

## ~ACTS~

## Lesson 10- Repent and be Saved

We are continuing our study through the book of Acts, and last week we wrapped up Peter's sermon, and today we will see the effects of his teaching. Peter's main objective in his sermon, by way of review, was to prove Jesus as the Christ. And we saw Peter prove Jesus to be the Anointed One of God by the miracles God worked through Him during His life, v.22. Then Peter proved Him to be the Christ by His death that was determined and foreknew before the foundation of the world, v.23, and finally Peter proved Jesus to be the Christ by His resurrection, v24-28. And Peter used Psalm 16 to prove that the Christ would suffer, die and be raised from the dead, v.29-32. But as we saw last week, Peter didn't stop his sermon there. He had one more important point to make. Not only was Peter proving Jesus to be the Christ, but he also proved Jesus to be God Himself, v.33-36. That Jesus is both Lord and Christ; Son of God and Son of Man, fully God and fully Man. God incarnate in human flesh as the Christ to take away the sins of the world, and then resurrected unto glory at the right hand of the Father where He is pouring out the Spirit to all who call upon His Name.

Now today as we continue through our study of chapter 2, we will see the effects of Peter's sermon. Let's read our text today, **Acts 2:37-41**. These verses at the end of chapter 2 began to capture the events of the birth of the church. And we begin to get a glimpse into the lives of these early Christians and their transformation by the message of the Gospel.

As we study the book of Acts, we are constantly reminded of the foundational doctrines of Christianity. Many times, people get caught up in religious tradition, and forget what the Bible says. And as we go through our study today, Peter begins explaining the way of Salvation. Very basic principles to Christianity, however it is important for us to look at these carefully in the Bible and remind ourselves of what the Bible says about these foundational Truths. Let's start with verse 37...

<p><b>37</b> Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"</p>	<p><i>37</i> Ἀκούσαντες δὲ κατενύγησαν τῇ καρδίᾳ, εἰπόν τε πρὸς τὸν Πέτρον καὶ τοὺς λοιποὺς ἀποστόλους, Τί ποιήσομεν, ἄνδρες ἀδελφοί;</p>
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Luke begins describing the effects of Peter's sermon in verse 37 saying... "**Now when they heard this...**" After hearing these powerful words from Peter, which were inspired by the Holy Spirit, these Jews are awakened to the fact that they just crucified their Messiah. This conviction was overwhelming to them. They had ears to hear the Word of God and that Word did its work and **they were cut to the heart**. This

word "cut them" is *κατανύσσομαι*- to intensely and deeply stab. Notice the *κατα* in front of this word. This is the work of the Word of God. The Word pierces and convicts the heart, **Hebrews 4:12; 2 Tim 3:16; 4:2**. And this is also the work of the Holy Spirit because the Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. He is the power behind these Words to convict and reprove, **John 16:8-11**.

This goes back to the Spiritual gift of tongues being spoken as a sign to the unbeliever. The tongues revealed those who had a believer's heart to hear the Word and they heard the miraculous works of God in their own language and became convinced by the Truth that Jesus is the Way unto Salvation. These Jews realized their error. Peter just revealed to them that they killed their own Messiah and now they are ready to repent of their sin. Remember from last week we learned that the Jews rejected Jesus because He didn't fit their model of who they thought the Christ was supposed to be. This is what Isaiah says in **Isaiah 53:1-5**.

These Jews were pierced to the heart, convicted of their sin unto repentance. They realize now that they are enemies of God and they ask Peter and the rest of the Apostles, "**what shall we do?**" And Peter responds in verse 38...

**38** Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>38</sup> Πέτρος δὲ ἔφη πρὸς αὐτούς, Μετανοήσατε, καὶ βαπτισθήτω ἕκαστος ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, καὶ λήψεσθε τὴν δωρεὰν τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος.

Peter’s response is... turn to Jesus! **“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...”** Peter tells us plainly the requirements for Salvation. Repent, change your thinking, μετανοέω. Turn away from your rebellion against Jesus and turn toward Him, trusting in Him fully for Eternal Salvation. It’s not our works that save us, it’s turning our heart toward Him in faith. There is one commandment by which the world will be judged, and that is to believe in Jesus, **1 John 3:23; John 12:47-50; Acts 17:30-31**. There is judgement coming, and the judgement is based on this question, “Did you believe the Words of Jesus Christ unto Everlasting Life?” “Did you repent of your rebellion against Jesus and put your faith in Him?” There is no salvation without repentance from the sin of rejecting Jesus. This is repeated over and over again in the book of Acts, **Acts 20:21**; turning from your rebellion against God, and having faith in Jesus Christ. **Acts 3:19**, this is the time of refreshing. This is the age of Salvation, **Isaiah 28:11-12, 16**; Acts 8:22-23; 17:30; 26:19-20. True repentance is having a change of heart to no longer reject Jesus, but instead turning wholly toward Jesus. Then once you are converted, then this begins the walk of Sanctification to separate yourself from a lifestyle of sin, **Acts 26:20**. The only way you can do the works befitting repentance is to be led by the Spirit, **Romans 8:13-14**.

Back to Acts 2:38... notice the universal call of a personal acceptance of Jesus. **“Repent... and let every one of you be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ...”** The Gospel is universal to all, for each one individually to be saved.

And notice, Peter says, **“Repent... and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins.”** Why does Peter say “repent and be baptized” and not “repent and have faith in Jesus Christ?” There are some denominations that use this verse to teach that water baptism is essential to Salvation. But when you take the whole council of God into account, the Bible doesn’t teach salvation through water baptism. The Bible clearly teaches that Salvation is by Grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone; and that only the blood of Jesus cleanses our sins\*, **Ephesians 2:8-9; 1:7, 13**. Many Scriptures in the NT showing that we are saved by grace through faith and not water baptism. Water baptism is the result of being saved. It is the outward confession of our faith. The physical act of being immersed in water does not forgive sins, it is merely the outward expression of the inward decision of the heart, **1 Peter 3:21**. We are saved by His death and resurrection, and we have a type of that in baptism. We are baptized into His death and raised up with Him together in life, Romans 6:3-4. But it’s not the water that saves us; it’s not the removal of the fifth of the flesh, but the answer to good conscience. Baptism is the outward confession of our faith in Jesus. It’s something you do “because you’re saved,” not something you do “to be saved.”

So again, why does Peter word it this way? Why does he tell them they need to be baptized for the remission of sins? In the early church, there was an immense amount of pressure from the Jews to remain under the Law. The persecution on the early church primarily came from the unbelieving Jews who hated Christians. And you have to remember where they are. They’re in the middle of Jerusalem, and Peter wants them to make a public confession of their faith by being baptized. This is an extremely bold statement because they are saying, in the middle of Jerusalem, “I am denying my past and all my Jewish traditions, and I am uniting myself with Jesus as my Lord and Savior.” Peter is saying this because he doesn’t want any false converts. He says if you’re really serious about changing your life, then you should be willing to make a public display of your faith in Jesus.

This was a bold thing to do, and Peter knows that the Christian life is going to be hard. So he wants them to take a bold stance in accepting Jesus as their Savior. Remember during Jesus’ ministry, there were Jews

\* Saved by faith alone in His blood- Rom 4:5; 5:1; Gal 2:16; Col 1:14; Eph 1:17; Heb 9:12, 22, 26-28; 10:12-14; 1 Pet 1:18-19; Phil 3:9; Acts 16:31

who saw the miracles of Jesus and heard His teachings and believed, but they didn't take the next step of confessing Him openly, [John 12:42-43](#); [Romans 10:9-10](#). I believe this public baptism in the Name of Jesus was Peter getting them to publicly confess Jesus as Lord and Christ. This was simply the public confession of their heart so they could boldly say they were a follower of Christ, even among the immense persecution from the Jews. Peter didn't want any secret Christians. Can you imagine the commotion this was stirring? Baptizing 3,000 people in the middle of Jerusalem? You know the religious leaders were watching this, but these Jews were willing to renounce their old ways and follow Jesus publicly, no matter the consequences. This reminds me of the Jews in [Hebrews 10:32-34](#). I believe this is what Peter is preparing them for. To take the bold stance to endure the persecution that would certainly come.

Peter continues in verse 38... “...[and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit](#).” Receiving the Holy Spirit is the immediate result of believing in Jesus and having your sins forgiven. God sends the Holy Spirit into your life and you are born again. This was the promise in Ezekiel, [Ezek 36:26-27](#). This is Justification; being born again; born of the Spirit unto new life. If you remember, in past lessons we discussed the gift of the Spirit being at work in all three aspects of our Salvation: Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification. And here, Peter is describing the gift of the Spirit unto Justification. The rebirth from death to life. This is the promise of the Father as Peter describes in verse 39...

<p><b>39</b> For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.</p>	<p><i>39 ὑμῖν γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπαγγελία, καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις ὑμῶν, καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς εἰς μακρὰν, ὅσους ἂν προσκαλέσῃται Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν.</i></p>
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The promise of Eternal Life through the power of the Holy Spirit is available to all, it's universal ... “[to you, and to your children, and to all who are afar off...](#)” Peter is including Jews and Gentiles in this universal call, Eph 2:13, 17-18. This is a universal invitation unto Salvation and the Gospel is the means to that universal call because Peter adds these words... “[as many as the Lord our God will call](#).” The phrase “will call” is, *προσκαλέω*, literally, “to call toward,” and it is in the middle voice meaning to call toward Himself. And notice who is doing the calling, *Κύριος ὁ Θεός*, the Lord God, and Peter just proved that the Lord God is Jesus Christ. So Jesus is specifically doing the calling toward Himself.

So now this begs a question. Does this calling to Himself put a limit on the universal call? The answer is... not at all. Jesus said Himself in John 12:32- “[If I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all peoples unto Myself](#).” Christ died for the sins of the whole world, not just for those who are elected for salvation. Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, 1 John 2:2. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, John 1:29.

Therefore, it is clear from Scripture that God has called all peoples to Himself through His Word that He sent, that is through Jesus Christ. But now we have to ask, “How will people hear His Word?” Through us, His ambassadors preaching the Word. The invitation is to all, but the Gospel has to be preached to all. People can't accept the invitation unless they hear the invitation. This is why Jesus gave us the great commission... [Go into all the world and preach the Gospel](#), Mark 16:15. Notice how Paul describes this in [Romans 10:9-17](#). But thank God we are not doing this alone. Matthew adds these words in his gospel... “[and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age](#),” Matthew 28:20. He has given us the Holy Spirit to bear witness of Him to all the world. This is being ambassadors for Him. God has given us this massive responsibility to proclaim His Truth to the world, [2 Cor 5:20](#). This is what Peter is doing to the Jews... I implore you on Christ's behalf... be reconciled to God. Look at verse 40...

<p><b>40</b> And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.</p>	<p><i>40 ἑτέροις τε λόγοις πλείοσι διεμαρτύρετο καὶ παρεκάλει, λέγων, Σώθητε ἀπὸ τῆς γενεᾶς τῆς σκολιᾶς ταύτης.</i></p>
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Peter continues proclaiming the Gospel to these Jews, “[with many other words](#),” expounding on what he had just said and answering questions. And Luke says, “[he testified and exhorted them...](#)” This word

“testified” is very emphatic. It is διαμαρτύρομαι- to thoroughly testify and bear witness. And Peter is exhorting, παρακαλέω, calling them alongside himself, bearing witness of the good news of Jesus Christ to them.

So Peter is thoroughly testifying and calling alongside the Jews in exhortation to **“Be saved from this perverse generation.”** This word “perverse” is σκολιός, literally “crooked.” We get the word scoliosis from this word. Proverbs uses this in the sense of being morally crooked or having slanderous speech, Prov 4:24; 10:8 LXX. Other places in the LXX is refers to a rebellious generation who has fallen away from God, Deut 32:5 LXX; Ps 78:8 LXX. This is a generation that is morally crooked, slanderous and not faithful to God. Every generation that rejects Jesus is perverse, but Jesus Himself said that “this” generation that rejected and crucified their Messiah will have greater judgement, **Luke 11:50-52**; Mk 9:42; Matt 12:39-45. So Peter implores the Jews, **“Be saved from this perverse generation.”** Don’t be a part of this generation that rejected and killed their Messiah. This word “saved” is a passive imperative. Literally saying, “allow yourself to be saved.” We can’t save ourselves. We need a Savior. We need Jesus and His Words of Life, **Phil 2:15-16**; Galatians 1:4.

<p><b>41</b> Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.</p>	<p><sup>41</sup> οἱ μὲν οὖν ἀσμένως ἀποδεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθησαν· καὶ προσετέθησαν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐκείνῃ ψυχαὶ ὡσεὶ τρισχίλιαι.</p>
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**“those who gladly received his word were baptized”** Peter preached the Word of God and these Jews had a believer’s heart, they had ears to hear the Gospel and they gladly welcomed the Word of God into their hearts. And as a result of hearing the Word they put their full trust in Jesus, and they were baptized and made a public declaration of their faith.

**“...and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”** On the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit of God was poured out, the church was born and 3,000 souls came into the Kingdom. The Holy Spirit did His convicting work through Peter and the Word, and these Jews gladly received the Word and were born from death to life, John 1:12. And as we will see next week, they continued steadfastly in one accord in Fellowship with each other... being born into the family of God.