

Acts Chapter 2 Second Continued

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Peter summarizes his sermon with a powerful statement of certainty: The Old Testament prophecies of resurrection and exaltation provide evidence that overwhelmingly points to the crucified Jesus as the Messiah.

“Both Lord and Christ”:

Jesus is God as well as anointed Messiah (Romans 1:4; 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:9, 11).

Peter has boldly told these Israelites that they crucified their Messiah (Christ).

He says you crucified Messiah, and God has exalted Him to be not only your Savior, but your Lord also.

Acts 2:37 "Now when they heard [this], they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men [and] brethren, what shall we do?"

“Pricked in their heart”:

The Greek word here means “stab,” and thus denotes something sudden and unexpected, in grief, remorse, and intense spiritual conviction.

Peter’s listeners were stunned by his indictment that they had killed their Messiah.

We must remember that Peter had been entrusted with the keys.

He was the leader of the church for both Jew and Gentile.

Peter has brought them a message that they know is true.

Now their hearts are turned, and so they seek instruction from Peter about what they must do to be saved.

They realize they have made a very grave mistake, and now they want to get into good graces with God.

Acts 2:38 "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."

“Repent”:

This refers to a change of mind and purpose that turns an individual from sin to God (see 1 Thessalonians 1:9).

Such change involves more than fearing the consequences of God's judgment.

Genuine repentance knows that the evil of sin must be forsaken and the person and work of Christ totally and singularly embraced.

Peter exhorted his hearers to repent, otherwise they would not experience true conversion (see note on Matt. 3:2; Acts 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 11:18; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; Matt. 4:17).

“Be baptized”:

This Greek word literally means “be dipped or immersed” in water.

Peter was obeying Christ's command from (Matt. 28:19), and urging the people who repented and turned to the Lord Christ for salvation to identify, through the waters of baptism, with His death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 19:5; Rom. 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; see notes on Matthew 3:2).

This is the first time the apostles' publicly enjoined people to obey that ceremony.

Prior to this, many Jews had experience the baptism of John the Baptist, (see notes on Matt. 3:1-3), and were also familiar with the baptism of Gentile converts to Judaism (proselytes).

“In the name of Jesus Christ”:

For the new believer, it was a crucial but costly identification to accept.

“For the remission of sins”:

This might better be translated “because of the forgiveness of sins”.

Baptism does not produce forgiveness and cleansing from sin (see notes on 1 Pet. 3:20-21).

The reality of forgiveness precedes the rite of baptism (verse 41).

Genuine repentance brings from God the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7), and because of that the new believer was to be baptized.

Baptism, however, was to be the ever-present act of obedience, so that it became synonymous with salvation.

Thus to say one was baptized for forgiveness was the same as saying one was saved, see note on “one baptism” in Eph. 4:5.

Every believer enjoys the complete forgiveness of sins (Matt. 26:28; Luke 24:47; Eph. 1:7; Col. 2:13; 1 John 2:12).

“The gift of the Holy Ghost”:

See notes on 1:5, 8.

Here, as throughout Scripture, one aspect of conversion is commonly used to represent all aspects: believing and calling as well as repenting.

The grammatical name for allowing part of something to represent the whole is called synecdoche.

Repentance is something every person must do (17:30).

For several reasons “be baptized”, should not be joined with “for the remission of sins”, to teach baptismal regeneration.

First, the context of this passage demonstrates that only the repentance relates to the removal of sin at salvation:

“Whosoever shall call ... shall be saved”:

See verse 21.

Peter’s next recorded sermon states only “Repent ... that your sins may be blotted out” (3:19).

Second, throughout Acts men demonstrate their faith and salvation prior to baptism (10:43-47).

Third, the soteriological passages throughout the New Testament do not include water baptism in the salvation experience (John 3:16; Acts 16:31; Romans 4:10; Eph. 2:1-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-19).

Thus, this verse more clearly reads, “Repent for the remission of sins, and you will receive the gift which is the Holy Spirit; and let each of you be baptized in the name of Christ.”

Though water baptism does not save or wash away our sins, it is a command that needs to be obeyed speedily after conversion.

Jesus commanded it (Matt. 28:19-20), as does Peter here.

This is the consistent pattern throughout Acts (16:31-34; 18:8).

These men Peter was speaking to here were the house of Israel.

They had rejected Jesus as their Messiah.

They must repent of this rejection of Jesus as the substitute for their sin.

The one they had rejected is the very one they are to be baptized in the name of.

These are all Jews here.

They must repent of rejecting Jesus.

They had the law; the Gentiles did not have the law to go by.

Notice the gift of the Holy Ghost would come after they had repented and been baptized.

The part of those who want to be saved is to repent of their sin, and then believe on the name of Jesus Christ.

Just as Abraham was justified (just as if he had never sinned), by faith they will be justified by faith in Jesus Christ.

We read earlier how God will save all who call on His name.

Acts 2:39 "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, [even] as many as the Lord our God shall call."

The promise is made to whosoever will (see note on 1:4).

“All that are afar off”:

Gentiles, who would also share in the blessings of salvation (Eph. 2:11-13).

Gentiles of all generations, since the Jews are thought of as those who are nigh.

The Lord Jesus died for all, but our obligation is to accept the gift of salvation.

God calls all of us, but few accept that call.

“As many as the Lord our God shall call”:

Salvation is ultimately from the Lord (see note on Rom. 3:24).

Acts 2:40 "And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

“Untoward” means “morally crooked” or “perverse.”

We see that this group that Peter is speaking to is the very group who turned Jesus down.

This says that Peter kept on speaking to them to make them understand their need for Jesus as Savior to them.

Verses 41-42

The pattern set here for new believers is normative throughout this age.

They publicly profess their faith through baptism and join in fellowship, edification, and service within the assembly of God's people.

Acts 2:41 "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added [unto them] about three thousand souls."

"They that gladly received his word were baptized" (see note on verse 38).

"Three thousand":

Luke's use of a specific number suggests records were kept of conversions and baptisms (see note on verse 38).

Archeological work on the south side of the temple mount has uncovered numerous Jewish mikvahs, large baptistery-like facilities where Jewish worshipers would immerse themselves in ritual purification before entering the temple.

More than enough existed to facilitate the larger number of baptisms in a short amount of time.

1 Corinthians 1:21 "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

We see from this, that this is God's plan to save people.

They received the sermon Peter preached and were saved and baptized.

This was a very effective sermon because 3,000 souls were saved.

Acts 2:42 "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."

"Apostles' Doctrine":

The word doctrine derives from the Latin term for teaching and refers to the content that was taught in the New Testament.

The proper teaching of Scripture was called “the apostles’ doctrine,” meaning that which the apostles taught.

The foundational content for the believer’s spiritual growth and maturity was the Scripture, God’s revealed truth, which the apostles received (see notes on John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:13), and taught faithfully (see notes on 2 Peter 1:19-21; 3:1-2, 16).

“Fellowship”:

Literally “partnership,” or “sharing.”

Because Christians become partners with Jesus Christ and all other believers (1 John 1:3), it is their spiritual duty to stimulate one another to righteousness and obedience (Rom. 12:10; 13:8; 15:5; Gal 5:13; Eph. 4:2, 25; 5:21; Col. 3:9; 1 Thess. 4:9; Heb. 3:13; 10:24-25; 1 Pet. 4:9-10).

“Breaking of bread”:

A reference to the Lord’s Table, or Communion, which is mandatory for all Christians to observe (1 Cor. 11:24-29).

“Prayers”:

Of individual believers and the church corporately (see 1:14, 24; 4:24-31; John 14:13-14).

This contrasted with erroneous teaching called “doctrines of devils” (1 Tim. 4:1), meaning that teaching whose source is not God but the messengers of Satan, whose desire it is to substitute false religion for Christianity (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

The apostles’ doctrine was true, not because an apostle taught it, but because it was consistent with the Scriptures.

The Bereans examined the teaching of Paul in light of the Scriptures before accepting it (17:11).

Also, the church at Ephesus examined some who called themselves apostles and found them liars (Revelation 2:2).

A Christian should attempt to understand and believe true doctrine, while rejecting all that disagrees with the Word of God (1 John 4:1; Acts 2:42).

“Church Discipline”:

One of the first religious exercises of the New Testament church after Pentecost was persevering in the apostles’ doctrine.

Doctrinal purity was essential to a New Testament church.

The local churches placed themselves under God's authority by accepting the discipline of the Word of God.

The proclamation of the Scriptures became a positive discipline, developing correct beliefs and life-style.

When Christians need to be confronted and rebuked for sin or false belief, either individually or corporately, negative discipline will correct the error and bring the church back to its original biblical role.

When an assembly of people removes itself from the authority of Scripture, that assembly ceases to be a New Testament church.

Although the church at Sardis had quite a reputation in its community, Jesus viewed it as having already died (Rev. 3:1).

All Christians should carefully evaluate the beliefs and practices of a church by the standard of God's Word.

Then they should associate with and support the one that meets the New Testament standards (Matt. 18:17; Acts 2:42; Matt. 28:19).

It seems that the apostles were establishing a doctrine.

The Lord did not set up a doctrine for the church.

Jesus' commandments were to love God above everything and everyone else, and love your neighbor as yourself.

This breaking of bread could have been the taking of communion in remembrance of Jesus, or it could just mean that they ate together.

We do know that it had something to do with worship, because they continued in prayer.

Acts 2:43 "And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles."

"Wonders and signs":

See note on verse 19.

In the New Testament, the ability to perform miracles was limited to the apostles and their close colleagues (e.g. Philip in 8:13; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:3-4).

These produced awe and respect for divine power.

This fear has to do with reverence.

This fear brings them to the point of making a decision about the Lord.

In (John 14:12), we see that Jesus gave His followers the power to do the same miracles that He had done while He was on the earth if they prayed in Jesus' name.

This would be astonishing to these Jews who had not seen this type of miracles going on within the temple.

Verses 44-45

Communal sharing was practiced for a brief time by the early church but not throughout Acts.

These believers were expecting the very soon return of Christ (as Peter demonstrates in his sermons of chapters 2 and 3), and they therefore sold their possessions.

This did not last.

Such communal life is not taught by the apostles.

Rather we are taught to be good stewards of that with which God has entrusted us and to share willingly and cheerfully (2 Cor. 8, 9).

Further, this does not correspond to communism, because this resulted from a spiritual unity among the people and was a voluntary act (5:4).

Acts 2:44 "And all that believed were together, and had all things common;"

“All things common”:

See 4:32.

This phrase conveys not that the early Christians lived in a commune or pooled and redistributed everything equally, but that they held their own possessions lightly, ready to use them at any moment for someone else, as needs arose.

It seems as if these believers stayed together, because they needed the strength of the apostles.

Soon after this large group joined the disciples, the authorities became very upset and jailed many of them.

Some of them were even martyred.

Acts 2:45 "And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all [men], as every man had need."

“Sold their possessions”:

This indicates that they had not pooled their resources (see note on verse 44), but sold their own possessions to provide money for those of the church in need (verse 46; 4:34-37; 2 Cor. 8:13-14).

At this time, these Christians thought that Jesus would be back very soon and would set up His kingdom then.

They had made the mistake of rejecting Jesus once; they did not want to take any chance that Jesus would return and they not know it.

They all stayed with the twelve apostles.

This sharing of all that they had kept the poor who came to Jesus from starving.

Acts 2:46 "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,"

“Continuing daily ... in the temple”:

Believers went to the temple to praise God (verse 47), observe the daily hours of prayer (3:1), and witness to the gospel (verse 47; 5:42).

“Breaking bread from house to house”:

This has reference to the daily means that believers shared with one another.

“Gladness and singleness of heart”:

The Jerusalem church was joyful because its single focus was on Jesus Christ (see notes on 2 Cor. 11:3; Phil. 3:13-14).

Notice that they worshipped daily.

They were so thankful that God would even have them after their rejection of the Lord.

Nothing was too much.

They were satisfied with what they had.

It was very similar to what Paul would say later, that whatever state he found himself in, that he was content.

They ate together and had all things common.

They were of one accord as they were at Pentecost.

Acts 2:47 "Praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

"The Lord added to the church daily" (verse 39; 5:14; see note on Matthew 16:18).

Salvation is God's sovereign work.

These followers of Jesus were so thankful to be saved that praises were on their lips continually.

This period of time was not the time of opposition.

Everyone was still in somewhat a state of shock since the resurrection of Jesus.

Almost everyone who heard the good news of the gospel wanted to be saved.

We read here, that the Lord added to the number of the believers (church), every day.

The apostles preached (planted the seed), and God got the harvest.

Acts Chapter 2 Second Continued Questions

1. What did Peter say the house of Israel should know assuredly?
2. Who had they crucified?
3. After Peter preached, what effect did it have on the Israelites?
4. What question did they ask Peter and the other apostles?
5. Who had the Lord entrusted with the keys?
6. What did Peter tell them they must do to be saved?
7. What gift would they receive after they were baptized?
8. What was the main thing they were to repent of?
9. Who must they believe on?
10. Who was the promise made to?

11. Who are the ones who are spoken of as being afar off?
12. What did Peter tell them to save themselves from?
13. How many souls were added that day?
14. In 1 Corinthians, we learn that by the foolishness of _____ God would save those who believe.
15. In verse 42, we find the converts continued steadfastly in what?
16. Did Jesus set up a doctrine for the church?
17. What commandments did Jesus tell us to observe?
18. Fear came on every soul; and many _____ and _____ were done by the apostles.
19. What kind of fear is spoken of in verse 43?
20. What does verse 44 tell us they did?
21. They sold their possessions and did what?
22. What was the main reason that they were not conscious of worldly goods?
23. What did they do daily?
24. How often were people added to the church?
25. Why were they praising continually?
26. The apostles _____ and _____ got the harvest.