

LESSON 3

OBEYING THE VOICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Central Truth: Obedience to the Holy Spirit's voice is key to victorious Christian living.

Memory Verse: Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. - **Revelation 2:7a**

LESSON TEXT

Acts 8:36 – 30; 10:9 – 21, 1 John 4:1 – 3

Acts 8:

26. Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza."

27. So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means "queen of the Ethiopians"). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship,

28. And on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet.

29. The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."

30. Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked.

Acts 10

9. About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray.

10. He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance.

11. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners.

12. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds.

13. Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat."

14. "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean."

15. The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean."

16. This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

17. While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate.

18. They called out, asking if Simon who was known as Peter was staying there.

19. While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you.

20. So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."

21. Peter went down and said to the men, "I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come?"

1 John 4:

1. Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

3. But every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

INTRODUCTION

Every believer must desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Beyond this, he should develop the habit of obeying the voice of the Holy Spirit on a daily basis. This will enable him develop a closer fellowship with God which will in turn, lead to victorious Christian living and help effective witness.

The Holy Spirit as a divine person speaks. He does so to individuals as well as group of persons. In each case we must be open to listen to so we can be effective in carrying out his purposes at any given time. One instance when the Holy Spirit spoke to an individual in **Acts 8: 26 – 40**. When the Ethiopian official was returning to his country along the desert, the Holy Spirit spoke to Philip to leave the revival in Jerusalem and go to the Gaza desert. The Holy Spirit further asked him to go near the chariot in which the Ethiopian official was travelling. This obedience on the part of Philip led to the salvation of the official. Peter also, in **Acts 10:1 – 48** obeyed the voice of the Holy Spirit leading to the salvation of Cornelius and his household.

Again when the church met together to pray the Holy Spirit spoke clearly and asked that Paul and Barnabas be set apart for missionary duties (Acts 13:1 – 3) we must always be sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit – He speaks.

To be able to obey the voice of the Holy Spirit, believers must scrutinize the voices we hear. With guidance from the word of God we will be able to differentiate between the voice of God from others that are not from Him. In teaching about testing the Spirits, the Apostle John in 1 John 4:3 explains that every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus as the son of God is not from God but from the Antichrist.

We must test the spirits because many false prophets have come out into the world teaching false doctrines to deceive many and lead them to destruction. The bible teaches that obedience is the foundation for a fulfilling life.

We must therefore make a conscious effort to obey the voice of the Holy Spirit in all situations. In Acts 9: 10 – 19, Ananias a disciple in Damascus obeyed the voice of the Holy Spirit when he was asked to go and pray for Saul to receive his sight. Although he was afraid of Saul, due to what he had heard about him (Saul) he obeyed unconditionally and the result was that Paul recovered and eventually fulfilled his mission as the apostle to the gentiles.

Jesus Christ, our perfect example said “if it is possible, let this cup pass over me; yet not as I will but as you will” (Matt. 26: 39). This is the greatest expression of a conscious effort to obey God, despite the condition.

LIFE APPLICATION

As spirit – filled Christians, we must commit ourselves constantly to obeying the voice of the Holy Spirit and He will strengthen us to live righteously and fulfil God’s purposes on earth.

DAILY BIBLE READING

- Monday – The identity of those who listen to the Holy Spirit (John 10:25 – 28)
- Tuesday – The need to listen to the Holy Spirit (John 16:12 – 14)
- Wednesday – Hindrances to hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit (Psalm 32:8 – 9)
- Thursday – A call to listen to the Lord (Isaiah 55 : 2 – 3)
- Friday – Covenant revealed (Deut. 4: 12 – 13)
- Saturday – A call to value what we hear (Hebrews 2 : 1 – 3).

