

HAVE YOU RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST SINCE YOU BELIEVED

Acts 19:2 Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?

John 3:4 How can a man be born when he is old?

Acts 2:37 Men and brethren what shall we do?

Questions, questions, and more questions?

Men have always learned by asking questions. Children are good at asking questions. Many times there are no answers for their questions, but they keep on asking and learning. To know and understand more about God, questions need to be asked.

In Acts 19 Paul was traveling and came to the city of Ephesus. There he found some believers. He didn't know them or what they understood about Jesus and salvation so he asked them some questions. His first question was the one that he thought was the most important. "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?" (Acts 19:2) Their answer helped Paul to understand how much they knew about the plan of salvation. "We have never heard about there being any Holy Spirit," they answered.

They were believers, they had taken the first step towards having a relationship with God. This relationship was provided for man by the death of Jesus Christ. Paul knew there was something more for them and wanted them to have it. He then asked them a second question. "How have you people been baptized?" (Acts 19:3) Their answer was that they had been baptized by John the Baptist. Paul didn't say this is wrong or bad. However, he must have taught them about Jesus name baptism because (Acts 19:5) says, "When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

I am sure my friend you are a believer in Jesus Christ. I would like to ask you the two questions Paul thought important to ask believers. Have you received the Holy Spirit and how were you baptized? Maybe you don't know for sure the answers to these questions. Let us look at these believers in Ephesus and see what happened to them when they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 19:6 says, "And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke with tongues, and prophesied." This was the same experience that happened to the disciples in Acts 2:4. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." Also in Acts 10:45,46 while Peter was preaching in the house of Cornelius the Holy Ghost was poured out on people. "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. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God." Then like Paul in Acts 19, Peter felt baptism was so important that he took them and the Bible says, "baptized them in the name of the Lord." (Acts 10:47,48)

I seems Paul and Peter had some of the same ideas about what is important in us receive salvation. You must be a believer, you must be baptized in Jesus name, and you must receive the Holy Spirit. The evidence of this Holy Spirit will be that you will speak in a language you have never learned and so not know. (Acts 2:38) The language will fill your mouth straight from God himself and not your own mind. I have seen and heard this happen thousands of times.

Nicodemus asked Jesus, "How can a man be born when he is old?" (John 3:4) Jesus had an answer for that question in John 3:5. "Verily, Verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of the water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Peter was there when Jesus said this to Nicodemus. In Matthew 16:18,19 Jesus told Peter, "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven." Peter used those keys in Acts 2:38 when he answered the question the people asked him, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37) "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." (Acts 2:38)

The question Nicodemus asked is still important today. How can a man be born again of water and the Spirit like Jesus said we must. If we want to enter the Kingdom of God we must be born again. Peter answered the question for us when he used the keys to the Kingdom given to him by Jesus. Peter's answer opens the door for men everywhere to enter into God's Kingdom. A man or woman must believe on Him, repent, be baptized, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Just as the disciples in Acts 2, Cornelius in Acts 10, and the believers in Acts, 19. When the Holy Ghost enters into our bodies we will lose control of our tongues and we will speak in a language we never learned. God will speak through us in this new language.

Now we come back to the beginning question. HAVE YOU RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST SINCE YOU BECAME A BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST? If not, this experience is for you. (Acts 2:39) To be saved and ready to enter heaven with Jesus you must be born again.

JE! ULIPOKEA ROHO MTAKATIFU ULIPOAMINI?

Matendo 19:2 Je! Mlipokea Roho Mtakatifu mlipoamini?

Yohana 3:4 Awezaje mtu kuzaliwa akiwa mzee?

Matendo 2:37 Tutendeje, ndugu zetu?

Maswali, maswali, na maswali zaidi.

Watu daima wamejifunza kwa kuuliza maswali. Watoto ni wazuri sana katika kuuliza maswali. Mara nyingi hakuna majibu ya maswali yao, walakini wanaendelea kuuliza maswali na kujifunza. Kujua na kufahamu zaidi kuhusu Mungu, maswali yanatakiwa kuulizwa.

Katika Matendo Paulo alikuwa akisafiri na akafika katika mji wa Efeso. Hapo aliwakuta baadhi ya waamini. Hakuwajua au walichokuwa wanakielewa juu ya Yesu na wokovu hivyo akaauliza baadhi ya maswali. Swali lake la kwanza ni lile alilofikiria kuwa la muhimu zaidi. “Je! mlipokea Roho Mtakatifu mlipoamini?” (Matendo 19:2). Jibu lao lilimsaidia Paulo kuelewa ni kiasi gani walichojua kuhusu mpango wa wokovu. “Ia hata kusikia kwamba kuna Roho Mtakatifu haukusikia” walijibu.

Walikuwa ni waamini, walikuwa wamechukua hatua ya kwanza kuwa na uhusiano na Mungu. Mahusiano haya yalitolewa na mtu kwa kifo cha Yesu Kristo. Paulo alijua kwamba kuna jambo zaidi kwa ajili yao na alitaka wao kuwa nacho. Baadaye akawauliza swali la pili. “Mlibatizwa kwa ubatizo gani?” Jibu lao ni kwamba walikuwa wamebatizwa kwa ubatizo wa Yohana Mbatizaji. Paulo hakusema hii ni vizuri au mbaya. Walakini, lazima iwe alikwisha wafundisha juu ya ubatizo katika jina la Yesu kwa sababu katika (Matendo 19:5) inasema, “Waliposikia haya, wakabatizwa kwa jina la Bwana Yesu.”

Rafiki yangu ninajua kuwa wewe ni mwamini katika Yesu Kristo. Napenda nikuulize wewe maswali mawili ambayo Paulo alifikiria kuwa muhimu kuwauliza waamini. Umepokea Roho Mtakatifu na ulibatizwa kwa namna gani? Pengine hujui kwa uhakika majibu kwa ajili ya maswali haya. Hebu tuwaangalie hawa waamini katika Efeso na kuona nini lililowatokea walipopokea Roho Mtakatifu.

Matendo 19:6 inasema, “Paulo alipokwisha kuweka mikono juu yao, Roho Mtakatifu akaja juu yao, wakaanza kunena kwa lugha na kutabiri.” Ni hali ya jinsi ile ile iliyowatokea wanafunzi katika Matendo 2:4. “Wote wakajazwa Roho Mtakatifu, wakaanza kunena kwa lugha nyingine kadiri Roho alivyowajalia kutamka.” Pia katika Matendo 10:45, 46 wakati Petro alipokuwa akihubiri katika nyumba ya Kornelio Roho Mtakatifu alimwagwa juu ya watu. “Nale waliotahiriwa walioamini wakashangaa, na watu wote waliokuja pamoja na Petro, kwa sababu mataifa nao wamemwagiwa kipawa cha Roho Mtakatifu. Kwa maana waliwasikia wakisema kwa lugha, na wakimwadhimisha Mungu.” Baadaye kama Paulo katika Matendo 19 Petro alijisikia kwamba ubatizo ni muhimu kwamaba aliwachukua kama vile Biblia inavyosema, “akawabatiza katika jina la Bwana” (Matendo 10:47, 48).

Inaonekana Paulo na Petro walikuwa na wazo linalofanana ni umuhimu gani kwetu kupokea wokovu. Lazima uwe mwaamini, lazima ubatizwakwa jina Yesu, lazima upoke Roho Mtakatifu. Ishara ya kupokea Roho Mtakatifu ni kwamba unanena kwa lugha ambayo hujawahi kujifunza nasiyoijua (Matendo 2:38). Lugha itajaa katika kinywa chako moja kwa moja kutoka kwa Mungu mwenyewe na siyo akili yako mwenyewe. Nimeona hili likitoe mara maelfu.

Nikodemo alimwuliza Yesu, “Awezaje mtu kuzaliwa akiwa ni mzee?” (Yohana 3:4). Yesu alikuwa na jibu kwa ajili ya swali hilo katika Yohana 3:5. “Amin amin nakuambi, mtu asipozaliwa kwa maji na kwa Roho, hawezi kuingia katika ufalme wa Mungu.” Katika Mathyo 16:18, 19 Yesu alimwambia Petro, “Nami nitakupa wewe funguo za ufalme wa mbiguni.” Petro alizitumia funguo

hizo katika Matendo 2:8 wakati alipojibu swali watu walilomwuliza. “Tutendeje?” (Matendo 2:37) “Petro akajibu, Tubuni, mkabatizwe kila mmoja wenu kwa jina la Yesu Kristo, mpate ondoleo la dhambi zenii, nanyi mtapokea kipawa cha Roho Mtakatifu” (Matendo 2:38).

Swali alilouliza Nikodemo bado ni la muhimu leo. Jinsi gani mtu anavyoweza kuzaliwa kwa maji na kwa Roho kama Yesu alivyosema ni lazima kwetu. Kama tunataka kuingia katika ufalme wa Mungu ni lazima kuzaliwa mara ya pili. Petro alijibu swali kwa ajili yetu alipozitumia funguo za ufalme alizopewa na Yesu. Jibu la Petro linafungua mlango kwa ajili watu kila mahali kuingia katika Ufalme wa Mungu. Mwanamume au mwanamke ni lazima amwamini Yeye, atubu, abatizwe, katika jina la Bwana Yesu Kristo, na kupokea kipawa cha Roho Mtakatifu, sawa na Mitume katika Matendo 2 na Kornelio katika Matendo 10 na waamini katika Matendo 19. Roho Mtakatifu anapoingia katika miili yetu tutashindwa kuuongoza ulimi wetu na kusema lugha ambayo kamwe hatujajifunza. Mungu atasema nasi kupitia lugha hii mpya.

Sasa tunarudi nyuma mwanzoni mwa somo letu “JE! ULIPOKEA ROHO MTAKATIFU ULIPOFANYIKA KUWA MWAMINI WA YESU KRISTO?” Kama siyo, tukio hili ni kwa ajili yako (Matendo 2:39). Kupokea wokovu uwe tayari kuingia mbinguni na Yesu lazima uzaliwe mara ya pili.