

Text: Acts 2:37-40 "Peter's Application of the Witness of Joel and David" June 23, 2013

This is the fourth part of five of an examination of the sermon that Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, answering the question, "What do these things mean?" The Holy Spirit answered the question by the mouth of the apostle Peter.

Two weeks ago, June 2: The Witness of the prophet Joel.

Last Week: June 9: The Witness of the prophet David, part one.

June 16: The Witness of the prophet David, part two.

June 23: Peter's application

June 30: The Aftermath to the Sermon.

1. Joel bore witness to the necessity for repentance to escape the many evils that God would send because of their sins; but that God would, by a new covenant, pour out His spirit in the days of Messiah upon the elect.
2. Then Peter cites David in Psalm 16 and Psalm 110. It would be necessary that Jesus put away sins by the shedding of His blood and His rising from the dead. He would ascend into Heaven to take the heavenly throne of David, and the Father would give Him the gift of the Holy Spirit that He would pour out upon His servants under that new covenant. This pouring out of the Spirit was promised to all the church that all be equally heirs of eternal life. Jesus would put down all His and our enemies so that nothing could ever hinder us from obtaining our eternal inheritance.

These sermons all will be on sermonaudio, and you are well advised to listen to any of them that you have missed, for they comprise what I desired to be a unified presentation of the events of Acts 2. There are many voices that will lead you astray, and you need to be cognizant of them.

But let us look at our text today: verses 37-40:

"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? 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. 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. 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." (Ac 2:37-40)

I would say three things with respect to Peter's answer to their question: "What shall we do?" The multitude of Israel asked two questions in Acts 2. "What do these things mean?" and now, "What shall we do?" These two questions themselves are the work of the Holy Spirit and are the beginnings of new life. What is the meaning? and because of the meaning: what shall we do? We must ask the same questions ourselves. What is the meaning of these things? and what shall we do because of them?

Peter's answer. It is to us and to all people to the end of the world.

- I. Repent. The word means to think again. It means to turn around. It involves the whole man.
 - A. My thoughts, my emotions, and my choices have been wrong, and I am corrected by the Scriptures to think again. My whole thought pattern needs to be rearranged and turned around. This is that that Joel spoke of. He called the nation to repent. There was no statute of limitations on the call of the prophets to repent: Joel 2:15, 16. The call to repentance and the promise of the Spirit was to the same people, the elect of God.
 - B. Isaiah and the other prophets said the same thing as Joel:
 1. 6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. 12 For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. 13 Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." Is. 55
 2. John the Baptist: Matthew 3:11,12 "11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire: 12 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (Mt 3:11-12)
 3. Jesus: Mark 1:14,15: "14 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, 15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel." (Mr 1:14-15)
 - C. My past is defined by rebellion to God and to the Scriptures. My emotions and my feelings are all wrong. I love what I should hate and I hate what I should love. I need a value adjustment. I love the ways of death and hate the ways of life. My heart is far from God Isaiah 5: Isa 5:20 Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Isa 5:21 Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! My choices have been wrong
 - D. Israel must realize that the past was a history of rebellion against God that culminated in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ. But so is every man's history unless he is born

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again. We desperately need the Holy Spirit to take us by the hand and lead us to Christ and to the fountain of life. We are undone without that work of grace.

E. There are two sides: repent and believe the gospel. You cannot Not think. When you abandon one way of thought you must receive another. Otherwise you just change your slavemaster and style of sin, and not sin and rebellion itself. You cannot just put off the old man, you must put on the new man. Repent and believe the Gospel, is the word of Christ.

II. So what must I do? Right now: "Be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ." Wash away your sins. This is the way that Ananias put it to Saul of Tarsus: "Arise and wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord." Acts 9:17

A. To the Jew is means abandoning Moses and Israel and believing in Jesus Christ; It meant to take the name of Christ and not be ashamed of it.

B. Baptism in water symbolizes the baptism of the Holy Ghost. It is Christ who baptizes us with the Holy Ghost into His church and His people and takes us under His government. Shall I exchange one rebellion for another? Shall I come to Christ to escape my rebellion in the world and bring my rebellion into the church, refusing His government and sacrament and refusing to love the people of God and live at peace among them? Shall I invent a new church in terms of my own rebellion? God forbid. Shall the Holy Spirit be divided from Christ and His church and Scriptures.

1. John: I baptize with water, but one cometh after me who shall baptize with the Holy Ghost.

2. By one Spirit we are baptized into one body: Eph. 4 and 1Cor. 12.

C. When you repent, you are identifying yourself with the human race and confessing you are a sinner like everyone else. You take your place with sinners. When you believe the Gospel, you are taking your place with the church and Jesus purchased with His own blood. Your salvation is the same as all other believers; you are not in a class by yourself. Christ is not composed of disassociated body parts. Water baptism and identification with the visible church symbolizes Spirit baptism and identification with the elect of God, the church of all ages. We are baptized into Christ; not just baptized. We are not ashamed of His Name.

D. We are baptized in some present moment, and the gift of the Spirit may come at our baptism as it did with Saul and those 3000 on the Day of Pentecost. The baptism of the Spirit may come before baptism in water as it did with Cornelius and the Gentiles with him. The baptism of the Spirit may come after baptism as it did with the 120 in the upper room, at least. Baptism is a witness to the present age of the promise of God that whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved. It is His church that bears the sign and seal of His promise, and the promise is His. Baptism is a testimony of God of His promise of the Spirit to His people; not the testimony of the believer to some religious experience he has had. Experience varies widely, but the promise of God is One and there is, hence, only one baptism.

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E. Repent of you past ways, thoughts, deeds, and emotions; Today, trust in the Gospel and call upon Him, being baptized if you have not already been baptized. But what of the future. Ah! Peter speaks of this, too. That is the third thing

III. All of this is because of the Promise. Repent and be Baptized, for the promise is to you. "For" is a conjunction that most commonly has the meaning "because of" in most of the passages it is used, as "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save His people from their sins." Many, many other illustrations could be made.

A. Repentance and Baptism is because of the Promise: The Promise of the New Covenant that Joel and the other prophets spoke about. The message of the prophets is summarized by the writer of Hebrews:

Heb 8:8 For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah:

Heb 8:13 In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.

Heb 12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

B. Nothing matters if you do not have faith. Where there is no promise, there can be no faith. Repent and be baptized for your own sake and for your children's sake. Remember the call of Joel 2:15-17

15 Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: 16 Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. 17 Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where *is* their God?" (Joe 2:15-17)

C. Repent and Believe the Gospel; Repent and be baptized; For your sake and for the sake of your children after you.

1. You do not repent and believe in order to get the promise; the promise is completely by grace as it was to Abraham.

2. We repent and believe because of the promise. We are therefore children of the promise as Isaac was. Our baptism is witness to that, to the promise of God to the world.

Conclusion. There is much more that could be said. There are so many figures and things in Scripture that illustrate these things that we can never exhaust: never, never, never. But I will close with the words of Jesus that speaks of these same things:

John 7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. 38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. 39 (But this spake he of the Spirit,

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which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

John 14: 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Romans 8: 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. 12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.