

# The Birth and Growth of the Church



## ACTS CHAPTER 2 TEXT, EXPOSITION AND PRACTICAL HELPS

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# The Birth and Growth of the Church, [Acts 2:1-Acts 7:60](#)

## A. The Day of Pentecost and The Coming of the Holy Spirit: The Church is Born, [Acts 2:1-13](#)

**[\(Acts 2:1-13\)](#) *Introduction:* the Day of Pentecost was one of the most phenomenal and important events in all of history.**

There are several reasons why the event was so important.

1. It was "**the coming of the Holy Spirit.**"
2. It was the birth of the church.
3. It was the corporate filling of the body of believers by the Holy Spirit with the promised presence of Christ ([John 14:16-18](#)).
4. It was the personal filling of the individual believer by the Holy Spirit.
5. It was the Presence and Power of God coming upon believers, gifting and equipping them to proclaim the glorious message of salvation to men.

1. **There was God's providence (v.1).**
2. **There was man obeying (v.1).**
3. **There was the spirit of being in one accord (v.1).**
4. **There was the Spirit's infilling (v.2-4).**
5. **There was witnessing—devout men heard the Word (v.5-11).**
6. **There were different reactions (v.12-13).**

### **Introduction:**

**[\(Acts 2:1-4\)](#) Holy Spirit— Pentecost: the disciples had been deliberately prepared for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Throughout the Bible the revelation of the Spirit had been step by step, that is, progressive.**

**Prophecy shows this clearly.**

1. Joel prophesied, "**It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh....**" ([Joel 2:28-29](#)).
2. John the Baptist said, "**I baptize with water, but He shall baptize with [en, in] the Holy Spirit**" ([Matthew 3:11](#); [Luke 3:16](#)).
3. In the early part of Jesus' ministry, He had said that believers were to be "**born again...by the Spirit**" ([John 3:3-4](#); cp. [1 John 5:1](#)).
4. During His ministry, Jesus taught that men were to receive the Holy Spirit by prayer ([Luke 11:13](#)).

5. In the Upper Room, Jesus identified the Holy Spirit as a Person ([John 14:15-26](#)), and He outlined the work of the Spirit with both unbelievers and believers ([John 16:7-15](#)). Significantly, He revealed that He was praying to the Father for the Comforter to come and abide with the disciples ([John 14:16-17](#)).

6. After His resurrection from the dead, Jesus appeared to His disciples in the Upper Room. There He symbolically breathed on them, saying, "**Receive ye the Holy Spirit**" ([John 20:22](#)). But He insisted they not begin their ministry until they experienced the Spirit actually coming upon them with power ([Luke 24:49](#); [Acts 1:8](#)).

7. Right before Jesus was to ascend into heaven, He said, "**John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit**" ([Acts 1:5](#)).

8. Then, ten days after Jesus' ascension and after much prayer, the Holy Spirit came upon and filled the whole body of believers at Pentecost ([Acts 2:1-4](#)).

There are two events of the Holy Spirit's coming that seem to hold historical significance. These two particular events are very, very special to the church, for both Jewish and Gentile believers were clearly seen to be in God's historical plan. Both Jew and Gentile were baptized by the Holy Spirit, that is, placed into the body of Christ, His Church.

1. **At Pentecost:** the disciples were "**filled with the Holy Spirit**" ([Acts 2:4](#)).
  - a. This was in fulfillment of the prophecy by Joel. The Spirit was *poured out* upon the believers ([Acts 2:16](#)).
  - b. This was in fulfillment of the prophecies by Jesus and John. The Spirit *baptized*, that is, immersed the believers with His own presence ([Acts 1:5](#); [Acts 10:44-48](#); cp. [Acts 11:15-16](#), esp. [Acts 11:16](#)).
2. **At Cornelius' house:** the Holy Spirit "fell," was "**poured out**," and was "**received**" by the Gentile believers ([Acts 10:44-47](#)).
  - a. Peter said to the Jews who came with him, "**These received the Holy Spirit as well as we**" ([Acts 10:47](#)).
  - b. Peter reported the event to the Jerusalem Church: "**The Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water: but 'ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit' "**" ([Acts 11:15-16](#)).
  - c. Peter used the experience to support Paul before the great Jerusalem Council:  
  
"**God...[gave] them the Holy Spirit even as He did unto us**" ([Acts 15:8](#)).

In all three instances the idea conveyed is that of an event just like *their own* experience. It is as though Peter pointed to a Gentile Pentecost or at least an extension of Pentecost in [Acts 2](#) to include the Gentiles.

**Note two other facts:**

1. At Pentecost, the account uses the word *filled*, not *baptized*.

2. At Cornelius' house, the account says the Holy Spirit *fell*, was *poured out*, and *received*. But in reporting the experience to the Jerusalem Church, Peter used the word *baptized*. He said the Gentile believers were "**baptized with the Holy Spirit**" ([Acts 11:16](#)) "**as on us at the beginning**" ([Acts 11:15](#)). This clearly says that although the word *baptized* is not used in the Pentecost experience, the disciples were baptized or immersed with the Spirit's presence at Pentecost. The words *filled*, *received*, *poured*, *baptized*, and *fell upon* are all used interchangeably to describe the Spirit's presence coming into a believer's life. **(If believers would heed this, it would eliminate many of the arguments that arise over terminology.)**

**Other than these two events Acts records only four other times that the Holy Spirit came upon believers.**

1. A little prayer band in Jerusalem was "**filled**" with the Holy Spirit ([Acts 4:8](#)).
2. The Samaritans (half-Jews, half-Gentiles) "**received the Holy Spirit**" ([Acts 8:15-17](#)).
3. Paul was "**filled with the Holy Spirit**" ([Acts 9:17](#)).
4. The disciples of John experienced "**the Spirit coming on them**" ([Acts 19:6](#)).

One other fact is important. Other than Pentecost and Cornelius' house, the word *baptize* is used in connection with the Holy Spirit only once in the rest of the New Testament. People need to pay attention to this. What is being said is that after the book of Acts, the word *baptize* is used only once with the Holy Spirit. That one reference is [1 Cor. 12:13](#): "**For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.**" That is, the Holy Spirit takes all believers and baptizes or immerses, places, and positions them into the body of Christ—into the church, the universal church.

**In conclusion, what does all this mean?**

**Here are three thoughts that we should consider:**

1. When a man grasps the gospel and believes, really believes, the Holy Spirit enters his life. He *comes upon*, *falls upon*, *pours*, *fills*, *baptizes* (immerses) Himself into the life of the believer. This is a personal *experience*. This act of the Spirit takes place in the life of the believer. The believer *experiences* the Spirit coming into his life. The believer receives the Spirit *experientially*.
2. When a man grasps the gospel and believes, really believes, the Holy Spirit takes him and *baptizes* or immerses, and places him into the body of Christ, which is God's Church. The believer does not feel or experience this act. It is an act of God that takes place in heaven. The believer is *counted* as a child of God. He is *counted* as a member of the body, of the church. This is a *position*, not an experience which the believer feels. It happens once-for-all. The believer is adopted as a child of God—irrevocably.

It is an eternal *position*, an eternal sonship. The believer becomes a member of God's Church—positionally ([1 Cor. 12:13](#)).

3. After a man is saved, he is to "keep on being filled with the Spirit"—day by day ([Ephes. 5:18](#); cp. [John 14:21](#), the word "manifest"). The early believers were continually filled ([Acts 4:8, 31](#)).

### 1. ([Acts 2:1](#)) Feast of Pentecost— God, Providence of: there was God's providence.

The Feast of Pentecost needs to be understood in order to see God's providence at work. Pentecost was celebrated fifty days after the Passover. It was also known as the "Day of the First Fruits" ([Numbers 28:26](#)), or the "Feast of Weeks" ([Exodus 34:22](#)), or the "Feast of Harvest."

Pentecost was a glorious day of celebration, a day when the people were to heap praise and thanksgiving upon God.

There were three particular reasons for which they were to thank God.

1. The harvest of the fields. Note the very name of the Feast says that it is a celebration of the "First Fruits." It was celebrated when the first fruits of the harvest began to come in, which was around the first of June. It actually opened the harvest season.

2. The Exodus, the deliverance of the nation Israel from Egyptian bondage ([Deut. 16:12](#)). The people were to thank God for the day he delivered them out of slavery.

3. The giving of the law upon Mt. Sinai ([Exodus 19-20](#)). This was the day the people were constituted as a nation, as the great nation of Israel. They were to live as God's very own people upon earth. They were to thank God for Himself and for His law, the rules and principles He had given to govern their lives and nation. It is important to note that the Jews figured the law had been given to Moses fifty days after the Exodus.

Now note the providence of God, how all three events were fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit.

1. When "Pentecost was fully come" the first fruits were born—the church itself and the first harvest of souls. The new beginning, that is, the filling of the Holy Spirit, began fifty days after Jesus' death and resurrection ([Acts 2:4](#)).

2. The coming of the Holy Spirit had a very specific purpose. The Holy Spirit was to live and work within the heart of man, to deliver and free him from the enslavements of this world—from sin, death, and hell. The Holy Spirit came to set man at liberty even as God had delivered the Jews out of Egyptian slavery ([2 Cor. 3:17](#); cp. [John 16:8-11](#)).

3. The coming of the Holy Spirit **was two things**.

- a. It was the birth of the church, the new people of God. People who truly came to God were now to be sealed and known by the presence of the Holy Spirit, by His very presence within their hearts and lives.

**"Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" ([2 Cor. 1:21-22](#)).**

**"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory" ([Ephes. 1:13-14](#)).**

**"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" ([Ephes. 4:30](#)).**

- b. It was the institution of the new law, the new rule and principle of God. Man is now to be guided by the Spirit who empowers him to live right and to serve Christ.

**"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" ([John 14:26](#)).**

**"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come" ([John 16:13](#)).**

**"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" ([Romans 8:14](#)).**

**"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" ([1 Cor. 2:14](#)).**

### **DEEPER STUDY # 1**

**([Acts 2:1](#)) Feasts, Jewish: there were three major Feasts celebrated by the Jews.**

Each had been instituted by God to celebrate significant events in both the daily life and history of the people and their nation. But God also had something else in mind as well, the coming of His Son and the birth of His followers. Therefore each of the Feasts find their fulfillment in Christ and His Church.

1. There was the "**Feast of the Passover**."

**It was a week of giving thanks.....**

- a. for God's deliverance out of bondage and slavery, looking back to their forefathers' slavery under Egypt.

**The Passover Feast** was fulfilled in the crucifixion of Christ. Christ was the "**Lamb of God**" who was to die for the sins of the world. He and His death had been symbolized in the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb.

**2. There was the "Feast of the First Fruits."**

**It was a day of giving thanks.....**

- a. for the birth and growth of the new crops, the reaping of the first fruits of the earth.
- b. for the birth of their nation at Mt. Sinai.

This Feast was fulfilled in the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, the day when the church was born and the first of God's new people were reaped.

**3. There was the "Feast of Tabernacles."**

**It was a week of giving thanks.....**

- a. for the end and completion of the harvest season, the journey of toil and struggle experienced in gathering the harvest.
- b. for the end of their nation's wilderness wanderings under Moses.

The "**Feast of Tabernacles**" is yet to be fulfilled. It will be fulfilled when our Lord returns. The Feast will symbolize our joy, liberty, and victory through the wilderness wanderings of life and the glorious provision of God, that of living and serving eternally in His wonderful presence ([Zech. 14:16](#)).

**DEEPER STUDY # 2**

([Acts 2:1](#)) **Power:** Jesus had instructed the disciples to "tarry" in Jerusalem until they were endued with power ([Luke 24:49](#)).

**Luke 24:49 (KJV)**

**And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.**

**2. ([Acts 2:1](#)) Obedience: there was man obeying.**

**Note:** the believers were in "**one place**," in the city of Jerusalem precisely where Christ told them to go and wait upon the coming of the Holy Spirit. They were obedient—obedient despite the great danger the Jerusalem authorities posed to them. (See note below—[Acts 1:12-15](#) for more discussion.)

**Thought 1.** One thing is absolutely essential if a believer wants to receive the fullness of God's Spirit: *obedience*. The believer must obey Christ and follow His instructions.

**"If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 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" ([John 14:15-17](#)).**

**"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" ([John 14:23](#)).**

**([Acts 1:12-15](#)) Leaders, Church: the essentials to choosing church leaders.**

There are six essentials seen in this passage.

**1. Essential 1: to obey Jesus.** The disciples had just witnessed the ascension on the mount of Olives. They now obeyed Christ by returning to Jerusalem. And note: their obedience took tremendous courage, for Jerusalem was the very center of opposition against Christ. They were risking their lives to obey Christ. It would have been much easier to go elsewhere and wait upon and serve God there. But Christ had made His will known and the disciples had committed their lives to obeying Him.

**Thought 1.** In choosing church leaders, believers have to be in the will of God; they must do the will of God. They cannot know who God's choice for a leader is unless they are obeying Him. Disobedient and carnal believers end up with disobedient and carnal leaders, that is, with leaders who are fleshy and worldly, knowing little if anything about God and His will and the true spiritual matters of the church and its mission.

**2. Essential 2: to center around the appointed leaders.** Note that all eleven of the apostles were present, and they were even meeting in the upper room where the apostles were staying. The building was large, for there were over 120 disciples gathering there ([Acts 1:15](#)).

**Thought 1.** Leaders appointed by Christ are to be *the leaders* of the church, and believers must be centered around them if they wish God's presence and blessings. Too often however, too many turn to other leaders, leaders less godly, less spiritual and less mission-, evangelistic-, and ministry-minded. The result is a dead, formal, self-centered, or worldly and socially minded church.

**Note:** there is a huge difference between being ministry-minded and social-minded. The difference is the same as the great gulf between the spirit and the world itself.



1. Being ministry-minded means reaching out to help people both socially and spiritually, leading people to an evangelistic encounter, to a personal relationship with Christ as well as meeting their physical and social needs.
2. Being social-minded means reaching out to help people with *little* if any attention given to evangelism. A social gospel seldom stresses the need for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The church must *have* and *follow spiritual leaders*, leaders chosen and appointed by God, if the church is to be a true church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**3. Essential 3: to continue in one accord.** The disciples were in the upper room for one reason: to seek and wait upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

**Thought 1.** Believers must be of one spirit and mind, focusing their thoughts and concentrating as strongly as they can upon the same purpose. They have one purpose in mind, to seek God for the promise of His Spirit and His presence.

**4. Essential 4: to pray steadfastly (*esan proskarterountes*).** The word is strong. They continued, persevered, endured, persisted, stuck to praying. For what? For the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They would not cease or stop praying. God's very special presence and power, His very own Spirit and power, had been promised to them; and they were not going to stop praying until God baptized them in His Spirit and presence. (What a lesson for us!)

**5. Essential 5: to have a leader who willingly leads.** Peter had failed his Lord and failed Him in a terrible way, tragically denying Him. He had emotionally dropped into the dregs of despair and anguish (see [Matthew 26:69-75](#)). He could have easily remained defeated, allowing the glances and criticisms of the believers to keep him down, never serving his Lord again. But note: he had gotten up off the ground of despair and defeatism: He was standing forth, willingly serving Christ *exactly* where Christ had originally appointed him to serve. Peter's sin and the public's criticism were not keeping him away from his Lord, nor from serving his Lord. He had failed and failed miserably, but the Lord in His unbelievable mercy and grace had forgiven him and lifted him up, and now the Lord was ready to use Peter as originally planned.

**Thought 1.** Note that Peter willingly stepped forth. He did not step forth by constraint nor out of fear. Compare what he later said to the leaders of the church.

**"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" ([1 Peter 5:1-3](#)).**

**6. Essential 6: to heed what the leader says.** All 120 believers listened and gave heed to Peter's leadership. No leader could lead unless the people were *willing* to follow. God's presence and blessings depended upon the believers following the leader God had given them.

### 3. ([Acts 2:1](#)) **Unity: there was the spirit of being in one accord.**

([Acts 1:14](#)) **One Accord** (*homothumadon*): the same mind or spirit; oneness of mind and heart. It means to be one in spirit and purpose. *Homos* means same and *thumos* means spirit or mind. The believers, all 120 of them in the upper room, were of the same spirit, of the same mind. The idea is they were after the same thing, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They were focusing and concentrating their thoughts and energies upon seeking God for the promise of His Spirit.

The word is used **only eleven times** in Scripture, **ten of those times** are found in [Acts](#), **one** is found in [Romans](#).

1. One accord in prayer ([Acts 1:14](#); [Acts 4:24](#)).
2. One accord in one place ([Acts 2:1](#)).
3. One accord in daily worship and the Lord's supper ([Acts 2:46](#); [Acts 5:12](#)).
4. One accord in obedience ([Acts 8:6](#)).
5. One accord in a business meeting ([Acts 15:25](#)).
6. One accord is needed to glorify God ([Romans 15:6](#)).

The phrase "**one accord**" is also used to refer to the unity of unbelievers and enemies of the gospel ([Acts 7:57](#); [Acts 12:20](#); [Acts 18:12](#); [Acts 19:29](#)).

### 4. ([Acts 2:2-4](#)) **Holy Spirit— Pentecost: there was the Spirit's infilling.**

**Note the word "suddenly."** The Holy Spirit came suddenly, abruptly, unexpectedly, the kind of abrupt happening that jolts and startles a person. God was dramatizing the supernatural and precious significance of the event.

1. There was a mighty sound that filled the room.
  - a. The sound was from heaven, that is, from God. It came from God's activity, not from the activity of natural causes upon earth. It was supernatural. God created this sound for this very special occasion.
  - b. The sound was like the rushing of a *mighty* wind. It was not wind, but a sound like the deafening roar or blast of a strong wind (cp. a hurricane, tornado, or gale).
  - c. The sound filled *all the house*, that is, it was localized upon the house where they were *sitting*. Why?

**There are at least three reasons.**

**First**, people needed to be startled and alarmed, attracted to gather from all over Jerusalem, seeking to know what had happened. An audience needed to be gathered for the first preaching of the gospel.

**Second**, the mighty power of the Spirit needed to be symbolized and dramatized for the disciples. They needed strong confidence instilled within them in order to stand and preach the gospel before the very persons who had crucified the Lord and who had hunted them down as accomplices.

**Third**, the disciples would learn how Christ wanted them to preach the gospel. The presence of the Holy Spirit upon them would either bring people flocking from all over, asking what had happened or lead them to the people whom they were to reach.

2. There was the appearance of cloven tongues (*diamerizomenai*). The Greek means a tongue that was cloven, that is, parting asunder. The idea is that a single tongue appeared and then began to split and divide itself, resting upon each of the disciples.

- a. The tongues were not fire, but *like fire*; that is, they only looked like fire. They were a brilliant, luminous, fire-like substance created by God to dramatize the moment of the Holy Spirit coming upon the disciples.
- b. The tongue of fire that first appeared symbolized the presence of the Holy Spirit which was to dwell in the midst of God's people as a whole. When He began to divide into many tongues of fire and to rest upon each believer, He was symbolizing that He was to dwell within each believer as well as within the whole body of believers.

**Note the words, "It [He] sat" (*ekathisen*).** The word is singular, not plural; Scripture does not say "**they sat**," but He, the Holy Spirit Himself, was descending and resting upon *each* of the disciples. They were not receiving "**tongues of fire**" **but the Spirit of God.**

**Note also** that the Spirit appeared in the form of a tongue of fire. The tongue symbolizes the instrument of speaking and preaching and sharing the gospel. The Holy Spirit was to be the burning power of the tongue, of the convicting message to be proclaimed.

3. There were the results which **were twofold**.

- a. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit.

**First**, both the body (church) and each individual believer were filled. They were "**all filled**" with the presence and power of the Spirit—all of them corporately and each of them individually. **It was both a corporate and a**

**personal, individual infilling.** Each believer had been commanded to wait for the baptism of the Spirit, and each one was to be so filled with His presence and power. It was a command to the individual believer as well as to the corporate body. Each one was to experience and know His grace and power and fruit ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

**Thought 1.** A critical point is often ignored and neglected. The command to be filled with the Spirit is still God's command to every believer, both individually and corporately (the church).

**"Be filled with the Spirit" ([Ephes. 5:18](#)).**

**"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).**

**Thought 2.** How neglectful the church is! Ignoring and neglecting the command "[to seek to] be filled with the Spirit." How many churches actually meet together to pray and wait for the filling of God's Spirit?

**"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" ([Luke 11:13](#)).**

**Second,** the disciples were given the gifts of the Spirit to carry on the work of the ministry upon earth. This fact is not mentioned here, although it is certainly to be demonstrated in the preaching and witnessing about to take place. The giving of the Spirit's gifts is covered in Ephesians.

**"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men....And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" ([Ephes. 4:8, 11-12](#)).**

**"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" ([Acts 1:8](#)).**

**"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power [Holy Spirit], Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" ([Ephes. 1:19-20](#)).**

b. The disciples began to speak with other tongues (see [Deeper Study # 3, Tongues—Acts 2:4](#)).

### DEEPER STUDY # 3

**(Acts 2:4) Tongues— Holy Spirit:** what is meant by "other tongues" here?

**Note two things.**

1. "Other tongues" definitely means foreign languages ([Acts 2:6-13](#)). The disciples were supernaturally witnessing and preaching in the languages of the different nationalities gathering together. Scripture is so clear about this that there can be no reasonable doubt without really twisting the Word of God.

2. "Other tongues" could also mean the *tongues* or **ecstatic utterance** covered in [1 Corinthians](#); that is, it could have been what is commonly called the *heavenly or prayer language* ([1 Cor. 14:2, 14](#)).

An ecstatic worship could be taking place while the disciples were experiencing the infilling of the Holy Spirit. There seems to be some time between the moments of infilling and the crowds arriving to see what caused the explosive sound or noise ([Acts 2:2](#)). And there can be no doubt that the disciples were flooded with joy, an ecstatic worshipful joy.

**They now knew the most wonderful things.....**

1. Christ was in them, His Spirit had actually entered into their hearts and lives. Their wonderful Lord had returned to them just as He had said He would.
2. They were filled with a deep sense of His presence and power, His concern and love for the world, His courage and drive to share the great news of the glorious gospel.

One thing needs to be noted, however: the words "**as the Spirit gave them utterance.**" They spoke in tongues "**as the Spirit gave them utterance.**" This may indicate a clear difference from the gift of tongues in [1 Cor. 14](#), a clear difference in this sense:

1. All gifts once bestowed by the Spirit are thereafter exercised by the believer as the believer wills to use them. In fact, in order to be faithful, the believer *has* to use his gifts as need or as opportunity arises. This is clear from [1 Cor. 14:28-33](#).
2. The gift of tongues here in [Acts 2](#) says that the gift was supernaturally exercised by the Spirit, not by the individual believer.

**5. (Acts 2:5-11) Witnessing: there was witnessing—devout men heard the Word.**

Witnessing is also a result of being filled with the Spirit.

### Note several things.

1. Devout men, Jewish pilgrims who had come from *all over the world*, had returned to Jerusalem to celebrate the "**Feast of the First Fruits.**" The word "**devout**" (*eulabeis*) means reverent, worshipful, careful. It means persons who handle spiritual matters carefully.

2. The words "**when this was noised abroad**" seems to be saying it was the news of the disciples' behavior that brought the crowd together. But the Greek says, "**When this sound was heard**" (*genomenēs phōnēs*). It was apparently the sound of the thunderous blast caused by God that brought the people rushing to the scene.

3. The crowd heard an amazing thing—the disciples supernaturally speaking in their own tongue (**dialect, language**) ([Acts 2:6, 8, 11](#)).

4. The number of dialects and languages spoken included most of those from the known areas of the world at that time. Luke's purpose in giving the list seems to stress that people from all over the world were present for Christ to save and to send back to their native lands as servants of His, servants to proclaim the message of the glorious gospel.

5. What the crowd heard in their native languages was "**the wonderful works of God,**" the personal witness of the gospel, the very things Peter was about to preach to the whole crowd ([Acts 2:14-40](#)).

**Thought 1.** Note how the groundwork for preaching is first laid by personal witnessing. (See below [Deeper Study # 4, Witnessing—Acts 1:8](#) for Scripture.)

### **DEEPER STUDY # 4**

[\(Acts 1:8\)](#) **Witnessing:** the word "**witness**" in the book of Acts is forceful, revealing the duty of the believer.

**"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"** ([Acts 1:8](#)).

**"This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses"** ([Acts 2:32](#)).

**"And with many other words did he testify [witness] and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation"** ([Acts 2:40](#)).

**"And [you] killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses"** ([Acts 3:15](#)).

**"And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all"** ([Acts 4:33](#)).

**"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him"** ([Acts 5:32](#)).

**"And they, when they had testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans" ([Acts 8:25](#)).**

**"And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" ([Acts 10:39-43](#)).**

**"And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people" ([Acts 13:31](#)).**

**"Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands" ([Acts 14:3](#)).**

**"And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified [witnessed] to the Jews that Jesus was Christ" ([Acts 18:5](#)).**

**"Testifying [witnessing] both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify [witness] the gospel of the grace of God" ([Acts 20:21-24](#)).**

**"For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" ([Acts 22:15](#)).**

**"And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony [witness] concerning me" ([Acts 22:18](#)).**

**"And when the blood of thy martyr [witness] Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him" ([Acts 22:20](#)).**

**"And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome" ([Acts 23:11](#)).**

**"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee" ([Acts 26:16](#)).**



**"Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come" ([Acts 26:22](#)).**

**"And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified [witnessed] the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening" ([Acts 28:23](#)).**

## **6. ([Acts 2:12-13](#)) Gospel, Reaction to: there were different reactions.**

All were amazed (*existanto*) and astonished, marvelling at what was happening.

**There was a twofold reaction.**

**1.** Some were attracted (*diēporoun*), perplexed and wondering, at a loss as to what was happening. But they were attracted to seek meaning in it all.

**2.** Others simply mocked, accusing the disciples of being drunk. (Just imagine the ecstatic joy flooding their hearts for them to behave in a way to cause such a charge! Where is the infilling of such joy today?)

**"For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" ([2 Cor. 6:2](#)).**



## **B. The First Sermon (Part I): The Gospel Message,** **Acts 2: 14-24**

**(Acts 2:14-24) Introduction:** this is the first sermon ever preached in the new church age, after Jesus' ascension and Pentecost, that is, after the coming of the Holy Spirit.

If men would preach what is preached here, what a difference would exist in men's lives, in the church, and in world history. (Because of its length and the time limit placed on preachers in the churches of so many industrialized societies, the message preached by Peter is split into three studies.)

1. **Infilled believers (v.14-16).**
2. **These are the last days, the days of God's last work on earth (v.17-21).**
3. **This is the day of God's Savior: Jesus of Nazareth (v.22-24).**

### **1. (Acts 2:14-16) Holy Spirit, Infilling: the believers were infilled.**

**The disciples were so full of the Holy Spirit, so full of God's presence and joy, they could only.....**

1. act excited.
2. speak about the wonderful works of God (**Acts 2:11**).
3. express joy and rejoicing in what God had done.
4. demonstrate absolute confidence, assurance, and conviction of God's presence and eternal salvation.
5. bear testimony to all who would listen.

1. Such behavior required an explanation. It was not common behavior, not among a people who lived in a world of trial and uncertainty, struggle and survival, pain and hurt, suffering and death; a people who knew their world was such, but who evaded the fact and did all they could to escape the reality of it.

A person who demonstrated absolute confidence, assurance, and conviction of God's presence and of eternal salvation had to explain himself.

- a. Some in the world were amazed at such behavior and wished to know what it meant. An answer was required (**Acts 2:12**).
- b. Others mocked, jokingly suggesting that such behavior *was crazy and foolish*, just like the behavior of a drunken man; and they, too, were due an answer (**Acts 2:13**).

2. A spirit-filled person is not under the influence of a man-made, induced excitement. Peter stood to his feet *with the eleven* other apostles: they all stood before the thousands who had gathered (**Acts 2:41**). Peter spoke at the top of his voice. Note the authority and forcefulness of Peter!

What a difference the Spirit had made in this man—the man who had been so *up and down* in following Jesus:

1. "Be this known."
2. "Hearken to my words."
3. "It is but the third hour [9 a.m.] of the day."

Peter declared that they were not deluded; they were not acting and speaking *foolish* things like a drunken man. What was happening was just what Scripture predicted. It was the work of God, just what God had promised to man. It was the glorious gospel (good news) promised by God.

## **2. (Acts 2:17-21) Last Days— God, Work of: these are the last days, the days of God's last work on earth.**

Standing there before the throng of thousands, Peter declared:

1. Today, this day, the great prophecy of Joel begins to be fulfilled ([Joel 2:28-32](#)).
2. Today, this day, begins the *last days* of earth's history.
3. Today, this day, begins the *last days* of God's work on earth.
4. Today, this day, begins the last days, the final age of God's plan for human history.
5. Today, this day, begins the last days, the dispensation of God's grace (the church), the age of the gospel.

**Thought 1.** In the Scripture, the "last days" mean all the above. The *last days* began when Christ came to earth and they will end when Christ returns to earth.

**Note:** we are already 2000 years into the last days.

1. The last days include the great outpouring of God's Spirit.
  - a. The word "pour" (*ekcheō*) means to pour out, to pour forth, to shed forth. **It means that God gives His Spirit.....**
    1. to  *dwell in* the believer ([John 14:17](#); [1 Cor. 6:19-20](#)).
    2. to  *abide with* the believer forever ([John 14:16](#)).
    3. to fill, to overflow, to abundantly  *fill* the believer ([Ephes. 5:18](#)).
    4. to give very special  *manifestations* of Christ to the believer ([John 14:21](#)).
  - b. God pours out His Spirit upon  *all flesh*.....
    1. upon sons and daughters.
    2. upon young men and old men.
    3. upon His slaves, servants, and handmaidens.

**The point is this:** God's Spirit shows no discrimination. The Spirit of God is available to all: male and female, young and old, slave and free, rich and poor.

- c. God pours out His Spirit **with very special gifts**.....
1. the gift of prophecy: proclaiming and predicting the truth (see [1 Cor. 14:3](#)). Note this gift is given to both men and women. This was part of the Scriptural promise.
  2. the gift of seeing visions, especially among young men. The Greek word "**visions**" (*horaseis*) means appearance ([Rev. 4:3](#)) or an ecstatic revelation ([Rev. 9:17](#)). In Scripture the Greek word is used for both what a man can envision (see, imagine, think, cause to appear) within his own mind and what is given him by God through a special revelation ([Rev. 9:17](#)).
  3. the gift of dreaming dreams, especially among older men. The idea is that a dream is given by God.

**Thought 1. Note a crucial fact.** History has shown and Scripture warns that spiritual gifts are often misused and abused, tragically and destructively so.

- 1) We must guard against accepting every dream and vision as being of God. God's Word is the revelation of God. What God wants to reveal to us is therein. We must stand upon God's Word and measure every vision and dream by God Word.
- 2) A study of the visions and dreams in the Book of Acts shows that every one of them had to do with witnessing, with reaching people for Christ. Not a single dream or vision had to do with *personal edification* or with *boosting self to be spiritually superior*.

- d. God pours out His Spirit only upon His servants and upon His handmaidens. This is the emphasis of this verse, the reason for repeating what has just been said. Note that the verse is a summary statement: no one receives God's Spirit, no one, not until they become His servant or His handmaiden.
- e. God gifts His servants and His handmaidens with one very special gift—the gift of prophecy. Again, the point is primary, to stress what is so important. The gift of prophecy, of proclaiming that God's very own Son has come into the world to save sinners, is the primary gift of God's Spirit. Every one of God's servants and handmaidens are gifted to prophesy.

**Thought 1.** Note the devastating blow to the ego of *professionalism* and to the practice of so many of us.

- 1) So many of us leave proclamation, that is, witnessing, up to others, using the flimsy excuse that we are not capable nor gifted to witness.
- 2) Too many enjoy the prestige of a *professional gift* and a *professional ministry*, minimizing the lay ministry and the layman's gift to proclaim Christ. And although there are *measures* or degrees of gifts, the great need of the hour is for every believer to proclaim the living Lord.

2. The last days include the days of terrible judgment at the end—the Day of the Lord (see below [Deeper Study # 5—Acts 2:19-20](#)).

3. The last days include the days of great salvation. Throughout the last days, during the whole period, **man can be saved by doing two simple things:**

1. He has to **call**: to sense the **need** to be saved.
2. He has to call upon "**the name of the Lord**": to know and believe that Jesus is the Lord and to be ready to submit to His Lordship, to serve Him as Lord.

**"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" ([Romans 10:13](#)).**

**"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" ([Romans 10:9-10](#)).**

## DEEPER STUDY # 5

**([Acts 2:19-20](#)) Day of the Lord (Jehovah)**: in the simplest of terms, the Day of the Lord is the Day when Christ returns to execute judgment upon the earth. It is a definite Day that is coming upon earth, and note: it is coming at the end of the **last days**, at the end of the present age.

### Note two points.

1. The Day of the Lord is to be characterized by several things.
  - a. **Wonders (*terata*)**: marvels, signs, happenings, portents in heaven above, that is, in outer space; happenings and marvels that point to something unusual about to happen.
  - b. **Signs (*semeia*)**: events and happenings on earth given by God to warn that the end is at hand.
  - c. **Blood and fire and vapor of smoke**: terrible bloodshed and explosive fire that causes.....
    1. mushrooming vapors of smoke.
    2. the sun to be turned into darkness and blotted out.
    3. the moon to be turned into a blood red.

**Thought 1.** It is thought-provoking when we consider how closely the language resembles atomic warfare.

2. The events to happen in the Day of the Lord (as revealed by the whole of Scripture) seem to be fourfold. **Note**: no attempt whatsoever is made to put these events in any specific order.

**There are two reasons for this.**

1. There are so many divergent opinions.
2. More importantly, Scripture does not give a complete list of last events.

**Throughout Scripture, four events are discussed as happening in the Day of the Lord:**

- 1) the return of Christ,
- 2) terrible tribulation,
- 3) judgment, and
- 4) the remaking of earth.

- a. A terrible period of tribulation (**7 years**). This includes the last half of the period known as the great tribulation (**3 1/2 years**). This is the fulfillment of Daniel's "**seventieth week**" ([Daniel 9:27](#)).
- b. The return of Christ as sovereign Lord. He shall rule and reign in glory upon earth (**the Millennial reign of God's Son**, [Rev. 20:4-6](#)).
- c. The resurrection and final judgment of all.

**This includes.....**

1. men who are described as sheep and goats ([Matthew 25:31-46](#); [Rev. 20:11-15](#)).
2. the Beast or the antichrist, the false prophet, and their followers ([Rev. 19:11-21](#)).
3. Satan and his angels ([Rev. 20:10](#)).
- d. The destruction and remaking of the earth and heavens ([2 Peter 3:3-15](#); [Rev. 21:1](#); cp. [Isaiah 65:17](#); [Isaiah 66:22](#)).

### **3. (Acts 2:22-24) Jesus Christ, Death; Resurrection: this is the day of God's Savior, Jesus of Nazareth.**

Peter drove the thrust of his message home. He shouted out: "**Hear these words**"...

- a. the "**last days**" have been launched by Jesus of Nazareth.

1. "**Jesus of Nazareth...approved of God.**" The word "**approved**" (*apodeideigmenon*) means to point out, display, show, attest, accredit, sanction, certify, endorse. God put His stamp of approval upon Jesus, demonstrating and showing to all men that Jesus is *perfectly acceptable* to Him. Jesus of Nazareth had God's *approval*, His *perfect acceptance*.

There is proof of this, the proof of His miracles and wonders and signs.

- a. They were the works of God, the kind of works that only God could do. God Himself was working through Jesus of Nazareth.

- b. The works were done (through Christ) "**in the midst of you**," in the very presence of people. They were not done in secret. God attested and demonstrated to the world that He was working through Christ. The miracles, wonders, and signs were done both *for* the sake of the world and *before* the world.
- c. "**You yourselves also know**" this. Man knows, for God has clearly shown that Jesus is approved by Him. The evidence abounds in the lives of those who have *truly* followed Christ down through the centuries, in the presence of the living Lord who has dwelt *within* their very being.

2. The death of Jesus of Nazareth was planned by God *due to man's wickedness* (see below [Deeper Study # 6, Jesus Christ, Death—Acts 2:23](#) for discussion).

### DEEPER STUDY # 6

([Acts 2:23](#)) **Jesus Christ, Death**: this verse is saying a most significant thing. Jesus' death was planned by God *due to man's wickedness*. God planned Jesus' death, planned for Him to die upon the cross, but He planned it *because of man's wickedness*.

#### Note two points.

1. Jesus was crucified and slain by wicked hands. Men are sinful, wicked, depraved, and selfish.

- 1. They want to go their own way.
- 2. They want to do their own thing.
- 3. They want to control their own lives.

Therefore, they rebel and fight against God, **against surrendering to God, against.....**

- 1. following God's way.
- 2. doing God's thing.
- 3. allowing God to control their lives.

It was this corruptible nature of man that rebelled against God's Son and crucified Him.

2. The "**foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God**" saved man. God knew man, what was in man ([John 2:23-24](#)). He knew exactly what men would do to His Son. He knew they would kill His Son. But in the counsel and advice of His knowledge—in consideration of all the possibilities—God knew something else as well: the way of death, the way of the cross was the best way to save men. And being God, He was bound to choose the best way. So God determined to use the best way possible, the death of His Son to save the world.

**"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:14-16](#)).**

**"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" ([Romans 5:6](#)).**

**"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" ([Romans 5:8](#)).**

**"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" ([Galatians 1:4](#)).**

**"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" ([Hebrews 9:28](#)).**

**"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" ([1 Peter 2:24](#)).**

**"For Christ also hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" ([1 Peter 3:18](#)).**

Another way to say the same thing is that God foresaw sin even before the creation of man; so He, in love, planned beforehand that Christ should die for sinners.

**"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" ([John 17:24](#)).**

**"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" ([Ephes. 1:4](#)).**

**"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" ([1 Peter 1:20](#)).**

**"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship the Beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" ([Rev. 13:8](#)).**

3. The resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth ended the agony of death (see below [Deeper Study # 7—Acts 2:24](#) for discussion).

### **DEEPER STUDY # 7**

**([Acts 2:24](#)) Jesus Christ, Resurrection**: this is a great verse dealing with the resurrection of Christ.

**Note three points.**

1. God raised up Christ. God knew that the very best way to save man from death was through the resurrection of His own Son from the dead.

2. The resurrection of Christ "**loosed the pains of death.**" The word "**pains**" (*ōdinas*) means birth pangs. For the unbeliever, there is great pain in death, pain such as that experienced by a woman in giving birth. But man no longer has to suffer the pain of death nor fear suffering through it. Christ has conquered and abolished death, made it completely harmless. Death is actually the most glorious and joyful experience for the believer, an experience that simply explodes human imagination. ([John 5:24](#); [Hebrews 2:14-15](#).)

3. It was impossible for death to hold Christ. Why?

**There are five significant reasons.**

- a. There was God's foreknowledge and determinate counsel. God knew that the way of the cross and resurrection was the very best way to save the world. Therefore, nothing could stop God from following through with the death and resurrection of His Son.
- b. Jesus was approved by God. He had God's approval, sanction, accreditation, endorsement. Jesus Christ was perfectly acceptable to God.
- c. Jesus' resurrection was foretold by Scripture, and Scripture must be fulfilled.
- d. Jesus was *Life* itself. He possesses the very *being, essence, quality, substance,* and *energy* of life. He is *The Life*, Life itself; therefore, He is the source of all life. All life finds its source in the energy and being of Christ Himself. Therefore, being Life, death could not engulf Him any more than darkness can engulf light.
- e. Jesus was sinless. Death exists or happens because everything is short of perfection—short of what it should be—short of *God's glory*. This is true of man. Man dies because he has "**sinned and come short of God's glory**" ([Romans 3:23](#)).

**Sin is.....**

1. being short.
2. missing the mark.
3. transgressing God's glory.

And it is sin that causes death. Therefore Jesus Christ, being sinless, did not have to die. He died because He *willed* to die for man.



**The point is this:** Jesus was sinless and perfect and righteous ([John 8:46](#); [2 Cor. 5:21](#); [Hebrews 4:15](#); [Hebrews 7:26](#); [1 Peter 1:9](#); [1 Peter 2:22](#)). He was the Ideal Man, the Sinless Man, the Perfect Man—the Ideal Pattern for all other men. Therefore, when He died for men, He died as the Ideal Man or the Ideal Pattern. And death cannot hold the Ideal Man, for the Ideal Man came short in nothing. He was not short in life; therefore, He was destined to live forever. He was Perfect Life and Perfect Man. But death is anything but Life and Perfect. As the Scripture says, "**It was not possible that He should be held by it [death].**" ([Romans 1:4](#).)

# THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH, [Acts 2:1-7:60](#)

## C. The First Sermon (Part II): Proofs of the Resurrection, [Acts 2:25-36](#)

[\(Acts 2:25-36\)](#) **Introduction:** the first sermon ever preached after Pentecost was preached by Peter. He focused on the proofs of the resurrection.

1. **Proof 1: the prophecy of David—the prophecy concerned Jesus (v.25-28).**
2. **Proof 2: Peter's testimony (v.29-31).**
3. **Proof 3: the eye-witnesses—the disciples (v.32).**
4. **Proof 4: the exaltation and the ascension of Jesus into heaven (v.33-36).**

### 1. [\(Acts 2:25-28\)](#) **Jesus Christ, Work: proof 1—the prophecy of David concerned Jesus.**

Peter said that "**David [spoke] concerning Christ**" ([Psalm 16:8-11](#)). What David said was a prophecy of the Lord's experience upon earth ([Acts 2:25-28](#)).

1. David's prophecy concerned Jesus' daily experience or life.
  - a. Jesus experienced God's constant presence and power.
    1. Jesus always saw God before His face. Jesus looked and kept His gaze upon God. He thought upon God, focused His mind and attention upon God. He concentrated and stayed His mind upon Him. The idea is that Jesus always practiced and was always conscious of God's presence—"captivating every thought" (cp. [2 Cor. 10:5](#)).
    2. Jesus always had God on His right hand, that He should not be moved. God was right there as an advocate and as a protector and defender. God was a provider looking after Christ, strengthening, guiding, upholding, seeing that He was not moved nor shaken. The picture is that of a defender in court or of a soldier on the battlefield standing at a person's right hand, protecting, looking after, and providing for his welfare. (Cp. [Psalm 109:31](#) for this picture.)

"The LORD is thy keeper: the LORD is thy shade upon thy right hand" ([Psalm 121:5](#); cp. [Psalm 121:1-8](#)).

"For I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not: I will help thee" ([Isaiah 41:13](#)).

- b. Jesus' heart rejoiced and His tongue praised God. Such a consciousness of God's presence was bound to cause...
    - 1. the heart to rejoice (*ēphranthē*): to be joyful and full of euphoria, full of God's presence and glory.
    - 2. the tongue to be glad (*ēgalliasato*): to leap for joy and break forth with praise and song.
  - c. Jesus' flesh rested in hope. The phrase "shall rest" (*kataskēnōsei*) means *shall tabernacle* or pitch a tent. Jesus' *flesh* rested, tabernacled, pitched its tent, encamped and made its abode upon hope—the hope of conquering death, of being resurrected. Hope of living forever was the basis and foundation of Jesus' life, that for which He lived. He focused His whole life and being upon the hope of the glorious resurrection (cp. Paul's testimony—[Phil. 3:7-16](#), esp. [Phil. 3:11](#)).
2. David's prophecy concerned Jesus' conviction that He could be delivered from death.

**Note several points.**

- a. The word "leave" (*egkataleipō*). A soul can be utterly forsaken and abandoned, doomed permanently in hell. But Christ was absolutely sure that His soul would not be left and abandoned in hell.
- b. The word "hell" (*hadēs*). (See below [Deeper Study # 8—Acts 2:27](#) for discussion.) Christ said emphatically that His soul would not be left in *hadēs*, that is, in the realm of the dead. He would arise and live forever.
- c. The word "corruption" (*diaphthoran*). (See below [Deeper Study # 8—Acts 2:27](#) for discussion.)
- d. The title Jesus used of Himself, "[God's] Holy One." Jesus was holy, righteous, and pure. He was without sin and totally devoted to God. He was perfectly acceptable to God. Therefore God was bound to raise Him, to keep His flesh from being destroyed and lying in corruption.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" ([2 Cor. 5:21](#)).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" ([Hebrews 4:15](#)).

"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" ([Hebrews 7:26](#)).

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" ([1 Peter 1:19](#)).

**"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth" ([1 Peter 2:22](#)).**

3. David's prophecy concerned Jesus' revelation, His revealing the way of life and God's presence. The Hebrew original reads "the path of life." This is a marvelous declaration, a declaration that reveals the most glorious truth. God revealed the *path of life* to Christ, and Christ reveals it to us. The path of life, the way to escape death is to live in the countenance and presence of God. God will never abandon a man, never allow a man to see corruption if that man lives and walks in His presence.

Jesus knew the path: it was God's presence. Note: He was full of the joy of God's presence. (So should we be.)

**"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" ([John 14:6](#)).**

**"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" ([Psalm 16:11](#)).**

## **DEEPER STUDY # 8**

**([Acts 2:27](#)) Hell** (Greek, *Hadēs*; Hebrew, *Sheol*): the Greek word used here is *Hadēs*. Jesus revealed that Hades is the other world, that is, the unseen world, the spiritual dimension of being (see [Deeper Study #3—Luke 16:23](#)). Jesus said that Hades (the other world) was divided into two huge areas or sections. The two areas are separated by a great gulf that is impassable ([Luke 16:26](#)). One area is the place of sorrow ([Luke 16:23-24, 28](#)), and the other area is the place of paradise where believers go. To say that one is dead is to say that one is in *hades* or in the other world.

**Note a critical fact:** the other world or the spiritual dimension of being does exist. Denying hell does not change the fact that *hades* exists. There are two areas or places in the other world: paradise and hell—the place of glory and the place of torment. And Christ says both actually exist.

The context of what Jesus said in David's prophecy needs to be noted.

1. The word "leave" (*egkatalipō*) means "leave behind, to utterly forsake and abandon." It is a strong word indicating a permanent state. A soul can be utterly forsaken and abandoned and doomed permanently in hell.

2. The word "corruption" (*diaphthoran*) means "to decay, deteriorate, putrify, destroy, perish." In no place does Christ promise a *new body* to the unbeliever, to the unsaved and lost. A person's body and flesh can be destroyed forever. (This is a fact seldom pointed out.)

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" ([Galatians 6:8](#)).

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" ([Genesis 3:19](#)).

"I have said to corruption, Thou art my father: to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister" ([Job 17:14](#)).

"They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them" ([Job 21:26](#)).

"Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust" ([Psalm 104:29](#); cp. [Eccles. 3:20](#); [Eccles. 12:7](#)).

## 2. ([Acts 2:29-31](#)) Jesus Christ, Resurrection: proof 2-Peter's testimony.

Peter was forceful: the words of David could not refer to himself. David was dead and buried. It was even known where his grave was, on Mt. Zion where most of Israel's kings were buried.

But there is something significant about David. He was a prophet of God, and God had revealed to him that the Messiah would come through his line. The Messiah would be one of his descendants and sit upon his throne ([Psalm 132:11](#); cp. [Psalm 89:3-4, 35-37](#); [2 Samuel 7:16](#)).

Therefore, what David was doing was predicting the resurrection of Christ. The prophecy referred to Jesus and His resurrection.

**Note:** Peter's declaration of the prophecy: He gave the three reasons why God raised up Christ. These are the same reasons He will resurrect believers.

1. Christ was raised to reign with God.
2. Christ was raised to deliver His soul from hell (cp. [Acts 2:27](#)).
3. Christ was raised to deliver His flesh from corruption (cp. [Acts 2:27](#)).

(The believer's body is to be raised from the grave and made into a new body. See below [Deeper Study # 9—John 21:1](#) for more discussion.)

### DEEPER STUDY # 9

**([John 21:1](#)) Body, Resurrected— Jesus Christ, Resurrection; Shows Himself:** it is said twice in one verse, "He showed Himself." The purpose of these appearances was to prove that Jesus was not a spirit, vision, phantom, hallucination, or any other figment of man's imagination.

He was the risen Lord—bodily. He was not someone else. His body was none other than the body of Jesus, the Carpenter from Nazareth. He had been raised from the dead—physically raised. His body was real. It differed, yes; but it was His body—perfected, no longer subject to the limitations and frailties of the physical universe and its laws. It was His body which was now transformed into a spiritual body by the power of God's Word (cp. [Romans 1:3-4](#)).

How did the Lord's body differ since His resurrection? Some idea can be gleaned by looking both at His resurrection body and at the glorified body promised to the believer.

1. The resurrected body of the Lord was His body, but it was radically changed. It had all the appearance of His physical body, yet it was not bound by the physical world and its material substance.

- a. It looked like the same material body, the same "**flesh and bones**," not some other body. It was a body that bore the marks of the nails in His hands and feet ([John 20:20, 27](#)). It was a body that appeared and looked like a body and that occupied space.
- b. It was a body that could travel and appear any place at will or by thought, a body unhampered by space, time, or physical substance. When He appeared, it was suddenly, even behind locked doors ([Luke 24:36](#); [John 20:19](#)).
- c. It was a body that differed enough from the earthly body that it was not clearly recognized, not at first, not until it was closely observed.
  1. Mary Magdalene thought He was the gardener ([John 20:15](#)).
  2. The two disciples walking toward Emmaus thought He was a traveler ([Luke 24:31](#)).
  3. The disciples who were fishing did not recognize Him standing on the seashore ([John 21:4](#)).

However, after close observation, the Lord was recognized in all these instances. This probably indicates that our heavenly bodies will look like our earthly bodies, differing only in that they are perfected.

2. The resurrected and glorified body that is promised to the believer gives some additional insight into the kind of body Jesus now has. One of the most wonderful promises ever made to man is given in the words:

1. "**Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself**" ([Phil 3:21](#); cp. [Matthew 13:43](#); [Romans 8:17](#); [Col. 3:4](#); [Rev. 22:5](#)).
2. We shall be "**conformed to the image of His Son**" ([Romans 8:29](#). Cp. [1 Cor. 15:49](#); [2 Cor. 3:18](#).)
3. "**We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is**" ([1 John 3:2](#)).

The body of the believer is to undergo a radical change just as the Lord's body was radically changed. Several changes are promised the believer.

- a. The believer will receive a spiritual body.

**"There is a natural body [soma psuchikon] and there is a spiritual body [*soma pneumatikon*]" (1 Cor. 15:44).**

Note that the *spiritual body* (*soma*) is still a body just like the *earthly body* (*soma*). The spiritual body still retains the qualities of the earthly body. The difference lies in its nature: it will no longer be a natural (soulish) body; it will be spiritual.

What does this mean? In essence, the body will be perfected and glorified: no longer subject to aging, deterioration, death, decay, pain, tears, sorrow, or crying (Rev. 14:4).

1. "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption."
2. "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory."
3. "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power."
4. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

**Note the strong, emphatic declaration: "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:42-44).**

- b. The believer will receive a body that is *not flesh and blood*. Flesh and blood are corruptible, they age, deteriorate, die, and decay.

**"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:50).**

**"Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days" (John 11:39).**

**"For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption" (Acts 13:36-37).**

**"All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (Eccles. 3:20).**

**"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:42).**

**"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (2 Cor. 5:1-2).**

- c. The believer will receive a body that will be radically changed.

**"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" ([1 Cor. 15:52-53](#)).**

- d. The believer will be given a body that will not need reproduction for continuing the (redeemed) human race.

**"In the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven" ([Matthew 22:30](#)).**

### **3. ([Acts 2:32](#)) Jesus Christ, Resurrection: proof 3—the eye witnesses to the resurrection were the disciples.**

(See below [Deeper Study # 10—Acts 1:3](#), for more discussion)

#### **DEEPER STUDY # 10**

**([Acts 1:3](#)) Jesus Christ, Resurrection:** Jesus appeared at least ten times after His resurrection before He ascended into heaven. There were apparently many more appearances not recorded (cp. [John 20:30-31](#); [John 21:25](#)).

1. He appeared to Mary Magdalene ([Mark 16:9-11](#); [John 20:11-18](#)).
2. He appeared to the women running to tell the disciples about the empty tomb ([Matthew 28:8-10](#)).
3. He appeared to Peter, probably to assure him of his restoration ([Luke 24:34](#); [1 Cor. 15:5](#)).
4. He appeared to the two Emmaus disciples sometime in the early evening ([Mark 16:12](#); [Luke 24:13-42](#)).
5. He appeared to the disciples with Thomas absent ([Mark 16:14](#); [Luke 24:36-43](#); [John 20:19-25](#)).
6. One week later, He appeared to the disciples who had gone fishing ([John 20](#)).
7. He appeared to 500 believers ([1 Cor. 15:6](#)).
8. He appeared to the apostles ([Matthew 28:16-20](#); [Mark 16:15-18](#)).
9. He appeared to James, the Lord's half-brother ([1 Cor. 15:7](#)).
10. He appeared to the believers at His ascension ([Mark 16:19-20](#); [Luke 24:44-53](#); [Acts 1:3-12](#)).

It should be remembered that since Jesus' ascension He has appeared at least two other times.

1. He appeared to Stephen at his martyrdom ([Acts 7:55-56](#)).
2. He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus ([Acts 9:3](#)).



#### 4. ([Acts 2:33-36](#)) Jesus Christ, Exaltation: proof 4-the exaltation and the ascension of Jesus into heaven.

Note three points.

1. Jesus was raised to be exalted. His resurrection involved the exaltation.
  - a. To be raised is for the purpose of exaltation.
  - b. To be raised is being exalted to the very presence of God.
  - c. To be raised and given eternal life is a state of exaltation.
  - d. To be raised means to be exalted.

Note the words “the right hand of God.” This is the position by the side of God, a place of honor, glory, authority, dominion, and rulership (cp. [Acts 5:31](#)). Christ has been raised to sit by the right hand of God in such a position.

**And note:** Christ, who is the obedient Son of God and the exalted Lord, has received what God had promised Him, the Holy Spirit. The exalted Christ has the presence of God, the Holy Spirit, to shed forth (*excheen, pour forth*) upon us all. This is what “**you now see and hear,**” the glorious presence and energy of the Holy Spirit, of the very Spirit and presence of God Himself. (cp. [John 15:26](#); [John 16:7](#))

Thought 1. The believer’s heart should shout “hallelujah, praise ye the Lord.” Christ has sent the great promise and gift of the Spirit!

2. David prophesied the Lord’s exaltation (cp. [Psalm 110:1](#)).

David could not have been speaking of himself, for he never arose from the dead, nor has he ever been exalted. David was prophesying that God (**Jehovah**) had spoken to David’s Lord (Messiah), promising that the Lord would sit on God’s right hand. And the Lord would reign until God subjected all the Lord’s foes. The picture of the footstool is that of complete triumph and victory over all the enemies of Christ, both human and spiritual.

3. Peter declared emphatically: Jesus is both Lord and Messiah. “**Let all....know assuredly**” (*asphalos*). The word is emphatic. It means without any doubt whatsoever, with perfect assurance and certainty.

Know that.....

- a. Jesus is Lord ([Acts 2:33](#)).
- b. Jesus is Messiah (see below [Deeper Study # 11---Matthew 1:18 for more discussion](#))
- c. Jesus whom ye crucified (see [Deeper Study # 12, Jesus Christ, Death—Acts 2:23 for more discussion](#))

## DEEPER STUDY # 11

([Matthew 1:18](#)) **Christ—Messiah**: the word for "Christ" and "Messiah" is the same word: *christos*. **Messiah** is the **Hebrew** word and **Christ** is the **Greek** word. Both words refer to the same Person and mean the same thing: *the Anointed One*. The Messiah is *the Anointed One* of God. Matthew says that Jesus "is called Christ" ([Matthew 1:16](#)); that is, He is recognized as *the Anointed One* of God, the Messiah Himself.

In the day of Jesus Christ, people feverishly panted for the coming of the long promised Messiah. The weight of life was harsh, hard, and impoverished. Under the Romans, people felt that God could not wait much longer to fulfill His promise. Such longings for deliverance left the people gullible. Many arose who claimed to be the Messiah and led the gullible followers into rebellion against the Roman State. The insurrectionist, Barabbas, who was set free in the place of Jesus at Jesus' trial, is an example ([Mark 15:6](#)).

The Messiah was thought to be several things:

1. Nationally, He was to be the leader from David's line who would free the Jewish state and establish it as an independent nation, leading it to be the greatest nation the world had ever known.
2. Militarily, He was to be a great military leader who would lead Jewish armies victoriously over all the world.
3. Religiously, He was to be a supernatural figure straight from God who would bring righteousness over all the earth.
4. Personally, He was to be the One who would bring peace to the whole world.

Jesus Christ accepted the title of Messiah on three different occasions ([Matthew 16:17](#); [Mark 14:61](#); [John 4:26](#)). The name *Jesus* shows Him to be man. The name *Christ* shows Him to be God's anointed, God's very own Son. *Christ* is Jesus' official title.

It identifies Him officially as:

- a. Prophet ([Deut. 18:15-19](#). See [Luke 3:38](#) for verses and fulfillment.)
- b. Priest ([Psalm 110:4](#). See [Luke 3:32-38](#) for verses and fulfillment.)
- c. King ([2 Samuel 7:12-13](#). See [Luke 3:24-31](#) for verses and fulfillment.)

These officials were always anointed with oil, a symbol of the Holy Spirit who was to perfectly anoint the Christ, the Messiah ([Matthew 3:16](#); [Mark 1:10-11](#); [Luke 3:21-22](#); [John 1:32-33](#)).

## DEEPER STUDY # 12

([Acts 2:23](#)) **Jesus Christ, Death**: this verse is saying a most significant thing. Jesus' death was planned by God *due to man's wickedness*. God planned Jesus' death, planned for Him to die upon the cross, but He planned it *because of man's wickedness*.

**Note two points.**

1. Jesus was crucified and slain by wicked hands. Men are sinful, wicked, depraved, and selfish.

- a. They want to go their own way.
- b. They want to do their own thing.
- c. They want to control their own lives.

Therefore, they rebel and fight against God, against surrendering to God, against.....

- a. following God's way.
- b. doing God's thing.
- c. allowing God to control their lives.

It was this corruptible nature of man that rebelled against God's Son and crucified Him.

2. The "**foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God**" saved man. God knew man, what was in man (cp. [John 2:23-24](#)). He knew exactly what men would do to His Son. He knew they would kill His Son. But in the counsel and advice of His knowledge—in consideration of all the possibilities—God knew something else as well: the way of death, the way of the cross was the best way to save men. And being God, He was bound to choose the best way. So God determined to use the best way possible, the death of His Son to save the world.

**"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:14-16](#)).**

**"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" ([Romans 5:6](#)).**

**"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" ([Romans 5:8](#)).**

**"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" ([Galatians 1:4](#)).**

**"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation" ([Hebrews 9:28](#)).**

**"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed" ([1 Peter 2:24](#)).**

**"For Christ also hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit" ([1 Peter 3:18](#)).**

Another way to say the same thing is that God foresaw sin even before the creation of man; so He, in love, planned beforehand that Christ should die for sinners.

**"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" ([John 17:24](#)).**

**"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" ([Ephes. 1:4](#)).**

**"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you" ([1 Peter 1:20](#)).**

**"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship The Beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" ([Rev. 13:8](#)).**

# THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH, [Acts 2:1-7:60](#)

## D. The First Sermon (Part III): Imperatives of Salvation, [Acts 2:37-40](#)

[\(Acts 2:37-40\)](#) **Introduction:** this passage makes it crystal clear what a person must do to be saved. It gives us "**The Imperatives of Salvation.**"

1. **The people were convicted and cried out, "What shall we do?" (v.37).**
2. **The imperatives: repent and be baptized (v.38).**
3. **The results: forgiveness and receiving of the Holy Spirit (v.38).**
4. **The assurance to all: God's promise and God's personal call (v.39).**
5. **The great cry of Peter: save yourselves (v.40).**

### 1. [\(Acts 2:37\)](#) **Conviction:** the people were convicted and they cried out, "What shall we do?"

Peter's sermon, the proclaimed Word, was driven home to the hearts of the people.

The word "pricked" (*katenugēsan*) means "to convict, sting, sense pain and hurt."

Conviction is an emotional movement of the heart. A person senses sorrow over disappointing God. The person's heart is touched and moved to some degree of brokenness. (See below [Deeper Study # 13, Godly Sorrow—2 Cor. 7:10](#) for more discussion.)

Conviction is being pricked with a tug, a pull, a knowledge, an awareness.

- a. It is a sense of sin, of doing wrong, of breaking God's law, of being disobedient.
- b. It is a sense of failure, of coming short, of not measuring up, of disappointing God.
- c. It is a sense of needing more and more of the Lord and His righteousness.

Conviction causes people to seek answers, to ask, "**What shall we do?**"

### DEEPER STUDY # 13

[\(2 Corinthians 7:10\)](#) **Godly Sorrow— Worldly Sorrow— Repentance:** sin and irresponsibility cause regret and disappointment, guilt, and remorse. In short, sin causes sorrow. But sorrow has no healing power by itself. Only repentance, a change of mind or a turn of life, can heal the heart of man.

**There are two kinds of sorrow.**

**1. Worldly sorrow.** This sorrow can be a sorrow over doing wrong or of coming up short from what one expects. It is a violation of one's values. It can also be a sorrow caused by being found out, or suffering consequences, or being punished. In either case **"the sorrow of the world works death"** ([2 Cor. 7:10](#)).

**It works death in two ways:**

- a. It eats a man up with guilt and remorse, depression and despair, defeat and inactivity (**cp. Judas, [Matthew 27:3-5](#)**).
- b. It embitters a man in rebellion and resentment against the consequences and punishment of sin (**cp. Esau, [Hebrews 12:16-17](#)**).

**2. Godly sorrow.** This is the sorrow that is wrought in the heart of the believer by the conviction of the Holy Spirit. When the believer does wrong or falls short, the Holy Spirit is grieved ([Ephes. 4:30](#)). His work is quenched ([1 Thes. 5:19](#)). His ministry of making the believer like Jesus is hindered and hampered. So He begins His convicting work. Under the weight of conviction the believer's heart is thereby led to repent. The believer changes his mind and turns his behavior around to what it should be (**cp. Peter, [Matthew 26:75](#)**). Godly sorrow always leads to repentance. A believer who refuses to repent wallows around and eventually dwells in the realm of worldly sorrow. He always bears the mark of indwelling and unconfessed sin and failure.

**"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted"**  
([Matthew 5:4](#)).

**"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord"** ([Acts 3:19](#)).

**"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death"** ([2 Cor. 7:10](#)).

**"Therefore also now, saith the LORD turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning"**  
([Joel 2:12](#)).

**"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land"** ([2 Chron. 7:14](#)).

**"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit"** ([Psalm 34:18](#)).

**"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise"** ([Psalm 51:17](#)).

"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" ([Isaiah 55:7](#)).

"For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" ([Isaiah 66:2](#)).

## 2. ([Acts 2:38](#)) **Salvation**: the imperatives are twofold. A person must repent and be baptized.

(See below [Deeper Study # 14, Repent—Acts 17:29-30](#); see below [Deeper Study # 15, Baptism—Acts 2:38](#) for discussion.)

### DEEPER STUDY # 14

([Acts 17:29-30](#)) **Repentance**: *means* "to change; to turn; to change one's mind; to turn one's life." It is a turning away from sin and turning toward God. It is a change of mind, a forsaking of sin. It is putting sin out of one's thoughts and behavior. It is resolving never to think or do a thing again. (Cp. [Matthew 3:2](#); [Luke 13:2-3](#); [Acts 2:38](#); [Acts 3:19](#); [Acts 8:22](#); [Acts 26:20](#).)

The change is turning away from lying, stealing, cheating, immorality, cursing, drunkenness, and the other so-called glaring *sins of the flesh*. But the change is also turning away from *the silent sins of the spirit* such as **self-centeredness, selfishness, envy, bitterness, pride, covetousness, anger, evil thoughts, hopelessness, laziness, jealousy, lust**.

1. **Repentance involves two turns.** There is a **negative turn** away from sin and a **positive turn** toward God. It is a turning to God away from sin, whether sins of thought or action.

2. **Repentance is more than sorrow.** Sorrow may or may not be involved in repentance. A person may repent simply because he wills and acts to change; or a person may repent because he senses an agonizing sorrow within. But the sense or feeling of sorrow is not repentance. Repentance is both the change of mind and the actual turning of one's life away from sin and toward God. (See above [Deeper Study # 13—2 Cor. 7:10](#) for more discussion.)

### DEEPER STUDY # 15

([Acts 2:38](#)) **Baptism**: is the outward sign, the immediate sign of repentance. It is the physical sign that a person is identifying with Christ. It is the immediate sign that a person is to show before the world that he is really repenting and is now going to obey and live for God.

**Baptism and repentance are both.....**

- a. outward signs.
- b. signs that have to do with behavior.
- c. signs that show the world that a person is turning his life over to God.

Repentance is a command to change one's life. Baptism is a command, the very first command to follow Christ. Baptism is the first command given to those who are repenting. The person who is really repenting must be baptized. He must give testimony to the world and confess to the world that he is repenting by being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (**cp. [Matthew 28:19-20](#)**). Baptism is not an option. It is as much a command as repentance.

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" ([Matthew 28:19](#)).**

**"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" ([Mark 16:16](#)).**

**"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" ([Acts 2:38](#)).**

**"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days" ([Acts 10:48](#)).**

**"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" ([Acts 22:16](#)).**

**Now, note a critical point that is often overlooked and neglected.** Just because a person changes his life (repents) and is baptized does not mean he is saved. A person can change his life by the power of his own will, by discipline and self-control, by his own effort and works. And he can very simply request to be baptized. Many people have and will continue to do this. Many live what society calls a good, upright, and moral life and they have been baptized. But there is more to being saved than merely changing one's life and being baptized. What is it?

It is the very basis, the very essential to true salvation, to being truly forgiven and receiving the Holy Spirit:

⇒ It is the essential of faith, of believing **"in the name of Jesus Christ."**

A person who truly believes and really trusts Jesus does repent and is baptized. But just because a person lives a disciplined and controlled life (repents) and has been baptized does not mean he is truthfully trusting Jesus as his Savior. True faith—the inward work within the heart, the inward work of really believing *in the name of the Lord Jesus*—is the one absolute essential for being saved.



**Now note another critical point that is also overlooked and neglected.**

Just because a person says he believes in Jesus does not mean he is saved. A person can say and claim anything, and that person can be baptized. But profession and baptism do not save a person anymore than a changed life and baptism save a person.

There is more to being saved than professing faith and being baptized. What is it? Again, it is the very basis, the very essential to true salvation, to being truly forgiven and receiving the Holy Spirit.

It is the basis, the essential of *repenting* and of doing the very first act of repentance, being baptized.

There is no faith *without true repentance* and there is no forgiveness by God *without trusting or committing* one's life to God's dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And the very first act of following Jesus is that of repenting and being baptized. A person who honestly believes in Jesus Christ will do what He said, repent and be baptized.

This is what Peter was saying in this passage. He did not mention faith, but he was not omitting faith nor eliminating belief in the Lord Jesus as essential to salvation. The rest of Scripture cannot be ignored in looking at this verse just as this verse and others like it cannot be ignored by the passages that stress faith alone. Common sense tells us that a person who truly believes something acts upon that thing. *Behavior follows true belief.* But similarly, common sense tells us that behavior can be changed by raw effort and discipline. A person can change because he thinks he should change and not because someone else demands change.

Paul stressed the same point in that classic passage of his ([Romans 6:3-4](#)), and the point is very significant. A believer (true believer) is said to be "**baptized [immersed] into the death of Christ.**"

**"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized [immersed] into the death of Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" ([Romans 6:3-4](#)).**

Now note what Paul has just said: when a person is baptized, he is "**baptized into His [Jesus'] death**" in the same way he is immersed (identified) into the resurrection of Christ. Baptism is an act by which one identifies with Christ. He counts himself as having died *in* Christ's death and as having risen *in* Christ's resurrection; as living and moving and having his being *in* Christ even as Christ lived and moved and had His being in God. Christ's death and resurrection and life becomes the believer's death and resurrection and life. The believer treats and judges himself as having been "**crucified with Christ, nevertheless living; yet not himself, but Christ living in him**" ([Galatians 2:20](#)).

**In conclusion, history has shown that this point needs to be stressed and restressed.**

- a. A person can repent, change his own life and be baptized (by his own effort and works) without ever trusting Christ, without really believing in Christ.
- b. But a person cannot trust, cannot really believe in Christ without repenting and following Christ in the very first act of repentance, that of being baptized. True faith and honest belief always mean that a person repents and is baptized. To believe is to follow (obey) Christ and to be baptized.

**"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" ([Hebrews 5:9](#). See below [Deeper Study # 26—John 2:24](#).)**

**"He that believeth not [ho apeithon, obeys not] shall not see life" ([John 3:36](#)).**

### **3. ([Acts 2:38](#)) Salvation: the results are twofold, being forgiven of sins and receiving the Holy Spirit.**

1. Forgiveness of sins (see below [Deeper Study # 16, Forgiveness—Acts 2:38](#) for discussion).
2. Receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit (see below [Deeper Study # 17, Holy Spirit, concluding points—Acts 2:1-4](#) for discussion).

#### **DEEPER STUDY # 16**

**([Acts 2:38](#)) Remission— Forgiveness (*aphesin*): means “to send off, to send away.”**  
The wrong is cut out, sent off, sent away from the wrongdoer. The sin is separated from the sinner.

**There are four main ideas in the Biblical concept of forgiveness.**

1. There is the idea of why forgiveness is needed. Forgiveness is needed because of wrong doing and guilt and the penalty arising from both.

**"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" ([Romans 3:23](#)).**

**"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" ([Romans 6:23](#)).**

**"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" ([Romans 8:1](#)).**

2. There is the idea of a *once-for-all* forgiveness, a total forgiveness. A man is forgiven *once-for-all* when he receives Jesus Christ as his Savior. Belief in Jesus Christ, true repentance, is the only condition for being forgiven *once-for-all*.

**"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" ([Matthew 26:28](#)).**

**"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" ([Ephes. 1:7](#)).**

**"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" ([Romans 4:5-8](#)).**

**"I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto me; for I have redeemed thee" ([Isaiah 44:22](#)).**

3. There is the idea of forgiveness that maintains fellowship. Fellowship exists between God as Father and the believer as His child. When the child does wrong, the fellowship is disturbed and broken. The condition for restoring the fellowship is confessing and forsaking the sin ([Psalm 66:18](#); [Prov. 28:13](#); [1 John 1:7](#)).

**"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" ([Acts 2:38](#)).**

**"And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" ([Luke 3:3](#)).**

**"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" ([Luke 24:47](#)).**

4. There is the idea of a *releasing from guilt*. This is one of the differences between a man forgiving another man and God forgiving a man. A man may forgive a person for wronging him, but he can never remove the guilt that his friend feels. And often he cannot remove the resentment he himself feels within his own heart. Only God can remove the guilt and assure the removal of resentment. God does both. God forgives and erases the guilt and resentment ([Psalm 51:2, 7-12](#); [Psalm 103:12](#); [1 John 1:9](#)).

**"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" ([Isaiah 43:25](#)).**

**"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" ([Isaiah 55:7](#)).**

**"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy" ([Micah 7:18](#)).**

**"And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" ([Jeremiah 31:34](#)).**

**"And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me" ([Jeremiah 33:8](#)).**

### **DEEPER STUDY # 17**

**([Acts 2:1-4](#)) Holy Spirit— Pentecost:** the disciples had been deliberately prepared for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Throughout the Bible the revelation of the Spirit had been step by step, that is, progressive.

Prophecy shows this clearly.

1. Joel prophesied, **"It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh...."** ([Joel 2:28-29](#)).

2. John the Baptist said, **"I baptize with water, but He shall baptize with [en, in] the Holy Spirit"** ([Matthew 3:11](#); [Luke 3:16](#)).

3. In the early part of Jesus' ministry, He had said that believers were to be **"born again...by the Spirit"** ([John 3:3-4](#); cp. [1 John 5:1](#)).

4. During His ministry, Jesus taught that men were to receive the Holy Spirit by prayer ([Luke 11:13](#)).

5. In the Upper Room, Jesus identified the Holy Spirit as a Person ([John 14:15-26](#)), and He outlined the work of the Spirit with both unbelievers and believers ([John 16:7-15](#)). Significantly, He revealed that He was praying to the Father for the Comforter to come and abide with the disciples ([John 14:16-17](#)).

6. After His resurrection from the dead, Jesus appeared to His disciples in the Upper Room. There He symbolically breathed on them, saying, **"Receive ye the Holy Spirit"** ([John 20:22](#)). But He insisted they not begin their ministry until they experienced the Spirit actually coming upon them with power ([Luke 24:49](#); [Acts 1:8](#)).

7. Right before Jesus was to ascend into heaven, He said, **"John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit"** ([Acts 1:5](#)).

8. Then, ten days after Jesus' ascension and after much prayer, the Holy Spirit came upon and filled the whole body of believers at Pentecost ([Acts 2:1-4](#)).

There are two events of the Holy Spirit's coming that seem to hold historical significance. These two particular events are very, very special to the church, for both Jewish and Gentile believers were clearly seen to be in God's historical plan. Both Jew and Gentile were baptized by the Holy Spirit, that is, placed into the body of Christ, His Church.

1. At Pentecost: the disciples were "**filled with the Holy Spirit**" ([Acts 2:4](#)).
  - a. This was in fulfillment of the prophecy by Joel. The Spirit was *poured out* upon the believers ([Acts 2:16](#)).
  - b. This was in fulfillment of the prophecies by Jesus and John. The Spirit *baptized*, that is, immersed the believers with His own presence ([Acts 1:5](#); [Acts 10:44-48](#); cp. [Acts 11:15-16](#), esp. [Acts 11:16](#)).
  
2. At Cornelius' house: the Holy Spirit "**fell**," was "**poured out**," and was "**received**" by the Gentile believers ([Acts 10:44-47](#)).
  - a. Peter said to the Jews who came with him, "**These received the Holy Spirit as well as we**" ([Acts 10:47](#)).
  - b. Peter reported the event to the Jerusalem Church: "**The Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water: but 'ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit' "** ([Acts 11:15-16](#)).
  - c. Peter used the experience to support Paul before the great Jerusalem Council:
 

**"God...[gave] them the Holy Spirit even as He did unto us"** ([Acts 15:8](#)).

In all three instances the idea conveyed is that of an event just like *their own* experience. It is as though Peter pointed to a Gentile Pentecost or at least an extension of Pentecost in [Acts 2](#) to include the Gentiles.

**Note two other facts:**

1. At Pentecost, the account uses the word *filled*, not *baptized*.
2. At Cornelius' house, the account says the Holy Spirit *fell*, was *poured out*, and *received*. But in reporting the experience to the Jerusalem Church, Peter used the word *baptized*. He said the Gentile believers were "**baptized with the Holy Spirit**" ([Acts 11:16](#)) "**as on us at the beginning**" ([Acts 11:15](#)). This clearly says that although the word *baptized* is not used in the Pentecost experience, the disciples were baptized or immersed with the Spirit's presence at Pentecost. The words *filled*, *received*, *poured*, *baptized*, and *fell upon* are all used interchangeably to describe the Spirit's presence coming into a believer's life. (If believers would heed this, it would eliminate many of the arguments that arise over terminology.)

Other than these two events Acts records only **four other times** that the Holy Spirit came upon believers.

1. A little prayer band in Jerusalem was "**filled**" with the Holy Spirit (cp. [Acts 4:8](#)).
2. The Samaritans (half-Jews, half-Gentiles) "**received the Holy Spirit**" ([Acts 8:15-17](#)).
3. Paul was "**filled with the Holy Spirit**" ([Acts 9:17](#)).
4. The disciples of John experienced "**the Spirit coming on them**" ([Acts 19:6](#)).

One other fact is important. Other than Pentecost and Cornelius' house, the word *baptize* is used in connection with the Holy Spirit only once in the rest of the New Testament. People need to pay attention to this. What is being said is that after the book of Acts, the word *baptize* is used only once with the Holy Spirit. That one reference is [1 Cor. 12:13](#): "**For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.**" That is, the Holy Spirit takes all believers and baptizes or immerses, places, and positions them into the body of Christ—into the church, the universal church.

**In conclusion, what does all this mean?**

1. When a man grasps the gospel and believes, really believes, the Holy Spirit enters his life. He *comes upon, falls upon, pours, fills, baptizes (immerses)* Himself into the life of the believer. This is a personal *experience*. This act of the Spirit takes place in the life of the believer. The believer *experiences* the Spirit coming into his life. The believer receives the Spirit *experientially*.

2. When a man grasps the gospel and believes, really believes, the Holy Spirit takes him and *baptizes* or immerses, and places him into the body of Christ, which is God's Church. The believer does not feel or experience this act. It is an act of God that takes place in heaven. The believer is *counted* as a child of God. He is *counted* as a member of the body, of the church. This is a *position*, not an experience, which the believer feels. It happens once-for-all. The believer is adopted as a child of God—irrevocably. It is an eternal *position*, an eternal sonship. The believer becomes a member of God's Church—positionally ([1 Cor. 12:13](#)).

3. After a man is saved, he is to "**keep on being filled with the Spirit**"—day by day ([Ephes. 5:18](#); cp. [John 14:21](#), the word "manifest"). The early believers were continually filled ([Acts 4:8, 31](#)).

**[4. \(Acts 2:39\) Salvation— Assurance of: the assurance to all is God's promise.](#)**

Note the promise is.....

- a. "to you": the Jews.
- b. "to all that are afar off": the Gentiles; any who are away in distant lands; any who are spiritually away from God, no matter how far away.

But note the condition, the one essential. The promise is assured to those whom "**the Lord our God shall call.**" (See below [Deeper Study # 18, Call—Acts 2:39](#) for more discussion.)

## DEEPER STUDY # 18

([Acts 2:39](#)) **Shall Call** (*an proskalesētai*): God has to call because man is dead to God and resists the gospel. Man's deadness and resistance are seen in the very word *call*. The word *call* has both the idea of initiative and deadness and of constraint and resistance.

**For example, the calling of a person to simply come involves both actions.....**

- a. of pulling him to come.
- b. of being dead (unaware and not knowing or resisting the fact that one was to come).

Man, self-centered and rebellious toward God, likes to feel independent. Consequently, man is dead to God and resistant to the pulling call and quickening power of God.

The person who comes to Christ is a person who has been called by God, a person who has experienced the divine initiative.

**A man.....**

- a. does not act alone and come to Christ.
- b. does not come by his own effort and energy.
- c. does not come by his own works.
- d. does not come by his own mind, thoughts, and will.
- e. does not come by his own labor and good deeds.

A man, a dead spirit, can do nothing spiritually just as a dead body can do nothing physically. If a man with a dead spirit is to come to Christ, he has to be *acted upon* and *drawn* by God. Both God and man have a part in salvation.

⇒ God calls and He attracts, draws, pulls, and tugs at the heart of man to come.

**Now note:** when a man senses the call and pull of God, he must act then and there. He must believe and make the decision to follow Christ, even if he is all alone in the depths of a jungle someplace. Why? Because God's Spirit does not always strive or tug at us. We all know this. We have all felt the call of God before—the tug and movement of His Spirit within our hearts. But we quenched the tug and movement. We rejected the call, and the Spirit of God left us. And the more we reject the tug and call, the less often it comes.

- a. We *quench* the Spirit.

**"Quench not the Spirit" ([1 Thes. 5:19](#)).**



b. The Spirit does not always strive with us.

"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man" ([Genesis 6:3](#)).

Therefore, when the call of the Lord our God comes, we must *believe* and "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" ([Acts 2:38](#)).

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" ([Matthew 11:28](#)).

"Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage" ([Matthew 22:9](#)).

"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" ([John 7:37](#)).

"For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him" ([Romans 10:12](#)).

"Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" ([1 Tim. 2:4](#)).

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" ([Rev. 22:17](#)).

"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" ([Isaiah 1:18](#)).

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" ([Isaiah 55:1](#)).

## 5. ([Acts 2:40](#)) Salvation— Separation: the great cry of Peter, "Save yourselves from this untoward [corrupt] generation."

1. The words "save yourselves" (*sothete*) means "that a person is to act and do exactly what Peter preached: "Repent and be baptized."

2. "Untoward" (*skolias*) means "crooked or bent out of shape." Men are far from being straight and in the shape intended by God. They are crooked and bent, unrighteous and ungodly, sinful and corrupt.

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

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" ([2 Cor. 6:17-18](#)).



**"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" ([Ephes. 5:11](#)).**

**"Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD" ([Isaiah 52:11](#)).**

# THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH, [Acts 2:1-7:60](#)

## E. The First Church: Worthy Traits, [Acts 2:41-47](#)

[\(Acts 2:41-47\)](#) **Introduction:** this is the first look at the early church. It shows us the traits that characterized the daily lives of believers. It should prick the conscience of the modern-day church.

1. **A people who received the Word—gladly (v.41).**
2. **A people who continued—steadfastly (v.42).**
3. **A people who stirred souls with a godly fear (v.43).**
4. **A people who were together—sharing in ministry (v.44-45).**
5. **A people who were unified (v.46).**
6. **A people who worshipped and praised God—daily (v.46-47).**

### 1. [\(Acts 2:41\)](#) **Word of God:** the early believers were a people who received the Word gladly.

1. This is the basic trait, the very first trait of a true church. It actually defines a church. A church is a people, a body of people who have received *the Word of God*.

**They were not receiving.....**

- |                                  |                       |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. a set of ideas                | 4. a human philosophy |
| 2. a man's thoughts              | 5. a position         |
| 3. a set of rules and principles | 6. a religion         |

They were receiving the Word of God, the very revelation of God Himself. God had revealed Himself in Jesus Christ to His disciples. And Peter, the spokesman for the disciples, was proclaiming the Word about Jesus Christ. God had spoken to the world through His Son Jesus Christ, and the early believers had received His Word. (See below [Deeper Study # 19, The Word—John 1:1-5.](#))

### DEEPER STUDY # 19

[\(John 1:1-5\)](#) **The Word— Jesus Christ, Son of God:** the *Word (logos)* is Jesus Christ. John faced a serious problem in writing to the Gentiles, that is, the non-Jewish world. Most Gentiles had never heard of the Messiah or Savior who was expected by the Jews. The idea was foreign to them. However, the Messiah was the very center of Christianity. How was John going to present Christ so that a Gentile could understand?

The answer lay in the idea of the *Word*, for the *Word* was understood by both Gentile and Jew.

**1. The Jews saw a word as something more than a mere sound.**

A word was something active and existing. It was power—it possessed the power to express something, to do something. This is seen in the many Old Testament references where *The Word of God* was seen as the creative power of God, the power that made the world and gave light and life to every man ([Genesis 1:3, 6, 11](#); [Psalm 33:6](#); [Psalm 107:20](#); [Psalm 147:15](#); [Isaiah 55:11](#)).

**2. The Gentiles or Greeks saw the *Word* more philosophically.**

- a. When they looked at the world of nature, they saw that things were not chaotic, but orderly. Everything had its place and moved or grew in an orderly fashion, including the stars above and the vegetation below. Therefore, the Greeks said that behind the world was a mind, a reason, a power that made and kept things in their proper place. This creative and sustaining mind, this supreme reason, this unlimited power was said to be the *Word*.
- b. The *Word* was also seen as the power that enabled men to think and reason. It was the power that brought light and understanding to man's mind and enabled him to express his jumbled up thoughts in an orderly fashion.
- c. More importantly, the *Word* was the power by which men came into contact with God and expressed their feelings to God.

**3. John grabbed hold of this common idea of the Jews and Gentiles.** He proclaimed that Jesus Christ was the *Word*. John saw that a word is the expression of an idea, a thought, an image in the mind of a person. He saw that a word describes what is in the mind of a person. Thus, he proclaimed that in the life of Jesus Christ, God was speaking to the world, speaking and demonstrating just what He wanted to say to man.

**John said three things.**

- a. God has given us much more than mere words in the Holy Scriptures. God has given us Jesus Christ, *The Word*. As *The Word*, Jesus Christ was the picture, the expression, the pattern, the very image of what God wished to say to man. The very image within God's mind of the *Ideal Man* was demonstrated in the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the perfect expression of all that God wishes man to be. Jesus Christ was God's utterance, God's speech, *God's*

*Word* to man. Jesus Christ was the *Word* of God who came down to earth in human flesh to bring man into a face to face relationship with God (cp. [John 1:1-2](#)). Jesus was the *Word of God who came to earth to live out the written Word of God*.

b. Jesus Christ is the Mind, the Reason, the Power that both made and keeps things in their proper order. He is the creative and sustaining Mind, the Supreme Reason, the unlimited Power (cp. [John 1:3](#)).

c. Jesus Christ is the Light, the Illumination, the Power that penetrates the darkness of the world. He, the Life and Light of the world, is what makes sense of the world and enables men to understand the world (cp. [John 1:4-5](#)).

2. **Note the word "received."** The word "received" (*apodechomai*) means "to take fully, to welcome, to approve fully, to accept". A true church, a true body of believers, does not just hear and listen to the Word. They are not just present to join the crowd and see what is going on. They do not sit with wandering minds and closed hearts.

**A true church receives the Word of God; they.....**

- |                  |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. welcome it    | 6. hold on to it         |
| 2. believe it    | 7. hunger for it         |
| 3. take it in    | 8. joy and rejoice in it |
| 4. practice it   | 9. share it              |
| 5. experience it |                          |

3. **Note the statement: "They that gladly received his word."** To "gladly" (*asmenōs*) receive means "with pleasure, to embrace with anticipation". Not everyone present received it. Some were there for the wrong reasons and others were closed-minded and disinterested. Still others simply refused to believe and rejected the Word. **But they who received God's Word became the very first body of believers, the first church.**

4. Note that they were baptized: the idea is immediate baptism (see below [Deeper Study # 20, Baptism—Acts 2:38](#) for discussion). Note also the large number: three thousand "were added" to the 120 disciples.

**"Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand" ([Acts 4:4](#)).**

**"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" ([Acts 6:7](#)).**

"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" ([Acts 17:11](#)).

"But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world" ([Romans 10:18](#)).

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" ([1 Thes. 2:13](#)).

## DEEPER STUDY # 20

([Acts 2:38](#)) **Baptism**: is the outward sign, the immediate sign of repentance. It is the physical sign that a person is identifying with Christ. It is the immediate sign that a person is to show before the world that he is really repenting and is now going to obey and live for God.

**Baptism and repentance are both.....**

1. outward signs.
2. signs that have to do with behavior.
3. signs that show the world that a person is turning his life over to God.

Repentance is a command to change one's life. Baptism is a command, the very first command to follow Christ. Baptism is the first command given to those who are repenting. The person who is really repenting must be baptized. He must give testimony to the world and confess to the world that he is repenting by being baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (**cp. [Matthew 28:19-20](#)**). Baptism is not an option. It is as much a command as repentance.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" ([Matthew 28:19](#)).

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" ([Mark 16:16](#)).

"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" ([Acts 2:38](#)).

"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days" ([Acts 10:48](#)).

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" ([Acts 22:16](#)).

**Now, note a critical point that is often overlooked and neglected.** Just because a person changes his life (**repents**) and is baptized does not mean he is saved. A person can change his life by the **power of his own will**, by **discipline** and **self-control**, by his **own effort** and **works**. And he can very simply request to be baptized. Many people have and will continue to do this. Many live what society calls a **good, upright, and moral life** and they have been baptized.

But there is more to being saved than merely changing one's life and being baptized. **What is it?** It is the very basis, the very essential to true salvation, to being truly forgiven and receiving the Holy Spirit:

**It is the essential of faith, of believing "in the name of Jesus Christ."**

A person who truly believes and really trusts Jesus does repent and is baptized. But just because a person lives a disciplined and controlled life (**repents**) and has been baptized does not mean he is truthfully trusting Jesus as his Savior.

**True faith—the inward work within the heart, the inward work of really believing *in the name of the Lord Jesus*—is the one absolute essential for being saved.**

**Now note another critical point** that is also overlooked and neglected.

**1.** Just because a person says he believes in Jesus does not mean he is saved. A person can say and claim anything, and that person can be baptized. But profession and baptism do not save a person anymore than a changed life and baptism save a person.

There is more to being saved than professing faith and being baptized. What is it? Again, it is the very basis, the very essential to true salvation, to being truly forgiven and receiving the Holy Spirit.

**2.** It is the basis, the essential of **repenting** and of doing the very first act of repentance, being baptized.

There is no faith **without true repentance** and there is no forgiveness by God **without trusting or committing** one's life to God's dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And the very first act of following Jesus is that of repenting and being baptized. A person who honestly believes in Jesus Christ will do what He said, repent and be baptized.

This is what Peter was saying in this passage. He did not mention faith, but he was not omitting faith nor eliminating belief in the Lord Jesus as essential to salvation. The rest of Scripture cannot be ignored in looking at this verse just as this verse and others like it cannot be ignored by the passages that stress faith alone. Common sense tells us that a person who truly believes something acts upon that thing. *Behavior follows true belief*. But similarly, common sense tells us that behavior can be changed by raw effort and discipline. A person can change because he thinks he should change and not because someone else demands change.

Paul stressed the same point in that classic passage of his ([Romans 6:3-4](#)), and the point is very significant. A believer (*true believer*) is said to be "**baptized [immersed] into the death of Christ.**"

**"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized [immersed] into the death of Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" ([Romans 6:3-4](#)).**

Now note what Paul has just said: when a person is baptized, he is "**baptized into His [Jesus'] death**" in the same way he is immersed (identified) into the resurrection of Christ. Baptism is an act by which one identifies with Christ. He counts himself as having died *in* Christ's death and as having risen *in* Christ's resurrection; as living and moving and having his being *in* Christ even as Christ lived and moved and had His being in God. Christ's death and resurrection and life becomes the believer's death and resurrection and life. The believer treats and judges himself as having been "**crucified with Christ, nevertheless living; yet not himself, but Christ living in him**" ([Galatians 2:20](#)).

**In conclusion**, history has shown that this point needs to be stressed and restressed.

**1.** A person can repent, change his own life and be baptized (**by his own effort and works**) without ever trusting Christ, without really believing in Christ.

**2.** But a person cannot trust, cannot really believe in Christ without repenting and following Christ in the very first act of repentance, that of being baptized. True faith and honest belief always mean that a person repents and is baptized. To believe is to follow (obey) Christ and to be baptized.

"And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that **obey him**" ([Hebrews 5:9](#)).

"He that believeth not [ho apeithon, **obeys not**] shall not see life" ([John 3:36](#)).

## 2. ([Acts 2:42](#)) **Steadfastness: the early believers were a people who “continued steadfastly” in four things.**

### DEEPER STUDY # 21 ([Acts 2:42](#)) Continued stedfastly (*proskarterountes*)

([Acts 2:42](#)) **Continued stedfastly** (*esan proskarterountes*): to continue, persevere, endure, stick, persist. A person does not quit, back off, fade away, or slip back. He continues on stedfastly.

### DEEPER STUDY # 22 ([Acts 2:42](#)) In doctrine (*didache*)

([Acts 2:42](#)) **In doctrine** (*didachē*): the teaching, the instruction of the apostles. This would include both what Christ taught and His death and resurrection and ascension or exaltation.

**It would be the same teaching and instructions.....**

1. that are shared in the New Testament.
2. that the disciples wrote to various churches and bodies of believers.

The teaching would be no different. There is only one message, only one Word that saves and roots and grounds people in the Lord—the Word of God Himself, the message of the New Testament. On the day of Pentecost, the persons who were saved needed to be grounded in the faith. And the only message that could ground them was the message found in the New Testament. It was that message, that doctrine they were taught.

**"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen"** ([Matthew 28:19-20](#)).



**"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things" ([Luke 24:45-48](#)).**

**Thought 1.** Note a striking fact: we can be saved and rooted and grounded in the *very same message*. God has given us the very same doctrines and instructions to root and ground us. We can have a true, dynamic apostolic experience and maturity in the Lord. We can grow and know the Lord as intimately as the early believers knew the Lord. In fact, we come short if we do not, for we have the very same doctrine, teachings, and instructions that they had.

### **[DEEPER STUDY # 23 \(Acts 2:42\) Fellowship](#)**

**(Acts 2:42) Fellowship:** the fellowship wrought by the Spirit of God means more than the association existing in secular groups such as civic clubs and community bodies. There is a vast difference between *community participation* and *spiritual participation*. *Community participation* is based upon neighborly association. *Spiritual participation* is based upon a spiritual union wrought by the Spirit of God.

**The distinctiveness is this:** the Holy Spirit is within the Christian believer. The Holy Spirit creates a spiritual union by melting and molding the heart of the Christian believer to the hearts of other believers. He attaches the life of one believer to the lives of other believers. Through the Spirit of God, believers become one in life and purpose. They have a joint life sharing their blessings and needs and gifts together.

**Note several things about fellowship that are taught by this passage.**

**1. Fellowship is being experienced by the new believers because they join other Christians in learning the Scriptures (apostles' teachings) and in worship (prayers and celebrating the Lord's Supper, [Acts 2:41-42](#)).**

**2. Fellowship forbids an unattached Christian life.** Their fellowship is maintained because they "**continue stedfastly**" in the Scriptures and in worship. **An unattached Christian life is just impossible.**

a. Christianity is first an individual matter, but then it becomes a social matter. The Christian is attached to Christ individually, but he is also attached to other believers. He walks with other believers in the Scriptures and in worship.

b. Christianity is first a spiritual organism, but then it becomes a spiritual organization. The Christian has an *inward life*, but he also takes on an *outward form* of life. He becomes a living organization with other Christian believers. He sits at the feet of the apostles' teaching and joins right in with other Christians as they worship together.

c. Christianity makes the true believer a saint (**one who is set apart unto God**), but Christianity is made up of *saints*—plural. Christianity is not just one person; Christianity is many persons—*saints*. The word is often used in the New Testament, but it is never used in the singular. **Christianity is Christianity because the saints study the Scriptures together and worship together.**

d. Christianity demands that a believer personally live out such virtues as kindness, longsuffering, and love; **but the believer can do this only in association with others.**

e. Christianity means that the Spirit of God has entered the believer's life, but it also means that the Spirit of God has placed the believer into a corporate body (the church), into Christian society itself. The Spirit of God indwells the corporate body of believers as well as the individual.

### **3. Spiritual fellowship faces two dangers.**

a. Fellowship and society can be over-emphasized—to the point that individual salvation is missed. An individual must "receive His word" ([Acts 2:41](#)).

b. Individual salvation and individual worship, whether through nature or by any other means, can be overly stressed—to the point that Christian fellowship and society can be missed ([Acts 2:42](#); [Hebrews 10:25](#)).

**"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" ([Acts 2:42](#)).**

**"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another" ([Romans 12:5](#)).**

"For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" ([1 Cor. 10:17](#)).

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" ([Galatians 3:28](#)).

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" ([Ephes. 4:13](#)).

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" ([Hebrews 10:25](#)).

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" ([1 John 1:7](#)).

"I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts" ([Psalm 119:63](#)).

"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name" ([Malachi 3:16](#)).

#### [DEEPER STUDY # 24 \(Acts 2:42\) Lord's Supper](#)

[\(Acts 2:42\) Lord's Supper](#): the phrase "breaking of bread" means the early believers observed and remembered the Lord's death. They set aside some time to observe what churches call communion, or the Lord's Supper, or the Eucharist. Note they observed the Lord's Supper daily ([Acts 2:46](#)). **Why did they observe it so often?**

1. The Lord's Supper was the one ordinance Christ had given to symbolize His death. And it was His death that had saved them.

**Because of His death, they were now.....**

- a. reconciled to God.
  - b. in fellowship with God.
  - c. made new creatures in God.
  - d. infilled with the Spirit of God.
  - e. bearing all the fruit of God
- [\(Galatians 5:22-23\)](#).

All they now were and had was due to the death of Christ. They wanted to remember and thank God for His great love demonstrated in the death of His Son, and to do it often.

2. The Lord had commanded His followers to observe the Lord's Supper often.

**Thought 1.** What an indictment against so many of us who observe the Lord's Supper so little! We can, of course, remember and concentrate upon the death of Christ without the symbol of the Supper. ***But*** Christ gave us the ordinance and commanded that we use it as the primary symbol to show His death until He comes ([1 Cor. 11:26](#)).

"This do in remembrance of me" ([Luke 22:19](#); [1 Cor. 11:24-25](#)).

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he comes" ([1 Cor. 11:26](#)).

"And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many" ([Mark 14:22-24](#)).

### **DEEPER STUDY # 25 (Acts 2:42) Prayer**

([Acts 2:42](#)) **Prayer**: the early believers were a people who persevered in prayer—the idea is church prayer, united prayer with the whole body of believers.

1. Through prayer they were brought into the most intimate fellowship and presence of God. They could get no closer to God than when they were *drawing nigh* to God through prayer.

"The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth" ([Psalm 145:18](#)).

"But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works" ([Psalm 73:28](#)).

"For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God" ([Hebrews 7:19](#)).

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" ([Matthew 18:20](#)).

2. Through prayer they received things from God. They received His provision for both their souls and lives.

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" ([Matthew 21:22](#)).

"Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" ([John 16:24](#)).

### **3. ([Acts 2:43](#)) Fear, Godly— Church: the early believers were a people who stirred souls with a godly fear.**

Fear (*phobias*) does not just mean terror or fright.

It means.....

1. a godly fear, a fear of God, of His displeasure and judgment.
2. a holy sense of God's presence.
3. a consciousness that God is working.
4. a reverence for God and for what is happening.
5. a sense of awe and wonder.

Note what it is that stirs the public to be so aware of God: the signs and wonders being done by the *apostles*.

**And note: there were *many*.**

"His mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation" ([Luke 1:50](#)).

"But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him" ([Acts 10:35](#)).

"What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose" ([Psalm 25:12](#)).

"Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" ([Psalm 31:19](#)).

"Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the LORD, and stay upon his God" ([Isaiah 50:10](#)).

### **4. ([Acts 2:44-45](#)) Church— Unity— Ministry: the early believers were a people who were together and who shared in ministry.**

It is critical for the church to pay close attention and heed what is being said in this point.

1. The *professing believers* were true believers. They were those "that [truly] believe" (see below [Deeper Study # 26, Believe—John 2:24](#) for discussion that shows true belief is the commitment of all one *is and has*).

## DEEPER STUDY # 26

**(John 2:24) Believe— Commit:** the word "commit" (*episteuen*) is the very same word "believe" (*episteusan*) (cp. [John 2:23](#)). This gives an excellent picture of *saving faith*, of what *genuine faith* is—of the kind of faith that really saves a person.

1. Saving faith is not head knowledge, not just a mental conviction and intellectual assent. It is not just *believing the fact* that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world. It is not just believing history, that Jesus Christ lived upon earth as the Savior just as George Washington lived upon earth as the President of America. It is not just believing the words and claims of Jesus in the same way that a person would believe the words of George Washington.

2. Saving faith is believing in Jesus, *who* and *what* He is, that He is the *Savior* and *Lord* of life. It is a man giving and turning his life over to Jesus. It is a man casting himself upon Jesus as Savior and Lord.

3. Saving faith is commitment—the commitment of a man's total being and life to Jesus Christ. It is a man's commitment of all he *is and has* to Jesus. It gives Jesus everything; therefore, it involves all of a man's affairs. **The man trusts Jesus to take care of his past (sins), his present (welfare), and his future (destiny).** He entrusts his whole life, being and possessions into Jesus' hands. He lays himself upon Jesus' keeping, confiding in Him about his daily necessities and acknowledging Him in all the ways of life. He follows Jesus in every area and in every detail of life, seeking His instructions and leaving his welfare up to Him. It is simply commitment of a man's whole being, all he is and has, to Jesus.

**There are three steps involved in faith, steps that are clearly seen in this passage. ([Romans 10:16-17](#))**

1. **There is the step of *seeing* ([John 2:23](#)) or *hearing* ([Romans 10:16](#)).** A man must be willing to listen to the message of Christ, the revelation of truth.

2. **There is the step of *mental assent*.** A man must agree that the message is true, that the facts of the case are thus and so. But this is not enough. Mere agreement does not lead to action. Many a person knows that something is true, but he does not change his behavior to match his knowledge. For example, a man knows that eating too much harms his body, but he may continue to eat too much.

He agrees to the truth and knows the truth, but he does nothing about it. A person may believe and know that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world and yet do nothing about it, never make a decision to follow Christ. This man still does not have faith, not the kind of faith that the Bible talks about.

**3. There is the step of *commitment*.** When the New Testament speaks of faith, it speaks of *commitment, a personal commitment to the truth*. A man hears the truth and agrees that it is true and does something about it. He commits and yields his life to the truth. The truth becomes a part of his very being, a part of his behavior and life.

**2.** The believers were "**together**" (*ἔσαν ἐπι το αὐτο*). This *means* they were together in the same place *because they were of the same call, mind, and purpose*. It does not mean just being in the same location and place. They would not have been *together unless they had been of the same spirit and purpose*. This is critical to God's call.

**3.** The believers sold their possessions and goods and used the money to minister to the poor and needy.

**Now note:**

Why would they go to such a drastic extreme to minister? There is one critical reason: Christ commanded it. The church too often denies and ignores it, but denial of the truth does not do away with the truth. (See below [Deeper Study # 27—Acts 2:44-45](#)).

**Now note: Who are the rich and who are the poor?**

- a. A rich person is anyone who has more than what others have, more than what the vast majority of the world has.
- b. A rich person is anyone who has anything to put back beyond meeting the true needs of his own family.

This is exactly what Christ and the Bible say time and again (**cp. also [Mark 12:41-44](#); [Luke 21:1-4](#); [Acts 4:34-35](#); etc.**).

**In a summary statement, who is rich?** A rich person is anyone who has anything beyond what he needs. What Christ demands is that we give all that we *are and have* to meet the needs of those in such desperate need. We are to hold back nothing. This is often the great complaint against Christians that we just do not believe, not really. The evidence of our unbelief is seen in the insistence of Christ, the demand that we give all we have to feed the starving and meet the desperate needs of the poor and lost of the world. But we don't. Gandhi, the great leader of India's independence, is said to have never embraced Christianity for this very reason. **How many others have rejected Christ because of our hypocrisy?**

"Go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" ([Matthew 19:21](#)).

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" ([Matthew 19:29](#)).

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" ([Matthew 6:21](#)).

"And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" ([Matthew 22:39](#)).

"But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you, Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" ([Luke 12:31-34](#)).

"And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold" ([Luke 19:8](#)).

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" ([John 13:35](#)).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" ([John 15:10](#)).

"Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good" ([Romans 12:9](#)).

"Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" ([1 Cor. 10:33](#)).

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" ([2 Cor. 8:9](#)).

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" ([Ephes. 4:28](#)).

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you" ([1 Thes. 3:12](#)).

"Let your conversation [life, behavior] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" ([Hebrews 13:5](#)).

A final matter is this: Christ demands that we *give all we are and have* if we are to follow Him (see below [Deeper Study # 28—Luke 9:23](#)). Any attempt to *water down* what He often said fails miserably before an honest heart reading His Word.



**Thought 1.** Just imagine how long ago the world would have been reached with the gospel if *professing* believers had been honestly committing their *total* lives to Christ, giving all they were and had to His cause of world evangelization!

### DEEPER STUDY # 27

#### (Acts 2:44-45) Stewardship— Commitment— Self-denial—

**Possessions:** Christ demands that we give Him all we *are and have to enter heaven*. This is the reason the early believers gave what they had to meet the needs of the world. Christ had demanded it of the rich young ruler and *of His disciples*.

In our struggle to protect the glorious truth that man is saved by grace and grace alone, we often forget and neglect another great truth: to *follow* Christ is to serve and minister to our neighbor. To follow Christ is to deny self completely, all that we are as well as all that we have. When we love our neighbor as ourselves, then we show that we truly love God. If we do not love and minister to our neighbor (**above self**), then we do not love God.

When we deny self by giving all we are and have ([1 John 4:20](#)), then and only then do we receive heaven and the treasure of heaven. To deny self, to give all we are and have is a hard saying, but Christ demands it. Our attempts to soften it do not annul His demand.

It is love of the world that makes us unwilling to give up the possessions we have obtained (**comfort, esteem, recognition, power, position**).

**By refusing to take and give what we have, we make the fatal mistake of showing (demonstrating).....**

1. that we love the things of the world more than we love people; that we prefer hoarding and extravagance, living sumptuously and comfortably to helping those who are so needful, so desperately needful.
2. that we love the world more than we love the hope of eternal life.
3. that we love the position, recognition, esteem, and power of the world's possessions more than we love Christ.

**Now note a critical fact that we must heed: this point is often made a point of controversy.** Men use every explanation possible to ease their consciences and to keep from having to give everything.

There is a reason for this, and it is this that is so critical. Possessions pull a person away from God. It is difficult for a person who has possessions to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Why? There is a lure, an attraction, a force, a power, a pull that reaches out and draws any of us who look at or possess wealth. There are pulls so forceful that they will enslave and doom any man who banks and hoards and fails to turn and embrace God.

**1. Possessions create the big "I" (cp. [Matthew 19:16, 20](#)).** The man who *has possessions* is usually **looked up to, esteemed, honored, and envied**. Possessions bring **position, power, recognition**. They boost ego, and make a person self-sufficient and independent in this world. As a result there is a tendency for the rich person to feel independent and self-sufficient, that he needs nothing. And in such an atmosphere and world of thought, God is forgotten. It is forgotten that there are things that money cannot buy and events from which money cannot save.

**Peace, love, joy—all that really matters within the spirit of man—can never be bought.** Neither can money save a person from **disaster, disease, accident, or death**—the trials that are sure to come upon all.

**2. Possessions tend to make one hoard (cp. [Matthew 19:21](#)).** The Bible lays down the principle of handling money for all men, even for the poor:

**"Let him labor...that he may have to give to him that needeth" ([Ephes. 4:28](#)).**

**"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" ([Matthew 19:19](#); [Matthew 22:39](#)).**

The world reels in desperate need. People are **starving, sick, unhoused, and unclothed** by the millions. Teeming millions are spiritually lost and without God in this world, and they are doomed to die without ever knowing Him. When any of us sit still and objectively look at the world in its desperate plight, we ask: **"How in this world can any man hoard and not help—even to the last available penny? Why would any man keep more than what he needs for himself and his family?"**

As God looks at any man who banks and hoards, He is bound to ask the same question. In fact, His questions are bound to be more pointed and forceful. This is exactly what Christ said to the rich young ruler:

**"Go and sell [all] that thou hast; and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" ([Matthew 19:21](#)).**

***Riches tend to make a man selfish. For some unexplainable reason, the more we get, the more we want.*** When we taste the things of this world and become comfortable, we tend to fear losing our possessions. We struggle to keep what we have and to get more. True, many are willing to make contributions, but only a certain amount, an amount that will not lower their overall estate or standing or level of comfort and possessions. There are few who give all to Christ, all they are and all they have to meet the needs of the world.

As Christ said, it is very difficult for the rich (**meaning those who have anything in comparison with most of the world**) to enter heaven. If we do not have compassion and take care of our brothers (**fellow man**) when they are in desperate need, how can we expect God to have compassion and take care of us when we face the desperate need for heaven?

It is foolish to think that a loving and just God will meet our need for eternal life when we would not meet the need of our fellow man for physical life. The rich (all of us who have anything in comparison with the rest of the world) have the means to help and to save human life, if we only would.

**3. Possessions attach a person to the world (cp. [Matthew 19:22](#)).**

**Possessions enable a person to buy things that.....**

- a.** make him comfortable
- b.** please his taste
- c.** stir his ego
- d.** expand his experience
- e.** challenge his mental pursuit
- f.** stimulate his flesh
- g.** stretch his self-image

If a man centers his life upon the things of the world, his attention is on the world and not on God. He tends to become wrapped up in securing more and in protecting what he has. Too often, he gives little if any time and thought to heavenly matters. Wealth and the things it can provide within this world can and usually do consume the rich.

"Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth" ([Luke 12:33](#)).

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" ([Acts 20:35](#)).

"Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality" ([Romans 12:13](#)).

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" ([Galatians 6:10](#)).

"That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" ([1 Tim. 6:18](#)).

"But to do good and to communicate [give] forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased" ([Hebrews 13:16](#)).

## DEEPER STUDY # 28

([Luke 9:23](#)) **Cross—Discipleship**: people in Jesus' day knew what it meant to "**take up**" a cross. They saw scores of criminals bearing the cross to the place where they were to be executed, and they witnessed scores of crucifixions, some even by the side of the roads that led in and out of the cities.

The cross does not mean merely bearing one's particular hardship in life, such as poor health, abuse, unemployment, invalid parents, an unsaved spouse, a wayward child. The cross is always an instrument of death, not just an object to carry or bear. The Christian is to die mentally and actively. He is to deny himself daily. He is to let the mind of Christ, the mind of humbling himself to the point of death, be in him and fill his thoughts every day ([Phil. 2:5-8](#); [2 Cor. 10:3-5](#)). He is to put his will, his desires, his wants, his ambitions to death. In their stead, he is to follow Jesus and to do His will all day long. Note this is not negative, passive behavior. It takes positive, active behavior to *will*, to *deny self*, to *take up* one's *cross*, to *follow* Christ. A person has to act, work, get to it, be diligent, consistent, and enduring in order to die to self.

There are several ways the believer dies to self. [Romans 6:11-13](#) spells out the ways as clearly as they can be.

**"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" ([Romans 6:11-13](#); cp. [Romans 6:2-10](#)).**

1. The believer reckons or counts himself crucified with Christ.

**"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin" ([Romans 6:11a](#)).**

**"Knowing this, that our old man is [was] crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" ([Romans 6:6](#)).**

**"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" ([Galatians 2:20](#)).**

**"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts" ([Galatians 5:24](#)).**

2. The believer reckons or counts himself dead to sin, but alive to God.

**"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" ([Romans 6:11](#)).**

**"That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" ([1 Peter 4:2](#)).**

3. The believer does not let sin reign in his body.

**"Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof" ([Romans 6:12](#)).**

**"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" ([Col. 3:5](#)).**

4. The believer does not yield his bodily members as instruments of sin.

**"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin" ([Romans 6:13a](#)).**

**"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" ([Romans 8:13](#)).**

5. The believer yields himself to God—as much as those who are alive from the dead are yielded to God.

**"But yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead" ([Romans 6:13b](#)).**

**"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" ([Romans 12:1](#)).**

**"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" ([Romans 13:14](#)).**

6. The believer yields his bodily members as instruments of righteousness.

**"But yield...your members as instruments of righteousness unto God" ([Romans 6:13c](#)).**

**"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh" ([Galatians 5:16](#)).**

It should be noted that one's hardship or burden can bring a person to the place where the Lord can deal with him. It is then that the hardship becomes the cross and denial of self that Jesus is talking about. With an act of self-denial, the Christian can then reckon himself alive to God ([Romans 6:13](#)). He can then follow Jesus. This is an act which can be described as committing all that one is and has to Christ. It is an act that needs to be repeated every day (cp. [Matthew 10:38](#)).

## **5. ([Acts 2:46](#)) Unity: a people who continued with one accord.**

**([Acts 1:14](#)) One Accord (*homothumadon*): means “to have the same mind or spirit; oneness of mind and heart”.** It means to be one in spirit and purpose. *Homos* means “same” and *thumos* means “spirit or mind”. The believers, all 120 of them in the upper room, were of the same spirit, of the same mind. The idea is they were after the same thing, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They were focusing and concentrating their thoughts and energies upon seeking God for the promise of His Spirit.

The word is used only eleven times in Scripture, ten of those times are found in Acts, one is found in Romans.

1. One accord in prayer ([Acts 1:14](#); [Acts 4:24](#)).
2. One accord in one place ([Acts 2:1](#)).
3. One accord in daily worship and the Lord's supper ([Acts 2:46](#); [Acts 5:12](#)).
4. One accord in obedience ([Acts 8:6](#)).
5. One accord in a business meeting ([Acts 15:25](#)).
6. One accord is needed to glorify God ([Romans 15:6](#)).

The phrase "**one accord**" is also used to refer to the unity of unbelievers and enemies of the gospel ([Acts 7:57](#); [Acts 12:20](#); [Acts 18:12](#); [Acts 19:29](#)).

## **6. (Acts 2:46-47) Church— Worship: a people who worshipped and praised God every day.**

### **Note five things.**

1. The believers were worshipping in the temple, praying and attending the regular hours of worship and prayers (cp. [Acts 3:1](#)).

2. The believers were worshipping in their homes, moving from home to home. They were sharing together in fellowship meals and in observing the Lord's Supper, remembering their Lord's death. (See below [Deeper Study # 29—Luke 9:4](#) for discussion stressing that the home was to be the center of ministry.)

### **DEEPER STUDY # 29**

**(Luke 9:4) Church, In Homes**: the method Christ chose for evangelizing was the method of home evangelism (cp. [Luke 10:5](#)). Note this, for it should speak loudly and clearly to us. The disciple was to carefully investigate and search out a receptive family and home. He was to make that home the center for ministry.

#### **Note several things about this method.**

- a. It emphasizes the family, making it the very hub of ministry.
- b. It stresses stability, security, and settledness. Nothing on earth is to be any more secure and stable than the family. By placing the center of ministry in the home, the Kingdom of God becomes secure and stable.
- c. It centers preaching and ministering in the community, right where people live and walk. It makes the presence of Christ visible to all in day to day living.
- d. It serves as the center from which the message can move out in an ever widening circle, spreading from family to family.

**Thought 1.** The most ideal form of evangelism is probably this method given by Christ: a selected home and family serving as the center of witness within a community or town. The early church was definitely centered in the homes of committed believers ([Acts 5:42](#); [Acts 12:12](#); [Acts 16:40](#); [Acts 20:20](#); [1 Cor. 16:19](#); [Col. 4:15](#); [Philemon 2](#)).

3. The believers were worshipping with gladness and singleness of heart. The word "singleness" (*aphelotēti*) means "sincere, without hardness". Their hearts were soft and tender, easily touched and giving. There was no selfishness or withholding on their part. Where there was need, they gave.

**Note their attitude** was *gladness, joy, and rejoicing*. They were more than glad to worship and minister as the Lord had instructed.

**Thought 1.** Just imagine the radical, transformed behavior of these early believers. What could have caused such radical behavior? The proclamation of the *pure, unadulterated Word of Christ*. The giving of all we are and have is absolutely demanded.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" ([Luke 9:23](#)).

"Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord" ([Acts 11:23](#)).

4. The believers were praising God.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" ([Matthew 5:16](#)).

"That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" ([Romans 15:6](#)).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" ([1 Cor. 6:20](#)).

5. **The results were twofold:** they gained favor with the people, and the Lord added souls to the church. **Note the word "saved"** (*sōzomenous*). It is in the present tense, "such as were being saved." Salvation is a present experience of the believer as well as past and future (see below [Deeper Study # 30—1 Cor. 1:18](#) for discussion). The idea is that those who were being saved were being added to the church day by day.

"Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand" ([Acts 4:4](#)).



"And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" ([Acts 5:14](#)).

"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith" ([Acts 6:7](#)).

"And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord" ([Acts 11:21](#)).

### DEEPER STUDY # 30

[\(1 Corinthians 1:18\)](#) **Salvation—Perishing**: men are placed into one of two categories here, *perishing* or *being saved*. A man goes through life having one of these two experiences: he is either perishing, moving ever downward toward the grave; or he is being saved, moving ever upward toward eternal life.

In the Greek, both words are continuous action; that is, **a man is perishing or is being saved**. The words are not static; a man is not sitting still. He is ever "**perishing**," more and more being gripped by the flesh and being conditioned to accept a perishing, dying world; **or** he is ever "**being saved**," more and more being freed to walk righteously and godly in this present world. The man who is saved is being conditioned to break loose from a perishing, dying world and to look for the glorious appearing of the new world. (See [Deeper Study # 31, Salvation—Romans 1:16](#).)

1. The terrible word *perishing* means to be lost, to be utterly destroyed, to lose eternal life, to be spiritually destitute, to be cut off.

a. Perishing means to be in a lost state in this world.

**It means to be.....**

1. aging, deteriorating, decaying, dying.
2. without life (purpose, meaning, significance).
3. without peace (assurance, confidence, security in God's keeping).
4. without hope (of living forever).

b. Perishing means to be in a lost state in the world to come.

**It means.....**

1. having to die
2. facing judgment
3. being condemned
4. suffering separation from God and from all loved ones
5. experiencing all that is hell

2. The great word *salvation* is used in Scripture to describe at least three experiences for the believer.

**a. The *once-for-all experience of salvation*.** It is an experience that has happened sometime in the past: "**Ye have been saved**" ([Luke 7:50](#)). It is the initial act of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is receiving Christ into one's heart and life as Lord. It means being saved or delivered from sin, death, and hell; and being given the assurance that one will never be separated from God—either in this life or in the world to come.

**"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him"** ([John 17:2](#)).

**"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish"** ([2 Cor. 2:15](#)).

**"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)"** ([Ephes. 2:5](#)).

**"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God"** ([Ephes. 2:8](#)).

**"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began"** ([2 Tim. 1:9](#)).

**b. The *continuous experience of salvation*.** It is an experience that is occurring right now, in the present. "**Ye are being saved**" ([1 Cor. 1:18](#)). It is a description of God's work day by day in the believer's life. It is the Holy Spirit of God working within the believer. (Cp. [Romans 6:14](#); [Romans 8:2](#); [2 Cor. 3:18](#); [Galatians 2:20](#); [Phil. 1:19](#); [Phil. 2:12-13](#); [2 Thes. 2:13](#).)

1. To guide and teach him and to deliver him through all the trials and problems of life.

**"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 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"** ([John 14:16-17](#)).

**"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him"** ([John 14:23](#)).

2. To fill him with a heart of love, joy, and peace—all the fruit and resources necessary to live life to the fullest.

**"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).**

3. To conform him more and more to the image of Christ.

**"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" ([2 Cor. 3:18](#)).**

4. To stir and equip him to live and witness for Christ day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, and moment by moment.

**"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" ([Acts 1:8](#)).**

**"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God" ([2 Tim. 1:7-8](#)).**

- c. The *redemptive experience* of salvation that is to occur in the future. **"Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" ([Romans 13:11](#)).** This future reference to salvation points to the day of redemption—to the day of Christ's kingdom—to the day when Christ shall usher in His kingdom upon this earth—to the day when God will create a new heavens and earth and bring about His perfect will and rule throughout the universe.

**"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body" ([Romans 8:21-23](#)).**

**"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" ([1 Cor. 15:42-44](#)).**

"Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" ([1 Peter 1:5](#)).

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" ([2 Peter 3:10-13](#)).

### DEEPER STUDY # 31

([Romans 1:16](#)) **Salvation** (*hē sōtēria*): means "deliverance, made whole, preservation". From what does man need to be saved and delivered and preserved? Scripture paints five descriptive pictures of salvation, showing man's great need.

1. **Salvation means deliverance from being lost.** Man is pictured as wandering about in the forest of life trying to go someplace, but unable to find his way. He is lost, and if he continues to stumble about through the forest of life, the underbrush and thorns of the forest will sap his strength and prick him to the point that he lies down and dies. His only hope is for someone to notice that he is lost and to begin seeking for him. This is where the glorious gospel of salvation comes in. God sees that man is lost and He sends His Son to seek and to save man.

Salvation means that Christ.....

1. seeks and saves man from his lost condition.
2. sets man on the right road that leads him to eternal life.

"For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?" ([Matthew 18:11-12](#); cp. [Luke 15:4](#)).

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" ([Luke 19:10](#)).

"Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee" ([John 5:14](#)).

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" ([John 10:9](#)).

2. **Salvation means deliverance from sin.** It means deliverance from mistakes, from corrupt ideas and thoughts, from moral impurity and from a crooked and perverse generation.

**Sin is like.....**

1. an infection, a disease for which man has no cure.
2. a master that enslaves and will not let go.
3. a crooked and perverse world that man cannot straighten out.

Man's only hope is for someone to discover a cure, someone with the intelligence and power to do it. This is where God steps in with His glorious salvation. God knows all about man's infection and enslavement by sin, all about his crooked and perverse world; so He sends His Son to save man, to cure him and liberate him and straighten out his world.

**Salvation means that Christ saves man from the terrible tyranny of sin, from.....**

1. the infection of sin.
2. the enslavement of sin.
3. the crooked and perverse world of sin.

Salvation also does something else. It frees man from the pricking and burden of guilt and shame, and it plants within man's soul a deep sense of health and peace with God.

"Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" ([Matthew 1:21](#)).

"And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" ([Luke 7:50](#)).

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" ([John 3:17](#)).

"These things I say, that ye might be saved....And ye will not come to me that ye might have life" ([John 5:34, 40](#)).

"I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" ([John 12:47](#)).

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

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" ([Ephes. 2:8-9](#)).

"They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" ([2 Thes. 2:10](#)).

"God hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" ([2 Tim. 1:9-10](#)).

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost" ([Titus 3:5](#)).

**3. Salvation means deliverance in the future from all evil and corruption: from aging and wasting away, deterioration and decay, death and hell. It is the complete redemption of man's spirit and body at the end of the world.** It is salvation from the wrath of God—salvation that saves a man from being separated from God eternally. It is the life and exaltation which believers will receive at the final triumph of Jesus Christ. It is the salvation that will keep a man safe and preserve him both in time and eternity.

**Man and his world are pictured as having a *seed of corruption* within their very nature, a seed of corruption that eats away causing them to.....**

1. age and waste away.
2. deteriorate and decay.
3. suffer destruction and die.

Again, man is hopeless. He cannot stop himself and his world from death and destruction, but God can. God can save both man and his world; God can deliver them from the terrible fate of death and destruction. This is the message of salvation.

God loves man and his world and wants to save them, so He sent His Son into the world to save them.

**Salvation is.....**

1. the complete redemption of man's body and soul in the future: a redemption that saves man from the process of aging and wasting away, deteriorating and decaying, dying and being condemned to hell.
2. the perfect deliverance from the wrath of God: a salvation that saves man from being separated from God eternally.
3. the gift of life and exaltation: a salvation that will be given to believers at the final triumph of Jesus Christ.
4. the presence of perfect assurance: a salvation of security and preservation both in time and eternity.

"We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope" ([Romans 8:23-24](#)).

"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him" ([1 Thes. 5:9-10](#)).

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me [save me, deliver me] unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" ([2 Tim. 4:18](#)).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" ([1 Peter 1:3-5](#)).

"Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" ([1 Peter 1:9](#)).

**4. Salvation means deliverance from enemies and dangers.** Man is pictured as walking in a world lurking with enemy after enemy and danger after danger. Man has to confront all kinds of enemies and dangers that attack both his body and soul, his mind and spirit. He faces all kinds of problems and difficulties, trials and temptations.

**No matter how much he may long for peace and security, he is forced to combat.....**

1. a hostile environment
2. a savage world of nature
3. an unknown universe
4. an uncertain future
5. unregulated urges
6. inevitable aging and dying
7. a lust for more and more (possessions, fame, wealth, power)
8. an evil pride and ego
9. greed and covetousness
10. unpreventable accidents
11. dreadful diseases

Man is seen as helpless in overcoming all the enemies and dangers that lurk in the shadows of this world. But God is not helpless—God can *save* man; He can gloriously deliver man as he journeys along the road of life. This is exactly what salvation means. God delivers man from the enemies and dangers that war against him. But note the next paragraph, a crucial point.

Salvation does not mean that God delivers man *from* experiencing difficulty and danger, not in this present world. God does not give a life free from the nature and circumstances of this world. What salvation does is deliver one through the difficulties and dangers of life.

**Salvation means that.....**

1. God gives *security and peace* of soul, no matter what happens.
2. God gives *safety* independent of circumstances and environment.
3. God gives *inward strength and courage* to bear the onslaught and attacks of danger.

"And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" ([Matthew 8:25-27](#)).

"When he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" ([Matthew 14:30-31](#)).

"[God] hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David....That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us" ([Luke 1:69, 71](#)).

"Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health [salvation]: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you" ([Acts 27:34](#)).

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" ([Hebrews 11:7](#)).

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation" ([2 Peter 3:10-15](#)).



5. Salvation means to make well, to heal, to restore to health, to make whole both physically and mentally.

**Man is pictured as a suffering creature, a creature who.....**

1. gets sick
2. becomes diseased
3. struggles against deformities
4. wears out from aging
5. suffers infirmities
6. has accidents

Salvation declares that Christ is concerned with man's suffering. Christ saves and delivers man, rescues and restores man in body as well as in spirit. He takes a man who suffers and makes him whole.

**"And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment: for she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole. But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour" ([Matthew 9:20-22](#)).**

**"And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way" ([Mark 10:51-52](#)).**

**"If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole" ([Acts 4:9-10](#)).**

**"And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" ([James 5:15](#)).**