

Acts 2.37-47: Early Developments in the Church at Jerusalem Pt1

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 And Peter said to them, "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 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation."

Review of 1.1-2.36

Acts 1.1-14: Overlap and Expansion

(of Acts & Luke from resurrection to ascension & beyond)

Acts 1.15-26: Adding Matthias to the Eleven Apostles

Acts 2.1-36: The Coming of the Spirit and the Gift of Tongues (and Peter's explanation)

Summary of Peter's explanation of Pentecost: it is the historical-redemptive exaltation of Jesus to Sabbath Kingship: **Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified** (Acts 2.36). He was "made" Lord and Christ (became such by the resurrection, 2.24-35). He was made Lord of heaven and earth at the right hand of God with all enemies as the footstool of His feet (33-35), and thus, He became redeemer-Sabbath King. Q1: How could Jesus *become* Lord and Christ, was He not such from birth? [*cf. humiliation-exaltation*] Q2: Why include the notion of Sabbath Kingship? [*resurrection day, the inauguration day of His Kingly rule as the six & one; here, footstool & Isa 66.1-2*]

Two things follow in the record of Acts 2.37-47 regarding developments in the *church*: the expansion of the church (from 120 to thousands): 37-41, and the unity of the church (under the apostles): 42-47.

I. Let's consider the expansion of the church, from 120 to thousands

Peter closed his sermon-explanation with an affirmation of the guilt of his listeners: the one that God made Sabbath Lord by the resurrection is the one **you crucified** (2.36). This preaching opened the door of salvation to many beginning with deep conviction of sin: **Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"** (2.37).

A. Peter gave the gospel offer (its duty, promise, warrant, and exhortation)

1. The duty of the gospel offer: **Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ** (2.38a). Part of the duty of repentance is the outward act of receiving baptism. In John's washing ritual, baptism is the entry way into the new covenant people (**Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham, Lk 3.8**) by the admission of sin (**And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, Lk 3.3; and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins, Mat 3.6**). Baptism is the outward act of repentance, an act of obedience in sign and seal that represents turning (Repentance) from disobedience to obedience. Thus, repentance involves a commitment to obey God. The added, **in the name of Jesus Christ**, shows that repentance includes submission to Christ's authority (acknowledging his claims, subscribing to his doctrines, engaging in his service, and relying on his merits, Alexander, *Acts*, I, 85).

2. The promise of the gospel offer: **for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit** (2.38b). To repentance *shown in the obedience of baptism* is the promise of exemption from the punishment due our sins; here, from the guilt of crucifying Christ. Also promised is the gift of the Holy Spirit, that is, of the Spirit Himself and therefore "a promise of his ordinary sanctifying agency, to be experienced by all believers now and forever, and also as a promise of extraordinary, temporary gifts, to answer a specific end, on this occasion" (Alexander, I, 86). What the gospel offers to repentance demonstrated in baptism is great indeed!