until the apostles' hands were laid upon them. "As yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus" must be taken to mean that as yet they had received only the common gift of the Spirit. When Peter and John, two apostles, came from Jerusalem and laid their hands on the new converts, the Holy Spirit was received in a special way. This was a dispensation of the Holy Spirit in a different category altogether from the common gift.

What the apostles conferred through their hands were the miraculous gifts of the Spirit. They could not be imparted through baptism. Philip, who worked many signs, could not impart the Holy Spirit in this way. That this was the imparting of the miraculous gifts is evidenced by the attendant signs that were so visibly impressive. "When Simon saw" the operation of these gifts from the apostles' hands, he wished to buy the power to impart through his hands the Holy Spirit as the apostles did (Acts 8:9-11,14-20).

What were the means of imparting the miraculous gifts? The laying on of the hands of an apostle. While we can all be baptised and receive the common gift of the Spirit, no one can have an apostle's hand laid on him to receive the miraculous gifts, because the apostles are all dead.

The miraculous gifts have passed away because the purposes and means of receiving them have passed away.

**Baptism of the Spirit**

Those baptised in the Holy Spirit evidently possessed every one of the miraculous gifts. This baptism was received by the apostles at Pentecost (Acts 2). This marked the beginning of the gospel to the Jews. At most two later cases of Holy Spirit baptism occurred. Cornelius' household and Saul received it, marking the extension of that same gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 9 and 10).

**How God Works Today**

In connection with causes and reasons quite apart from miraculous gifts, the hand of God continues to work before our eyes today. While God no longer reveals and confirms his word, those works having been done, He still performs acts of grace and love. The Lord was working with the early Christians, and he still works with us today: for lo, he is with us alway, even unto the end of the world (Mtt 28:18-20).

When we pray, we can behold God's answering hand working. Untold things are wrought through prayer, including much healing of the body.

When we preach the gospel to the hearts of men, we see greater works than any seen when early Christians confirmed the gospel before the eyes of men. What God does to a man's soul through the preaching of the word is probably what Jesus referred to when he said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do..." (Jhn 14:12). Faithful preaching of the gospel brings about works of a kind God wants. He no longer wants the lesser works --no matter how miraculous-- of a past dispensation.

"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity (Mtt 7:21-23).

**A Warning**

In the following words with which we close, we see a possibility that with the help of Satan, there may be false prophets today who "shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Mtt 24:24).

A passage of scripture which has intrigued most Bible readers and become the motto of myriads is this one:

"And Jesus said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe; in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following." (Mark 16:15-20).

Today large numbers of people are deceiving and being deceived on the subject and it is hoped that this tract will do something to promote the truth.

Are these signs for today? Do these things still occur? The Holy Spirit, through the Scriptures, answers such questions and a look at what He has to say will be found to be enthralling and profitable.

**Two Dispensations**

The first thing that should be made clear is this: in the days of the apostles, there were two distinct areas of administration of the Holy Spirit.

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