



ACTS

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INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHY

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Biography:

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ACTS BACKGROUND INFORMATION

OVERVIEW OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION.

- I. Title.
- II. Author.
- III. Date of writing, period covered and chronology.
- IV. Apparent major purposes of the book.
- V. Importance and place of Acts in the New Testament.
- VI. Several ways of analyzing Acts.
- VII. Several outlines of the book.

I. TITLE.

- A. There is no inspired title - Luke did not give a title for the book.
- B. Thus, the titles that have been used have been given by uninspired men.
- C. The most common title is, The Acts of the Apostles - but this is not the most accurate title for several reasons:
 1. This record does not contain *all* of the acts of anyone.
 2. It excludes *many* of the acts of *many* of the apostles of Christ.
 3. In fact, other than the list in 1:13, this book contains only the mention of four apostles of Christ - James, John (12:2), Peter and Paul.
 4. Of these four, a significant amount of information is given only about two of those apostles - Peter and Paul.
- D. For these reasons a more accurate title would be "Acts of Apostles."
 1. This title makes it clear that the book contains *some* of the acts of *some* of the apostles of Christ.
 2. Accordingly, we will refer to the book either simply as Acts, the Book of Acts or Acts of Apostles.

II. AUTHOR.

- A. Of course, the author is the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:20-21; 1 Cor 2:9-13).
- B. But which *human* did God use to reveal this book to man?
- C. There is no direct indication of the human writer in the text.
- D. However, it is the almost unanimous conclusion of Bible students that Luke was the human agent used.
 - 1. One reason this conclusion has been drawn is that the writer of this book claims to have written an earlier account to a person named Theophilus (1:1).
 - a. Luke previously wrote his account of the gospel to a person named Theophilus (Lk 1:1-4).
 - b. This is a very good indication that Luke was the writer whom God chose.
 - c. In addition, Acts begins where Luke's account of the gospel ends, i.e., at the ascension of Christ into Heaven (Acts 1:2; Lk 24:51) and then gives a brief summary of the end of Luke's account of the gospel (Acts 1:2-4).
 - d. Thus, these two books are tied together very closely and show strong evidence of having been written by the same man.
 - e. For these reasons it is apparent that Luke was the human agent who God used to pen both of these books.
 - 2. Other reasons for believing that Luke was the human agent whom God used to reveal Acts are outlined in 3 and 4 below.
 - a. In addition, paragraph E below includes interesting information which indicates that Luke was a Gentile.
 - 3. A second reason for believing that Luke was the writer is that the style and content of both books are quite similar and closely related as seen in the following points:
 - a. Both books deal heavily with the Holy Spirit.

- (1) Luke's account of the gospel describes what Jesus did after the Spirit came upon Him and anointed Him for His ministry (Lk 4:18).
 - (2) Acts describes what the apostles did after the Spirit came upon them and empowered them for their ministry (Acts 1-2).
- b. Luke's gospel account gives the background of Christianity from the birth of Jesus to His resurrection. Acts gives the history of Christianity from Christ's resurrection to Paul's imprisonment in Rome.
 - c. Luke's gospel account pictures the training of the apostles while Acts pictures the result of that training.
 - d. Luke's gospel account ends with the great commission and the promise of the Holy Spirit. Acts begins with that point and shows what they accomplished.
4. Third, the "we" portions of Acts (16:1-17; 20:5-21:18; and 27:1-28:16) reveal that the writer was a close associate and traveling partner of Paul's. Luke fits this description better than any other man.
 - a. Luke was with Paul during his first imprisonment in Rome (Col 4:14; Phile 24).
 - b. By the time of Paul's second imprisonment in Rome he said, "only Luke is with me" (2 Tim 4:11).
 - c. This is especially significant when we notice that the writer of Acts accompanied Paul to his second imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28:10-16).
 - d. From these facts it is apparent that Luke was the writer.
 5. Fourth, early writers and writings indicated that Luke was the human agent whom God used to reveal the Book of Acts. Some examples include the following:
 - a. The Muratorian Fragment,
 - b. *Against Heresies* by Irenaeus,
 - c. And the writings of Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Tertullian, Jerome and Origen.
- E. One other interesting thing about Luke - he was probably a Gentile.

1. In Colossians 4:10-14, we find the following:
 - a. In verses 10 and 11 Paul lists his only three fellow workers who were of the circumcision, i.e., of Jewish background.
 - b. In verses 12-14 he lists *other* fellow workers.
 - (1) Since the three named in verses 10 and 11 were the only three of his fellow workers who were of Jewish background, then the other fellow workers listed in verses 12-14 must have been of *Gentile* background.
 - (2) Luke was mentioned as one of those fellow workers in verse 14.
 - (3) Therefore, Luke must have been a Gentile!
2. Also, in Acts 1:19 Luke refers to those dwelling in Jerusalem, i.e., those of Jewish background.
 - a. Then, in referring to those people of Jewish background he says, "...in *their* own language..."
 - b. Obviously then, Luke did not look on himself as one of Jewish background.
 - c. The only conclusion is that he was a Gentile.
3. If it is true that he was a Gentile he was the *only* Gentile that God used to reveal a part of the New Testament!

F. Summary of reasons for believing that Luke was the human agent:

1. The earlier account to Theophilus.
2. Similarity of style and content of Luke and Acts.
3. The "we" passages indicate a close associate and traveling companion of Paul's.
4. Early writers and writings.

III. DATE OF WRITING, PERIOD COVERED and CHRONOLOGY.

- A. There is no inspired answer to the question of when the book was written.

- B. However, most agree that it was written in 62 or 63 A.D. for reasons indicated below.
1. The book ends rather abruptly just briefly noting Paul's two year imprisonment in Rome (28:30-31) which would have ended at about 62 or 63 A.D.
 - a. There is no mention made of what happened to Paul after this.
 - b. If the book had been completed at a later date it seems logical that Luke would have informed us of what happened to Paul.
 - c. Also, since Luke was with Paul (2 Tim 4:11) he would have had time during this two year period to collect and verify information and write this accurate record.
 2. Another reason supporting the date of 62 or 63 A.D. is that there is no mention made of such significant later events as follows:
 - a. The great fire and persecution of Christians by Emperor Nero in 64 A.D.
 - b. Paul's death (which many estimate was in 68 A.D.).
 - c. And, the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.
 - d. Had the book been written after any of these events it seems certain that they would have been included.
 3. On the basis of these two facts, i.e., the abrupt ending and the exclusion of information concerning later significant historical events, we conclude that the book was written around 62-63 A.D.
- C. The period covered in the Book of Acts:
1. Approximately 29-30 years - from the ascension of Christ (33 A.D.) to Paul's second year in prison (62-63 A.D.).
 2. The Roman emperors who reigned during this period were as follows:
 - a. Tiberius (14-37 A.D.).
 - b. Caligula (37-41).
 - c. Claudius (41-54).

d. Nero (54-68).

D. An approximate chronology for the Book of Acts with the applicable chapters indicated in parentheses is shown below.

A.D.	33	Establishment of the church in Jerusalem (1-6).
	35	Stoning of Stephen, dispersion of the church (7-8).
	35	Conversion of Saul (9).
	38	Paul's first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion (9).
	40	Conversion of Cornelius the Gentile (10).
	42	Reception of Gentiles into the church at Antioch (11).
	44	Paul's second visit to Jerusalem (12).
	45-48	First evangelistic journey (Paul and Barnabas) (13-14).
	50	Meeting at Jerusalem (15).
	50-53	Second evangelistic journey (Paul and Silas) (16-18).
	54-57	Third evangelistic journey (Paul) (19-20).
	58	Paul reached Jerusalem (20-23).
	58-60	Paul in Caesarea (24-26).
	60-61	Paul's voyage to Rome (27-28).
	61-63	Paul in Rome for two years (28).

IV. APPARENT MAJOR PURPOSES OF THE BOOK OF ACTS.

- A. One purpose was to present examples of cases of conversion of sinners through the preaching of the gospel.
- B. Another purpose was to document such things about the Lord's church as the following:
 - 1. Its establishment,
 - 2. Its simple organization,
 - 3. The day of worship and some of the avenues of worship and
 - 4. Its growth.
- C. A third purpose was to paint a beautiful picture of the early Christians. These people:
 - 1. Were completely dedicated to the Lord, willing to forsake all, even their own lives for the Lord, e.g., Stephen (ch. 7) and James (ch. 12).
 - 2. Were united in doctrine (2:42; 4:32, etc.).

3. Loved each other enough to sacrifice for and help each other, including material needs (2:44f; 4:32-37).
 4. Were fervently evangelistic (5:28,42; 8:4; 14-21).
 5. Were people of prayer (2:42; 4:24ff; 12:15,22).
 6. Gladly received and studied the word of God (2:41; 17:11).
 7. Shined as a light for the Lord (2:47; 4:13; 17:6).
 8. Spoke the truth, even when it hurt (20:20,26-27).
 9. Were so dear to each other that they wept when they had to part from each other (20:37-38).
 10. Worshiped God in spirit and truth (2:42; 20:7).
 11. Had the courage to obey God rather than men when there was a conflict (5:29).
 12. Were filled with the joy of being a Christian (2:46; 8:39; 16:34).
 13. Were satisfied to be just Christians (11:26).
 14. Rejoiced to be counted worthy to suffer for Jesus (5:41; 14:22; 16:23-25).
- D. A fourth purpose was to show that Christianity is the religion for all men of every country.
- Included in that purpose was to show that the gospel is God's power to convert people from *all* races, countries, backgrounds, social status, occupations, etc.
- E. Another goal was to present valuable information on the work of the Holy Spirit.
- F. A sixth purpose was to demonstrate the reality of persecution of Christians.
- This included the giving of examples of commendable attitudes and actions in the face of such persecution.
- G. A seventh goal was to show the faithfulness of God and His beloved Son in the fulfillment of so many promises and prophecies.
- H. And finally, a purpose was to show the church of the Lord in *conflict* as a result of preaching the gospel.

1. And then to show her in *triumph*, victorious over all obstacles.
2. Remember Matthew 28:18-19.
3. Examples of conflict/triumph cycles in the Book of Acts:

SECTION: CONFLICT	TRIUMPH
1. 1:1-6:7 Persecution Hypocrisy Discrimination	Gospel preached Discipline / Fear Multitudes added Disciples multiplied greatly / Priests added
2. 6:8-9:31 Persecution by Saul	Peace / Edified / Multiplied
3. 9:32-12:24 Herod kills James, imprisons Peter	God kills Herod / frees Peter / Word grew and multiplied
4. 12:25-16:5 Jealous Jews stir up problems / Paul stoned / Jewish Christians try to bind the Law / Paul and Barnabas disagree	Churches strengthened in faith and increased in number daily
5. 16:6-19:20 Paul and Silas imprisoned under false charges / Jealous Jews stir up problems / Athens - Divine Wisdom versus human wisdom	Word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed
6. 19:21-28:31 Riot in Ephesus / Paul warned of danger in Jerusalem / Jews seize Paul to kill him / Paul on trial and in prison in Caesarea / His shipwreck and being bitten by a viper / Paul imprisoned in Rome	Paul's opportunities to speak the gospel to rulers and guards / He preaches the kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, with confidence, no one forbidding him!

4. Always remember Matthew 28:20!

V. THE IMPORTANCE AND PLACE OF THE BOOK OF ACTS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

- A. Acts shows us how the apostles of Christ and other disciples responded to the "great commission" given by Christ.

For example, see Acts 2:14f; 3:12ff; 4:8ff; 5:28,42; 6:7; 8:4; 12:12; 14-21.

B. Acts is also a very valuable link between the four accounts of the gospel and the twenty one epistles.

1. That connection between the gospel accounts, Acts and the Epistles can be seen in several ways:

First, in the organization of the New Testament:

Section	Book(s) Included	General Subject
Gospel accounts	Matthew-John	The life of Christ
History	Acts	How to become a Christian
Epistles	Romans-Jude	How to live as a Christian
Prophecy	Revelation	The hope of a Christian

b. Second, Acts serves as background for at least eight of the Epistles.

Epistle	Background Chapter in Acts
Romans	2 and 28
1 and 2 Corinthians	18
Galatians	13 and 14
Ephesians	19 and 20
Philippians	16
1 and 2 Thessalonians	17

C. A third important thing about Acts is that it presents convincing evidence for Paul's claim of apostleship, e.g.,:

1. Jesus' miraculous appearance to Paul and selection of him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles (Chs. 9, 22, 26).
2. The amazing miracles he was able to work by the power of the Holy Spirit (e.g., 14:8-10; 19:11-12; 20:9-12).
3. The striking similarities between the teaching and the lives of Peter and Paul as shown below:

a. **THEIR LIVES:**

PETER

1. First sermon (2)
2. Lame healed (3)
3. Simon, the sorcerer (8)

PAUL

1. First sermon (13)
2. Lame healed (14:8)
3. Elymas, the sorcerer (13)

4. Influence of shadow (5)
5. Laying on of hands (8)
6. Peter was worshiped (10)
7. Tabitha raised from dead (9)
8. Peter imprisoned (12)

4. Influence of handkerchief (19)
5. Laying on of hands (19)
6. Paul was worshiped (14)
7. Eutychus raised from dead (20)
8. Paul imprisoned (28)

b. **THEIR TEACHING:**

	PETER	PAUL
1. Facts about Christ:		
a. Death	2:23,36; 10:39	13:28; 1 Corinthians15:3
b. Burial	2:27,31	13:29; 1 Corinthians15:4
c. Resurrection	2:24,32; 10:20	13:30; 1 Corinthians15:4
d. Reigning as King and Lord	2:36; 1 Pet 3:22	17:3; 18:5,28
2. Commands:		
a. Obedience	10:34-35	17:30-31
b. Believe	10:34	16:31
c. Repent	2:38; 3:19	17:30-31
d. Be baptized	2:38; 10:48	16:33; 18:8
e. Live godly	2:40	14:22; Romans 6:4
3. Promises:		
a. Forgiveness	2:38	13:38
4. Gentiles:		
a. Afar off	2:39; 10:34-35	13:46-48
D. A fourth important thing about Acts is that, like Genesis in the Old Testament, it is a book of <i>beginnings</i> :		
1. Of gospel preaching (2:14ff).		

2. Of the Lord's church (2:1-47).
3. Of baptism with the Holy Spirit and indwelling (2:1-4; 10:44-46; 5:32).
4. Of salvation through Christ (2:22-47).
5. Of worldwide evangelism (8:4).
6. Of persecution for Christians (4 and 5).
7. Of the Lordship of Jesus (2:32-36).

E. Summary of importance of Acts and its place in the New Testament:

1. Shows early church's response to the Great Commission.
2. It is a valuable link between the four accounts of the gospel and the twenty one epistles.
3. It provides convincing evidence of Paul's apostleship.
4. It is a book of beginnings.

VI. SEVERAL DIFFERENT OVERVIEWS OF THE BOOK OF ACT - DIFFERENT WAYS OF ANALYZING THE CONTENTS OF THE BOOK:

A. By record of *growth*:

1. Acts 2:41 - 3,000 souls.
2. Acts 4:4 - number of men about 5,000.
3. Acts 5:14 - believers increasingly added - multitudes.
4. Acts 6:7 - number of disciples multiplied greatly - great many priests obedient.
5. Acts 9:31 - churches ... were multiplied.
6. Acts 12:24 - word of God grew and multiplied.
7. Acts 16:5 - churches ... increased in number daily.
8. Acts 19:20 - word of God grew mightily and prevailed.

- B. By *characters* whose activities are described in the most during different periods in the book:
1. Peter - 1-5; 10-11
 2. Stephen - chapters 6-7
 3. Barnabas, Philip and Saul - 8-9, 12-28
- C. By the work of the *Holy Spirit*:
1. The fulfillment of the promise of the Father to the apostles concerning the Holy Spirit (Ch. 1 and 2).
 2. The results of that outpouring among the Jews and Gentiles (Ch. 3-28).
- D. By *geography* (central places):
1. Jerusalem (chapters 1-12,15).
 2. Antioch (13:1-14:26; 15:36-21:15).
 3. Paul at Jerusalem, Caesarea and Rome (21:16-28:31).
- E. By six sections showing *progress* in fulfilling the *great commission*:
1. Acts 1-6:7 - The church at Jerusalem and the preaching of Peter. It finishes with the summary, "The word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem; and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith."
 2. Acts 6:8-9:31 - The spread of Christianity through Palestine, the martyrdom of Stephen and the preaching in Samaria. This section ends with the summary, "So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was built up; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it was multiplied."
 3. Acts 9:32-12:24 - The conversion of Paul, the extension of the church to Antioch and the conversion of Cornelius. Its summary is, "The word of God grew and multiplied."
 4. Acts 12:25-16:5 - The extension of the church through Asia Minor and the preaching tour of Galatia. It ends, "So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily."

5. Acts 16:6-19:20 - The extension of the church in Europe and the work of Paul in great Gentile cities like Corinth and Ephesus. Its summary reads, "So the word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily."
6. Acts 19:21-28:31 - The arrival of Paul in Rome and his imprisonment there. It ends with Paul, "preaching the Kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered."

F. By *progress* in fulfilling Acts 1:8 (preview this verse):

Focus	In Jerusalem		In Judea and Samaria		To the end of the earth
Reference	1:1.....3:1.....8:5.....13:1....21:17..28:31				
Division	Establishment of the church	Progress of the church	Expansion of the church		Paul's Three journeys Paul's trials
Topic	Jews		Samaritans		Gentiles
	Peter		Philip		Paul
Location	Jerusalem		Judea and Samaria		End of the earth
Time	2 Years A.D. 33-35		13 Years A.D. 35-48		14 Years A.D. 48-62

G. Summary of overviews of the Book of Acts:

1. By record of growth,
2. By characters,
3. By work of the Holy Spirit,
4. By geography,
5. By progress in fulfilling the great commission and
6. By progress in fulfilling Acts 1:8.

VII. SEVERAL OUTLINES OF THE BOOK OF ACTS:

ACTS OUTLINE (OVERVIEW)

- I. Part One: The church established in Jerusalem 1-7
- II. Part Two: The church scattered to Judea and Samaria 8-12
- III. Part Three: The church spread to the uttermost parts 13-28

ACTS OUTLINE (BRIEF)

- I. Part One: The church established in Jerusalem 1-7
 - A. The church began with power 1-2
 - B. The church grew in Jerusalem 3-7
- II. Part Two: The church scattered to Judea and Samaria 8-12
 - A. The church extended geographically..... 8-9
 - B. The church expanded racially..... 10-12
- III. Part Three: The church spread to the uttermost parts 13-28
 - A. First evangelistic journey (Saul and Barnabas) 13-14
 - B. Second evangelistic journey (Paul and Silas)..... 15-18:22
 - C. Third evangelistic journey (Paul) 18:23-21:14
 - D. Paul in the hands of enemies 21:15-28:31

ACTS OUTLINE (BASIC)

- I. Part One: The church established in Jerusalem 1-7
 - A. The church began with power 1-2
 - 1. Waiting for the promise 1

2.	The promise fulfilled and the church established	2
B.	The church grew in Jerusalem	3-7
1.	Miracle of Peter and John / Opposition of Sadducees	3:1-4:31
2.	Wrestling with a social problem / Ananias and Sapphira lie	4:32-5:11
3.	Prosperity and renewed opposition.....	5:12-42
4.	Appointment of the seven	6:1-7
5.	Pharisees aroused by Stephen / Stephen's death	6:8-7:60
II.	Part Two: The church scattered to Judea and Samaria	8-12
A.	The church extended geographically.....	8-9
1.	Expansion of the church in Philip's work	8:1-40
2.	Conversion of Saul / Peter raises Dorcas	9:1-43
B.	The church expanded racially.....	10-12
1.	Door open to Gentiles	10:1-11:30
2.	Persecution from civil government.....	12
III.	Part Three: The church spread to the uttermost parts	13-28
A.	First evangelistic journey (Saul and Barnabas)	13-14
1.	Call of Barnabas and Saul	13:1-3
2.	First evangelistic journey	13:4-14:28
B.	Second evangelistic journey (Paul and Silas).....	15-18:22
1.	The meeting in Jerusalem.....	15:1-35
2.	Second evangelistic journey	15:36-18:22
C.	Third evangelistic journey (Paul).....	18:23-21:14
D.	Paul in the hands of enemies	21:15-28:31

1. In Jerusalem 21:15-23:30
2. In Caesarea 23:31-26:32
3. Paul goes to Rome 27:1-28:15
4. Paul waits two years on Nero..... 28:16-31

ACTS OUTLINE (DETAILED)

- I. Part One: The church established in Jerusalem 1-7
 - A. The church began with power 1-2
 1. Waiting for the promise 1
 - a. Introduction..... 1:1-2
 - b. The promise given 1:3-8
 - c. Ascension of Christ..... 1:9-11
 - d. Apostles in Jerusalem 1:12-14
 - e. Appointment of Matthias..... 1:15-26
 2. The promise fulfilled and the church established 2
 - a. Apostles filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues..... 2:1-13
 - b. The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicts the crowd..... 2:14-36
 - (1) Inspired interpretation of these events 2:14-21
 - (2) Jesus: Attested by God; killed by Jews; raised by the Father..... 2:22-24
 - (3) Jesus: The proof from prophecy 2:25-32
 - (4) Jesus: Exalted and enthroned..... 2:33-36
 - c. Response of some in the crowd / Inspired conditions of

pardon	2:37-41
d. The church continues steadfastly	2:42-47
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- c. For two years, Paul preaches the Kingdom of God..... 28:30-31

ACTS EXPOSITION

I. Part one: (1-7) THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED IN JERUSALEM.

A. (1:2) THE CHURCH BEGAN WITH POWER

1. (1) WAITING FOR THE PROMISE

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER 1

- a. Acts 1-2 Introduction.
- b. Acts 3-8 The promise given.
- c. Acts 9-11 Ascension of Christ.
- d. Acts 12-14 Apostles in Jerusalem.
- e. Acts 15-26 Appointment of Matthias.

a. (1:1-2) INTRODUCTION

1:1

1. "The former account I made" is a clear reference to Luke's account of the gospel, which was a record of what Jesus began "to do and teach."
2. "Theophilus" comes from two Greek words: Θεός - God, and φίλος - to love; thus, literally, "lover of God!"
 - a. In Luke 1:3 he is referred to as "most excellent" - probably an indication that he was a high government official (cf. Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25).
 - b. Acts could have been written to *convert* Theophilus, or to *confirm* his belief and actions in becoming a Christian.

1:2

1. The end of Luke's account of the gospel was the day when Jesus ascended back into heaven (when He was "taken up").
 - a. Luke 24:50-51.
 - b. Compare with Acts 1:9-11.
2. This was after He, through the Holy Spirit, had given commandments.
 - a. Literally - had given *the* commandment!
 - b. This refers to the "Great Commandment" or commission:
 - (1) Luke 24:44-48.
 - (2) Compare with Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18-20.
3. Jesus gave that great commandment to His apostles "whom He had chosen".
 - a. Notice a special qualification of an apostle of Christ - *he had to be chosen by Christ*. None can meet that qualification today!
 - b. Compare with 1:21-22.
4. Summary of 1:1-2, Introduction:
 - a. In verse 1 Luke refers to his account of the gospel as a record of what Jesus did and taught.
 - b. In verse 2 we learn Luke's account ended with two significant events:

- (1) Christ's giving the great commandment to His chosen apostles,
- (2) And His ascension back into heaven.

b. (1:3-8) THE PROMISE GIVEN

1:3

1. After Jesus died He arose from the dead on the third day according to the scriptures (1 Cor 15:4) and lived among His chosen apostles.
 - a. And, He confirmed the validity of His resurrection by *many* infallible proofs.
 - (1) There were recorded *thirteen* different appearances of the Lord to His disciples after His resurrection, many of which are listed in 1 Corinthians 15:5-8.
 - (2) "Infallible" here means that which could not deceive and that which could not be mistaken. How were these proofs infallible?
 - (a) First, the apostles did not expect the resurrection (Jn 20:25; Lk 24:1-4, 19-24). Therefore, there was no delusion which resulted from their expectation of seeing Him. In other words, they were not looking forward to His resurrection so much that they imagined it!
 - (b) Second, they were intimately familiar with Jesus after living with Him for over three years. Thus, they could not be deceived concerning His identity.
 - (c) Third, He appeared to *all eleven* of the apostles. This is significant because it might have been possible to deceive one or several of them, but *not* eleven.
 - (d) Fourth, Jesus lived with them for forty days after His resurrection. There was plenty of time to prove His identity, or to disprove it if this was a deception.
 - (e) And fifth, the apostles saw Jesus at various places and at times which there could be no deception.
 - b. What else but Jesus' resurrection could explain the change in behavior of the apostles after His death?!
 - (1) Mark 16:9-16.
 - (2) Acts 5:40-42.
 - c. Is it not wonderful for the Christian to have this certainty (i.e., infallible proofs) about Jesus' resurrection?!
 - (1) Philippians 3:10.
 - (2) 1 Peter 1:3-4.
2. Not only was Jesus *seen* by His apostles, but they also *heard* Him speak!
 - a. And the topic was one of Jesus' favorites - the Kingdom of God.
 - (1) Matthew 4:17.

1:4

1. Jesus told His apostles to wait in a specific place - Jerusalem.
2. There, He told them, they would receive the promise of the Father which Jesus had given them previously.

3. This promise was for the apostles to receive divine guidance to reveal the New Testament through the Holy Spirit.
 - a. Luke 24:49.
 - b. In John 13-16 we see some more specific details concerning this promise.
 - c. But, before we study those details it is very important to establish from the scriptures *to whom* Jesus promised these things.
 - d. The following verses show clearly that Jesus promised these powers to *His apostles* and *only* to His apostles:
 - (1) Matthew 26:20-21.
 - (2) John 13:1-4, 21.
 - (3) John 13:6,23,26,36; 14:5,8,22.
 - e. Now, with that fact clearly in mind, let us study the details of Jesus' promises to His apostles concerning the Holy Spirit:
 - (1) John 14:16-17,26.
 - (2) John 15:26-27.
 - (3) John 16:7-14.

1:5

1. Jesus began by mentioning John's baptism. Here are several significant points concerning that baptism:
 - a. It was a commandment of God (Lk 7:29-30).
 - b. It was part of the preparation for the coming of the Messiah (Jn 1:31; Lk 3:3-6).
 - c. It was administered by John (Mk 1:5).
 - d. The subjects of this baptism were penitent Jews (Mk 1:4-5).
 - e. It was a baptism in water (Jn 1:26).
 - f. It was an immersion (Mk 1:10; Jn 3:23).
 - g. It was replaced by the baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1-5).
2. In this verse Jesus also promised the baptism with the Holy Spirit to a small group of people.
 - a. He said "you" shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. But, to whom was He talking on this occasion?
 - b. This context clearly shows without one doubt that Jesus was talking to:
 - (1) His *apostles* whom He had chosen (v. 2).
 - (2) His *apostles* to whom He presented Himself alive after His resurrection (v. 3).
 - (3) His *apostles* whom He had commanded not to depart from Jerusalem and to whom He had made the promise (v. 4).
 - (4) His *apostles* who received the baptism with the Holy Spirit not many days from this promise by Jesus (1:26-2:4).
 - (5) His *apostles* who miraculously spoke God's word in other languages which they had never learned (2:4,6,11,14,37).
3. Thus, we learn the apostles of Christ would receive the promise mentioned in verse 4 above when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit.

4. We also learn this very specific promise to these unique men would be fulfilled not many days from when Jesus went back to heaven - *not to be continued* for hundreds or thousands of years after Jesus spoke!
5. A very important parallel passage concerning baptism with the Holy Spirit is Mathew 3:1-12.
 - a. Although we do not have time to study that passage in detail, the following major points are found there:
 - (1) Two baptisms are described in these verses.
 - (a) One is the baptism of fire. This represents eternal punishment in the flames of hell for those who will not obey God's commandments.
 - (b) The other is the baptism with the Holy Spirit which was reserved for Jesus' specially chosen apostles.
 - (2). It is very important to notice that *Jesus* would be the administrator of both of these baptisms.
 - (3). That means that no *man* could or would administer the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Those who have obtained the written notes for this course will find a more detailed analysis of this passage in the notes on this passage.
 - c. A more detailed analysis is as follows:
 - (1) 1-4 John the Immerser preached repentance and the Kingdom of Heaven being near. This was to prepare the way for the Lord.
 - (2) 5-6 Many obedient people came to be baptized by John, confessing their sins.
 - (3) 7-9 Another group came, consisting of Pharisees and Sadducees. John refused to baptize them calling them vipers and demanding they repent.
 - (4) 10 John described in two ways eternal destruction for those who refuse to repent.
 - (a) First, he represented eternal destruction by the axe laid to the root of the trees (representing disobedient people - in this case, the Jews). Obviously, this would bring death to the trees.
 - (b) Second, he described unproductive trees (again representing disobedient people) being cut down and burned in the *fire* (representing punishment in the flames of hell).
 - (5) Skip verse 11 for a moment and look at verse 12. John described Jesus separating the wheat (representing obedient people) from the chaff (representing disobedient people).
 - (a) The wheat is placed in the barn (representing reward).
 - (b) The chaff is burned with unquenchable *fire* (again representing punishment in the flames of hell).
 - (6) In summary then, before we study verse 11, we see in these verses two groups of people and two eternal destinies described graphically:
 - (a) The first group is people who *will* obey God's commands. They will be rewarded.
 - (b) The second group is people who *will not* obey God's commands. They will be punished by being burned with fire that will not ever be put out.

- (7) With that background in mind let us study verse 11.
- (a) John described a mighty one whose sandals he was not worthy to wear - an obvious reference to the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (b) Next, John said Jesus would baptize those in the audience with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
 - (c) But, since fire stands for punishment in verse 10 (the verse before this one) and in verse 12, (the verse after this one) then we would expect it to stand for punishment in verse 11 - and that is exactly the case!
 - (d) Thus, in this verse, Jesus described two different baptisms; one with the Holy Spirit and one with fire!
 - 1. Since Jesus later specified His apostles as those to be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:2-5), some of those who would later become apostles must have been in John's audience that day.
 - 2. Matthew 3:11 contains their first promise that they would be baptized in the Holy Spirit.
 - 3. On the other hand, for those disobedient ones who refused to repent, Jesus promised them that they would be punished by being *immersed in fire* - a horrifying punishment!

1:6

1. The apostles asked Jesus if He would now restore the kingdom to Israel. This implies at least two things:
 - a. First, it implies the apostles still did not understand that Christ's Kingdom or church would be *spiritual* in nature.
 - (1) They still expected the kingdom to be a physical or political kingdom (cf. Mt 20:20-21; Jn 6:15).
 - (2) Jesus did not correct their misunderstanding on this occasion.
 - b. The second thing implied by the apostles' question is that the Kingdom had not been established yet - this is a very important fact!
 - (1) Isaiah had predicted its establishment in the last days (Isa 2:2-4).
 - (2) Daniel had predicted its establishment in the time of the Roman rulers (Dan 2:44).
 - (3) John the Immerser said it was "at hand," or near in the first century (Mt 3:2).
 - (4) So did Jesus (Mt 4:17).
 - (5) It was still in the future when Jesus spoke the words recorded in Matthew 16:18-19.
 - (6) Joseph of Arimethea was still waiting for it after Jesus' death (Mk 15:43).
 - (7) And, in this verse, after Christ's resurrection His apostles were still waiting for its establishment!
 - (8) Obviously then, John the Immerser *did not* establish it, because he had died before this time (Mt 14:3-12).

1:7

1. Jesus responded to their question by telling them that they did not need to know when God would establish the Kingdom. The time was under God's control, and it was His business (cf. Deut 29:29)!

1:8

1. Jesus told His disciples four very important things they *could* know and *needed* to know:
 - a. First, they would receive *power*;
 - b. Second, that power would be received when the *Holy Spirit* came upon them,
 - c. Third, they would then be His *witnesses*, and
 - d. Fourth, they would start in *Jerusalem* and move to the region of *Judea*, then *Samaria* and then to the *end of the earth*.
2. Let us discuss these four things in more detail:
 - a. First, the apostles would receive *power*.
 - (1) δύνανται - the enabling power or ability to perform something.
 - (2) In this context this is the power for the apostles to work miracles to carry out the great commission which Jesus had given to them.
 - (3) This included the ability to reveal God's word through inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Jn 14-16).
 - (4) And it included the ability to confirm that word by miracles through the power of the Holy Spirit (Mk 16:17-20; Heb 2:3-4).
 - b. Second, Jesus said this power would be received when the *Holy Spirit* came upon His specially chosen apostles.
 - (1) This would be the fulfillment of the promise of the Father and the baptism with the Holy Spirit mentioned by Jesus earlier (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:4-5).
 - (2) This coming of power was also a key indicator of the time of establishment of Jesus' Kingdom as seen in Mark 9:1.
 - (3) Remember our study of Matthew 16:18-19 where we learned Jesus used the words "church" and "kingdom" to refer to the same spiritual institution.
 - (4) With that thought in mind let us read and analyze what Jesus said in Mark 9:1. which is a critically important verse on the subject of the Kingdom (church).
 - (a) First, Jesus said there were some people in His audience that day who would not die until they saw the Kingdom come.
 1. This tells us without a doubt that it would *not* be hundreds or thousands of years before His Kingdom (church) was established, as some teach today!
 2. And it tells us it *would* certainly be established within 70 or 80 years of the time when Jesus spoke, or possibly before then.
 - (b) Second, Jesus said the Kingdom (church) would come with *power*.
 1. The word translated "power" in Mark 9:1 is the very same word translated "power" in Acts 1:8!
 2. And that *power* is the key link which connects, or draws together, the kingdom (church) in Mark 9:1 and the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles of Christ in Acts 1:8.
 - (c) Now that we have seen that concept *visualized* on the board, let us summarize with *words* what we have studied concerning this power and the kingdom in Matthew 16:18-19; Mark 9:1; and Acts 1:8.

1. First, Jesus used the terms “kingdom” and “church” interchangeably to refer to the same spiritual institution (Mt 16:18-19).
 2. Second, the *kingdom (church)* would be established with *power* (Mk 9:1).
 3. Third, that *power* would be received by Christ’s apostles when the *Holy Spirit* came upon them (Acts 1:8).
 4. Combining these verses we learn that the *kingdom (church)* would come with *power* and that *power* would be received by Christ’s apostles when the *Holy Spirit* came upon them.
 5. Therefore, we know that the kingdom (church) would be established when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles of Christ.
 6. Thus, all we have to do to determine when Christ’s kingdom (church) was established is to watch for the time when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles of Christ.
 7. And that answer will be given to us in the very next chapter in this book!
- c. The third thing Jesus told His apostles in 1:8 was they would be His *witnesses*.
- (1) A witness is a person who sees something and, on that basis, seeks to confirm a truth by his testimony.
 - (2) This was another one of the qualifications of an apostle of Christ, i.e., to have seen Jesus and to be willing to give testimony of what they actually saw.
 - (3) In verse 22 even more specific emphasis will be placed on the need for an apostle to be a witness of Jesus’ *resurrection from the dead*.
 - (4) Again, it is quite obvious no one who is alive today can meet these qualifications!
 - (5) Christ had worked with His apostles for over three years to prepare them for this unique work.
 - (6) And, He was going to complete their special preparation for this unique work through the *power* of the *Holy Spirit* which He promised them in this verse.
 - (a) John 14:26.
 - (b) John 15:26-27.
 - (7) The apostles began to serve as witnesses for Christ in Acts 2:14ff.
 - (8) In that section they began to testify on the basis of personal observation what Jesus did and taught.
 - (9) It is interesting to notice the original word translated “witnesses” (μάρτυρες).
 - (a) We get the English word “martyr” from this word.
 - (b) A martyr is one who chooses to suffer or die rather than give up his faith!
 - (c) That is just what the apostles of Christ did and it is also what many since that time have done.
 - (d) They chose to teach and preach Jesus even if it meant suffering or dying for Him!

- (e) Compare with Revelation 2:10.
- d. The fourth thing Jesus told His apostles in 1:8, was the *geographical order* with which they were to carry out Christ's great commandment. They were to begin in *Jerusalem*, then go to the region of *Judea*, then to *Samaria*, then to the *end of the earth*.
- (1) Jesus had given them the *general* realm of their work in verses like Mark 16:15 and Matthew 28:19.
 - (2) Now He gives them more *specific* guidance on where to begin and continue their work for Him.
 - (3) Also, as we have seen in our background information, this geographical order serves as an outline for the book of Acts:
 - I. Part One: (1-7) The church established in *Jerusalem*.
 - II. Part Two: (8-12) The church scattered to *Judea* and *Samaria*.
 - III. Part Three: (13-28) The church spread to *the uttermost parts*.
 - (4) Review map to see geographical order.
 - (5) But, *why* did the Lord charge His apostles to proceed in this order? J. W. McGarvey in his *Original Commentary on Acts* gives the following logical answer:

“It is not to be imagined that this arrangement of their labors was dictated by partiality for the Jews, or was merely designed to fulfill prophecy. It was rather foretold through the prophets, because there were good reasons why it should be so. One reason, suggested by commentators generally, for beginning in Jerusalem, was the propriety of first vindicating the claims of Jesus in the same city in which he was condemned. But the controlling reason was doubtless this: the most devout portion of the Jewish people, that portion who had been most influenced by the preparatory preaching of John and Jesus, was always collected at the great annual festivals, and hence the most *successful* beginning could there be made. Next to these, the inhabitants of the rural districts of Judea were best prepared, by the same influences, for the gospel; then the Samaritans, who had seen some of the miracles of Jesus; and last of all, the Gentiles. Thus the rule of *success* was made their guide from place to place, and it became the custom of the apostles, even in heathen lands, to preach the gospel ‘first to the Jew’ and ‘then to the Gentile.’ The result fully justified the rule; for the most signal triumph of the gospel was in Judea, and the most successful approach to the Gentiles of every region was through the Jewish synagogue.”

3. Summary of 1:3-8, The promise given:
 - a. In verse 3 we see that Jesus gave infallible proof of His resurrection by many appearances among His followers for forty days:
 - (1) He was *seen* by them.
 - (2) And He was *heard* speaking about the kingdom.

- b. In verse 4 He told His apostles to wait in Jerusalem until they received the promise of the Father which He had given them earlier.
- c. In verse 5 He said that promise would be fulfilled in the near future when the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit.
- d. In verse 6 the apostles asked the Christ if He would restore the kingdom to Israel at that time.
- e. In verse 7 Jesus said they did not need to know that answer because it was under the Father's control.
- f. Then, in verse 8, Jesus told them four things they could know and needed to know:
 - (1) They would receive *power*.
 - (2) That power would be received when the *Holy Spirit* came upon them.
 - (3) They would then be His *witnesses*.
 - (4) They would begin in *Jerusalem*, then go to the region of *Judea*, then to *Samaria* and then to the *end of the earth*.

c. (1:9-11) ASCENSION OF CHRIST

1:9

1. Jesus ascended into a cloud out of the apostles' sight.

1:10

1. Two men in white clothing stood by the apostles who looked steadfastly toward heaven.
 - a. For several reasons many speculate that these two men were actually angels.
 - (1) They brought a message which obviously came from God.
 - (2) Luke used a similar description in his account of the gospel (Lk 24:4).
 - (3) But, notice how John described the same beings (Jn 20:12).

1:11

1. The two men (angels) addressed the apostles as "men of Galilee." This designation of Christ's apostles will be particularly important when we get to chapter 2.
2. Then they announced that Jesus would come again *in like manner* as they saw Him go into heaven.
3. But, what is the significance of referring to His second coming as being "in like manner" as His ascension?
 - a. He ascended *visibly*. So shall He return *visibly*, not secretly or invisibly as many teach today (Rev 1:7)!
 - b. He disappeared in a *cloud*. So shall He return *in the clouds* (Rev 1:7; 1 Thess 4:16-17).
 - c. Angels appeared at His ascension. So shall they appear at His second coming (Mt 25:31; 2 Thess 1:7-9).
 - d. He ascended in *bodily* form. He shall come again in some kind of bodily form, although we do not know exactly what form that will be (Phil 3:20-21; 1 Jn 3:2).
4. While studying these verses, it is helpful to notice the importance of Christ's ascension back into heaven. He had to return to heaven to:

- a. Send the Holy Spirit to the apostles (Jn 16:7),
 - b. Reign as King on the throne of His eternal kingdom (Dan 7:13-14; Acts 2:32-36),
 - c. Present His atoning blood as the “once for all” sacrifice for sins (Heb 9:12-14, 24-26) and
 - d. Be the Christian’s mediator, advocate and intercessor thus giving us boldness to approach the throne of grace (Heb 4:14-16; 1 Tim 2:5; 1 Jn 2:1-2).
5. Also, notice the certainty of Jesus’ second coming:
- a. Jesus said He would come again (Jn 14:28).
 - b. Angels said He would come again (this verse).
 - c. Apostles said He would come again (1 Thess 4:16-18; 2 Pet 3:4ff).
6. Summary of 1:9-11 - Ascension of Christ:
- a. In verse 9 Jesus ascended into a cloud and out of the sight of His apostles.
 - b. In verse 10 two men (angels) stood by the apostles as they looked steadfastly toward heaven.
 - c. In verse 11 the angels announced that Jesus would come again in the like manner as He ascended.

d. (1:12-14) APOSTLES IN JERUSALEM

1:12

1. The apostles returned from Mt. Olivet to Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded them (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:4).
- a. “A Sabbath day’s journey” - approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile.

1:13

1. In this verse the fourth listing of the apostles in the New Testament is given. Please notice the following interesting facts about these lists:
- a. No two are in the same order.
 - b. Peter is listed first in all four. However, this fact is not to be used to exalt Peter above the other apostles.
 - (1) By his own admission, he was just *an* apostle of Christ, *not* the chief apostle (1 Pet 1:1).
 - (2) He was just a *fellow elder* among elders, *not* the chief elder (bishop) (1 Pet 5:1).
 - (3) The other apostles were given the same authority as Peter to bind and loose God’s will through His word (Mt16:18-19; 18:18).
 - (4) He instructed those who sinned to pray to *God*, not to him (Peter), for forgiveness of sins (Acts 8:20-22).
 - (5) He refused to accept men bowing down to him and worshipping him (Acts 10:24-26).
 - (6) Paul rebuked him when he sinned by being a hypocrite (Gal 2:11-14).
 - (7) Like the other apostles he had the right to have a wife and indeed *had one* (Mt 8:14-15; 1 Cor 9:5).
 - c. Philip is listed fifth in all four.

- d. James, the son of Alphaeus, is listed ninth in all four.
- e. Compare with Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:14-21; Luke 6:13-16.

1:14

1. These apostles continued united and prayerful with certain women and the Lord's brothers!
 - a. "Continued" – προσκαρτερουντες, "to be strong, to be steadfast, to adhere firmly."
 - b. "With one accord"
 - (1) ὁμοθυμαδὸν - from ὁμοιος "same," and θυμός "mind"; hence, with the same mind or, united!
 - (2) Compare with Romans 15:6
 - c. As we will see throughout the book, these men and the other early Christians prayed regularly and fervently (cf. 1 Thess 5:17; Jas 5:16).
 - d. Also, women such as Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, Joanna and Susanna are frequently mentioned as faithful followers of the Lord until the end (cf. Lk 8:2-3; 23:49,55; 24:10).
 - e. This is the last mention of Mary, the mother of Jesus.
 - f. Notice Jesus' brothers are now listed as being with the apostles.
 - (1) These brothers were James, Joseph, Simon and Judas (Mt 13:55).
 - (2) They had refused to believe in Him previously (Jn 7:5).
2. Summary of 1:12-14, Apostles in Jerusalem:
 - a. After Jesus' ascension the apostles returned to Jerusalem (v. 12).
 - b. They went to the upper room where they were staying (v. 13).
 - c. They remained steadfast in prayer and unity (v. 14).

e. (1:15-26) APPOINTMENT OF MATTHIAS

1:15

1. Peter began to speak to about 120 of Jesus' disciples.

1:16

1. Peter said the Holy Spirit spoke through David things concerning Judas, who betrayed Jesus.
 - a. Later Peter specified what things were spoken by David which applied to Judas.
 - b. He did that in verse 20 by quoting directly from two of the Psalms.
 - c. It is also interesting to note that Jesus quoted from the Psalms and applied it to Judas:
 - (1) John 13:18.
 - (2) Psalm 41:9.
2. In verse 16 we also find a clear reference to the true doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible.
 - a. Peter said, "...the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David..." (obviously referring to the Old Testament).

- b. This tells us that the Holy Spirit moved David (and other inspired men) to speak *God's words*. These were not words which David made up without God's assistance.
- c. As a prophet of God David was empowered to speak the very *words* that God wanted spoken in revealing the scriptures to which Peter referred in these verses.
- d. Thus, not just the ideas or concepts in the Bible come from God, but every *word* in the original revelation was from God, not men. This is what is called *verbal, plenary* inspiration.
- e. Compare with 2 Samuel 23:2.
Jeremiah 1:9.
2 Peter 1:20-21.
2 Timothy 3:16.

1:17

1. Peter made it clear that Judas was one of the original twelve men chosen personally by the Lord for the special work of apostles (Lk 6:13-16).

1:18-19

1. These verses appear to be an inspired thought inserted by Luke rather than a continuation of Peter's speech to the 120 disciples.
 - a. One reason that this conclusion is drawn is that verse 19 contains the words, "... in their own language, Akel Dama, that is 'Field of Blood.'"
 - b. The words "their own language" refer to the language spoken by the Jews and give the translation of the words "Akel Dama."
 - (1) But in the two previous verses (16-17) Peter, who had a Jewish background, was speaking to an audience with a Jewish background.
 - (2) Therefore, he would not refer to his own language as "*their* own language!"
 - c. On the other hand Luke, who was probably a Gentile and who wrote to people with a Gentile background, *would* refer to the Jews' language as *their* language.
 - d. Similarly, it is highly unlikely that Peter, being a Jew, would feel the need to explain the meaning of the words "Akel Dama" from their own language to his Jewish audience.
 - e. But Luke, as a Gentile writing to Gentiles, would need to give the translation of this Hebrew word - he said it meant "field of blood."
 - f. For these reasons we conclude that verses 18-19 are an inspired thought which God moved Luke to reveal for a specific purpose.
2. In these two verses (18-19) Luke tells us several things about Judas:
 - a. First, he purchased a field with "the wages of iniquity," i.e., with the money he had received for betraying the Lord Jesus.
 - b. Second, he died a horrible death which is described at the end of verse 18.
 - c. And third, that the field became known as the Field of Blood:
 - (1) Luke says this name was selected for the field because of the bloody death that Judas died there (vv. 18-19).

- (2) Matthew says this name was chosen because the field was purchased with Judas' "blood money," i.e., the money he received for betraying Jesus (Mt 27:6-8).
- (3) The name was probably derived from *both* of these facts and it certainly is an appropriate way to describe the field.
- 3. Some claim that in verses 18-19 Luke contradicted Matthew's account of these facts as found in Matthew 27:3-10. We will now analyze these claims and prove they are *false*.
 - a. First, it is claimed Luke said *Judas* purchased the field (v. 18), yet Matthew said the *chief priests* bought it (Mt 27:6-7).
 - (1) There is no contradiction here!
 - (2) Judas gave the betrayal money back to the chief priests (Mt 27:3-5).
 - (3) The chief priests refused to put Judas' money in the treasury because it was "blood money" (Mt 27:6).
 - (4) Instead, they used Judas' money to purchase the field (Mt 27:7).
 - (5) Thus, it could very honestly be said Judas purchased the field because he gave his money to the priests, who used it to buy the field.
 - (6) This is a common way of speaking - when what a person does *indirectly through others* he is commonly said to do *himself*.
 - (7) For another Biblical example of this way of speaking study John 4:1-2.
 - b. Second, it is claimed there is a contradiction because Matthew said Judas hanged himself, while Luke said he fell and burst open in the middle of his body.
 - (1) Again, there is no contradiction here!
 - (2) Matthew *did* say Judas hanged himself (Mt 27:5).
 - (3) And Luke *did* say Judas fell and burst open (v. 18).
 - (4) However, what we have here is *not* two *contradictory* statements, but rather two *complementary* statements!
 - (a) Complementary statements are those which, when put together, give a *complete* statement of things as they actually are.
 - (b) To illustrate, let us look at a Biblical example of two complementary statements:
 - 1. Matthew 26:51.
 - 2. John 18:10.
 - (5) Now, let us see how Matthew's and Luke's inspired statements about Judas' death *complement*, or make each other complete, when they are put together.
 - (a) Judas did hang himself as Matthew said.
 - (b) Then, either the limb on which he hung or the rope broke.
 - (c) Then Judas fell from the tree and burst open in the middle of his body, as Luke said.
 - (6) Thus, we have a perfectly reasonable explanation of these complementary, inspired statements and no contradiction at all!

1. Peter quoted first from Psalm 69:25 then from Psalm 109:8.
 - a. These are the verses Peter referred to in verse 16 of this chapter as being spoken by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David.
 - b. And Peter by inspiration of God is saying that what was said in these Psalms applied to Judas. How is that true?
 - (1) First, the image from Psalm 69:25 is one of judgment against the Christ's betrayer with the betrayer's dwelling place being left lonely, uninhabited and ruined.
 - (a) It is interesting to note that several places in Psalm 69 are repeatedly quoted as referring to the Messiah.
 - (b) For example see Psalm 69:9 with John 2:17, and Psalm 69:21 with Matthew 27:34,48.
 - (c) Thus, it is quite appropriate that Psalm 69 also contained a prophecy concerning the betrayer of the Messiah!
 - (2) Second, the thought in Psalm 109:8 is that Judas, as Christ's betrayer, lost his office as an apostle and that another would take his place.
 - (a) This thought, i.e., the replacement of Judas, sets the scene for the next several verses.

1:21-22

1. Peter gave two very important qualifications which had to be met by the one who would replace Judas:
 - a. First, that man was required to have been one who accompanied the apostles during "all" the time while Jesus lived and worked with them (v. 21).
 - (1) That time span included the period from John's baptism until Christ's ascension back into heaven, i.e., "the day when He was taken up" (v. 22).
 - (2) Compare with John 15:26-27.
 - b. Second, Judas' replacement had to be able to serve as a witness of the resurrection of Christ (v. 22).
 - (1) Remember our study of the definition of a witness in verse 8.
 - (2) A witness is one who personally sees something and who, on that basis, seeks to confirm a truth by his testimony.
 - (3) Thus, the replacement for Judas had to have seen the Christ after His resurrection and had to be willing and able to tell others about it.
 - c. But why was it so important for an apostle to be a witness of the *resurrection* of Jesus?
 - (1) It was to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, which is the meaning of the word translated "Christ" (Jn 1:41)!
 - (a) Luke 24:44-48.
 - (b) Romans 1:4.
 - (2) Notice, it was *only the apostles* who served as witnesses and notice the eyewitness testimony they gave regarding Jesus' resurrection:
 - (a) 2:32.
 - (b) 3:15.
 - (c) 5:29-32.

- (d) 10:39-41.
- (e) 13:30-31.
- (f) 4:33.
- (3) The overwhelming force of their testimony is seen in three major areas:
 - (a) Their number - there were twelve witnesses, not just one or two.
 - (b) Their agreement - the apostles were in *total* agreement.
 - (c) Their lives - they were *fearless* in the face of persecution, even to the point of being beaten and dying for the Lord Jesus.
- (4) Today, we have the testimony of those uniquely qualified eyewitnesses recorded in the New Testament of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ!
- (5) Is it any wonder then that the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is the foundation of the Christian's faith?
 - (a) 1 Corinthians 15:17.
 - (b) John 17:20.
 - (c) John 20:28-29.
- (6) Today, since none of us can "witness" in the Bible meaning of the word, our job is to preach and teach the word of God (2 Tim 4:2; Mk 16:15; Mt 28:19-20)!
 - d. Again, we see there is no man or woman living today who can meet the inspired qualifications to be an apostle of Christ as given in this book and the rest of the New Testament:
 - (1) To be personally chosen by deity (v. 2).
 - (2) To be witnesses of Christ in the Biblical meaning of that word (v. 8).
 - (3) To be one who was with Jesus and His apostles from the time of John's baptism until Jesus' ascension (this verse; Jn 15:26-27).
 - (4) To be a witness of Jesus' resurrection (this verse).
 - (5) To receive miraculous power through the Holy Spirit to do several things:
 - (a) First, to remember without error all that Jesus personally said to them (Jn 14:26).
 - (b) Second, to record without error all of the truth, the word of God, the commandments of the Lord (Jn 16:13; 1 Cor 14:37).
 - (c) And third, to confirm that message was from God with mighty miracles (2 Cor 12:12).

1:23

1. Two men were proposed who met these strict qualifications. One was Joseph, who was called Barsabas and was surnamed Justus, and the other was Matthias.

1:24-25

1. The apostles prayed for the Lord's will to be done in choosing between these two men. Why did they do that?
 - a. They knew both men met the qualifications to serve as an apostle.
 - b. But they were also aware God knows the hearts of all men and they wanted *His* will to be done!

- (1) God would know which of these two men was *best* qualified to serve as an apostle.
- (2) "Know the hearts" - καρδιογνωστα - literally, the "heart knower."
- (3) Practical application - it is a *sobering* thought to be aware of the fact that God knows what is in our hearts!
- (4) We may be able to fool or deceive others, but we cannot deceive God!
 - (a) Along those lines, please consider the following passages:
 1. 1 Chronicles 28:9.
 2. Psalm 139:1-4.
 3. Hebrews 4:12-13.
 - (b) Knowing this, what should you and I do?
 1. Proverbs 4:23.
 2. 2 Corinthians 10:5.
 3. 2 Corinthians 7:1.
 4. Matthew 5:8.
 5. Philippians 4:8.
- c. Notice in verse 24 the apostles were aware that the replacement of a fallen apostle was a matter which only *God* was qualified to do!
 - (1) Speaking to God, the apostles prayed, "...show which of these two *You have chosen*."
 - (2) Just as Jesus had chosen the original twelve apostles the eleven wanted God to choose Judas' replacement.
- d. Also, notice the strong words concerning Judas in this context, in this prayer, and in the rest of the Bible:
 - (1) He was an apostle in every sense that the other eleven were (v. 17).
 - (2) Yet, he guided the enemies of Christ to arrest Him (v. 16).
 - (3) He fell from his work as an apostle of Christ (this verse).
 - (4) He fell by transgression, i.e., by sin, which is violation of God's will (this verse; 1 Jn 3:4).
 - (5) He came to a horrible end as he hanged himself and fell, tearing his body open (1:18; Mt 27:5).
 - (6) The field purchased with his betrayal money was called the Field of Blood as a memorial to his horrible crime (v. 19).
 - (7) He was described by inspiration as a traitor (Lk 6:16).
 - (8) He was a thief (Jn 12:6).
 - (9) Jesus called him the son of perdition (meaning utter ruin, complete loss of well-being) (Jn 17:12).
 - (10) Jesus said it would have been better for him not to have been born (Mt 26:24).
 - (11) And, he went to his own place (this verse).
 - (12) Can there be any doubt that one of God's people can fall from grace to such an extent as to lose eternal salvation (cf. Gal 5:4; 1 Cor 9:27; 2 Pet 2:20-22)?
- e. Luke said after Judas fell by transgression that he went to his own place. We will discuss where it appears Judas went when we study 2:25-28.

- f. Some claim that in these verses the apostles prayed to Jesus rather than to the Father.
- (1) I do not believe the apostles prayed to Jesus.
 - (2) That belief is based upon careful study of these verses and the clear teaching of the New Testament that the Christian is to pray *to* the Father *through* His Son Jesus (Heb 7:25).
 - (3) A more detailed study of whether the apostles prayed to Jesus is available in the written notes on these verses.
- g. More detailed analysis of the question of to whom this prayer was offered.
- (1) Some say the apostles prayed to Jesus because Jesus chose the original twelve and because the prayer is addressed to the “Lord.”
 - (2) Others say the apostles prayed to the Father.
 - (3) To analyze this question several facts need to be considered:
 - (a) First, there is no doubt Jesus was often referred to as “Lord” (cf. Lk 24:34).
 1. But, it is also true the Father is referred to as “Lord” (cf. Heb 7:21; 8:8-11; Rev 4:8,11; 11:17; 15:3-4; 16:5; 19:6; 21:22).
 2. Thus, the fact that this prayer is addressed to the “Lord” is not conclusive evidence it was offered to Jesus.
 3. In fact, it seems very significant that in the first recorded prayer after the church was established the apostles addressed the *Father* in prayer by calling Him “*Lord*” (Acts 4:24,29)!
 - (b) Second, it is true Jesus selected the original twelve apostles (v. 2).
 1. However, that fact in itself is not conclusive evidence that this prayer was offered to Jesus.
 2. This is particularly true if offering prayer to Jesus would violate the Father’s will, as we will discuss in a moment.
 3. In addition, while Jesus was on earth all that He did (including choosing the original twelve apostles) was done by the authority of the Father (Mt 28:18; Jn 17:1-2).
 4. Thus, after Jesus left the earth it would be just as natural to expect that things that He did while here (such as choosing an apostle) would be done by the Father.
 - (c) Third, it is a fact that Jesus knew the hearts of men (Jn 2:24-25; 6:64; Rev 2:19).
 1. Remember this prayer was addressed to the One who knew the hearts of all (v. 24).
 2. But, the Father is also frequently described as the one who knows the hearts of men (1 Chron 28:9; Psa 139:1-4, etc).
 3. In fact, a striking parallel to the replacement of Judas is found in 1 Samuel 16:
 - a. 1:1 God had rejected Saul from reigning as king over Israel and sent Samuel to Jesse to find a *replacement* from among his sons.

- b. 1:2-3 Samuel needed reassurance from the Lord so the Lord promised Samuel He would show him who to anoint as king.
 - c. 1:4-5 Samuel went to Bethlehem and called on Jesse and his sons.
 - d. 1:6 Samuel looked at Eliab and believed that he was the replacement that God had selected.
 - e. 1:7 The Lord told Samuel not to judge by the *external* appearance. Then the Lord said that unlike man, He looks at the *heart!* He is the One who knows the hearts of all!
 - f. 1:12 The Lord selected David as His replacement for Saul.
4. Of course this incident took place before Jesus appeared on this earth as the Son of God.
 5. However, it is at least *possible* the apostles had this incident in mind and were calling upon the Father in the way Samuel did in that case.
 6. Thus, we see from another perspective that the fact that the prayer is addressed to the "Lord" is not conclusive evidence it was addressed to Jesus.
- (d) Finally, God has given clear instructions in the New Testament that we are to pray *to* Him, *through* His Son Jesus, and not *directly* to Jesus.
 - (e) That is the command and the pattern which He has given us to follow in such passages as the following:
 1. In the book of Acts - 4:24,29; 12:5; 16:25; 27:35.
 2. Matthew 6:6,9.
 3. John 16:23-24 (cf. 14:13-14; 15:16).
 4. Ephesians 5:20.
 5. Hebrews 7:25.

1:26

1. The apostles sought the Lord's will by casting lots and Matthias was chosen to replace Judas.
 - a. Casting lots on important and difficult occasions was common among the Jews in Old Testament times.
 - b. Some examples of the use of lots in the Old Testament include the following:
 - (1) David divided the priests by use of lots (1 Chron 24:5).
 - (2) The land of Canaan was divided by the use of lots (Num 26:55; Josh 15-17).
 - (3) Achan was detected by lots (Josh 7:16-18).
 - c. In resorting to lots the Jews were appealing for a decision from God. This was *not* a voting process, or an election!
 - (1) Proverbs 16:33.
 - d. It is not revealed what procedure the apostles used to cast lots.
 - e. However, several procedures which have been documented as having been used by the Jews can be found in the written notes for this verse.

- (1) Richard Lenski and several other commentators identify the following procedure:
 - (a) Two markers, each with one name upon it, were placed into a vessel.
 - (b) The vessel was shaken so hard that one marker fell out.
 - (c) This marker indicated the choice God had made.
 - (2) Albert Barnes, in his commentary on Acts identifies another procedure as follows:
 - (a) The names of persons were written on pieces of stone, wood, etc, and placed in a vessel.
 - (b) The name of the offices, portions of land, etc. were placed in another vessel.
 - (c) One marker would be drawn at random from the vessel containing names and one from the vessel containing offices, etc.
 - (d) That name would be matched with that office, etc.
 - (e) This procedure would be continued until each name was matched with an office, portion of land, etc.
 - (3) It appears more likely that a procedure similar to that suggested by Lenski was used by the apostles here.
 - f. But, in any case, it is important to stress this was *not* a voting process!
 - g. It is also essential to emphasize that casting of lots never occurred again in the New Testament.
 - h. Several reasons can be given to explain why this procedure was used in this case, and *only* in this case:
 - (1) The apostles were in a period of transition between the ascension of Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) Jesus had ascended back to heaven; thus, He was not available for the apostles to ask Him directly for His guidance as they had before.
 - (b) The apostles had not been baptized with the Holy Spirit yet to guide them into all the truth, the word of God.
 - (c) They did not have the New Testament to study and use to make such decisions.
 - (2) Thus, this case involved unique circumstances which do not exist today.
 - (3) Since that time, Jesus sent the promised Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into revealing all of the New Testament, which:
 - (a) Contains *all* things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3-4).
 - (b) Is useful for many purposes, including making us spiritually complete, completely equipped to do every good work (2 Tim 3:16-17).
 - (c) Is able to make us wise (2 Tim 3:15).
 - (d) Will help us to have the mind of Christ and do all things expected of us through Him who strengthens us (Phil 2:5; 4:13).
 - (e) The casting of lots is not a procedure we follow today. Instead, we determine God's will by studying, meditating upon and applying God's word, prayerfully.
2. Before leaving 1:15-26, a good practical application of what we see in these verses is to analyze the validity of the claims of some in the religious world today.

- a. Some say they have apostles.
 - b. Others say they have special authority which they received directly or indirectly from Christ's apostles.
 - (1) They claim they have authority to reveal and/or interpret scripture, or
 - (2) To rule over others in positions not authorized by the New Testament.
 - c. All of these claims can be summarized under the heading of "apostolic succession."
3. The following brief answers are provided in response to these claims.
- a. First, there are no apostles, or other men today, who speak, teach or command by the authority of God as Christ's apostles did because *no* man is *qualified* to do so (see our discussion of 1:3,21-22)!
 - b. Second, the New Testament was the *final* revelation of God's will for mankind; therefore, no man has the power or authority to reveal scripture today (Jude 3).
 - c. Third, each Christian is a priest and God has warned us to be on guard against those who try to interpret the scriptures for us (1 Pet 2:5; 2 Tim 2:15; Mt 7:15).
 - d. Fourth, the organization of the Lord's church is simple:
 - (1) Christ is the only head of His church (Col 1:18).
 - (2) A plurality of specially qualified elders over each independent congregation of the Lord's church (Acts 14:23; 1 Pet 5:1-2).
 - (3) Deacons to serve each congregation (1 Tim 3:8-12).
 - (4) Preachers to preach the gospel (Rom 10:14-15).
 - (5) Any other positions established by men to rule over others are unauthorized by God and thus are sinful (Mt 20:20-28)!
4. For those who are interested, more detailed answers to these claims can be found in the written notes.
- a. First, do we have apostles today who speak, teach and command by the authority of God, as Christ's apostles did?
 - (1) The Bible answer to this question is - absolutely not!
 - (2) As we have discussed several times, no person living today can meet the qualifications of an apostle as listed in our study of 1:21-22.
 - (3) But, someone says, "What about the apostle Paul?"
 - (a) There was only one of those conditions which Paul did not meet. He was not with Jesus, beginning with John's baptism.
 - (b) But, Paul met *every one* of the other conditions! Can any person living today make that claim? Obviously not!!
 - (c) Besides, Paul was a unique, one-of-a-kind case:
 - 1. 1 Corinthians 15:8-11.
 - 2. Acts 9:3-6.
 - 3. Acts 26:15-18.
 - 4. Can any person living today make these claims? Obviously not!
 - (4) Thus, the only conclusion that we can legitimately draw is that there are no apostles today who speak, teach and command by the authority of God as Christ's apostles did.

- b. Second, are there people living today who have special authority which they received directly or indirectly from Christ's apostles to reveal and/or interpret scripture?
- (1) God makes it completely clear in His word that the New Testament is the *last* revelation of His will for mankind. Therefore, any who claim to reveal more scripture contradict God, and thus, are liars!
 - (a) John 16:13.
 - (b) 2 Peter 1:3.
 - (c) Jude 3.
 - (d) Revelation 22:18-19.
 - (2) Next, there is no scriptural authority for "successors" to the apostles of Christ.
 - (a) A successor is one who follows another in an office, title, etc.
 - (b) In the New Testament Judas is the *only* apostle who was ever replaced, and his case was absolutely unique in the following ways:
 1. Judas had to be replaced because he *fell* from his office by his sin (v. 25) and *not* because he died and another apostle needed to succeed him!
 2. In addition, the decision on who was to replace Judas was *not* made by his peers, associates or any other men as is done in the religious world today.
 - a. Instead, the apostles of Christ prayed to God to place the decision in His hands (vv. 24-25),
 - b. And they cast lots as a familiar form of seeking *God's* guidance (v. 26).
 - c. Thus, the choice of the replacement was left to *God* who knows the hearts of men - *not* to a vote by fallible men who do not know each other's hearts!
 3. Notice also Peter used specific Old Testament scriptures which predicted Judas' betrayal of Christ as authority to begin this process (v. 20).
 - a. In one of those verses, (Psa 109:8), it was predicted that another person would take the office of the individual who had done wrong (Judas).
 - b. On the basis of that *specific* prediction in scripture Peter concluded that Judas must be replaced ("therefore," v. 21).
 - c. Thus, rather than establishing a pattern for replacing apostles in the future, the replacement of Judas was a one-of-a-kind occurrence.
 - d. It was unique in that the decision to replace Judas was made because God predicted his replacement previously in His word.
 - (c) Still on the subject of "apostolic succession," only two apostles were appointed after the original twelve were chosen by Christ.
 1. Both cases were unique, included divine involvement as well as approval, and were obviously meant by God not to be repeated.

2. The first case was that of Judas, which we have just studied.
3. The second was the case of Paul which we studied earlier. You will remember his case was unique because he:
 - a. Was one “born out of due time” and was the *last* to see the Lord (1 Cor 15:8).
 - b. Was confronted directly by Jesus in a vision, with witnesses present (Acts 9:3-6).
 - c. Was chosen directly by Christ for a special mission (Acts 26:15-18).
- (d) It is significant to note that the death of only one other apostle is recorded in the New Testament - James, the brother of John (Acts 12:2).
 1. It is also crucial to realize James was *not* replaced as an apostle.
 2. This is consistent with our contention that the replacement of Judas and the miraculous selection of Paul were unique, one-of-a-kind situations never to be repeated again.
 3. And it is one more conclusive way of showing that “apostolic succession” is *not* a Biblical teaching or practice approved by God!
- c. Third, let us answer the question whether anyone has received authority from Christ or His apostles to rule over others in positions not authorized by the New Testament through their power to reveal or interpret scripture.
 - (1) It is clear that *each* Christian is a priest, upon whom God has laid the responsibility to study the scriptures to determine His divine will. Furthermore, He has warned us to be on guard against those who try to interpret the scriptures for us.
 - (a) 1 Peter 2:5.
 - (b) Acts 17:11.
 - (c) 2 Timothy 2:15.
 - (d) Colossians 2:8.
 - (e) Matthew 7:15.
 - (2) It is also clear the organization of Christ’s church is simple *with no one man ruling over anyone* with God’s approval!
 - (a) Colossians 1:18.
 - (b) Philippians 1:1.
 - (c) Acts 14:23.
 - (d) Titus 1:5-7.
 - (e) 1 Timothy 3:8-12.
 - (f) Romans 10:14-15.
 - (g) Matthew 20:20-28.
 - (h) Matthew 23:8-12.
 - (i) A careful study of the New Testament reveals that there are no powerful, centralized positions of authority such as pope, cardinal, archbishop, president, synod, convention, etc!

- (j) These positions have been invented by men, contrary to God's will. They are doctrines and commandments of men which *Jesus* said make their worship vain (Mt 15:9)!
3. Summary of 1:15-26, Appointment of Matthias:
 - a. In verses 15-16 Peter began this section by referring to Old Testament scriptures which predicted Judas' betrayal of Jesus.
 - b. In verse 17 he made it clear that Judas was one of the original twelve apostles chosen personally by Jesus.
 - c. In verses 18-19 Luke inserted the information that:
 - (1) Judas purchased a field with the betrayal money.
 - (2) He died a horrible death.
 - (3) And, the field was named the Field of Blood.
 - d. In verse 20 Peter quoted from Psalms 69:25 and 109:8 to show that:
 - (1) Judas' dwelling place would be left uninhabited.
 - (2) Another would replace him in his office.
 - e. In verses 21-22 Peter gave two very important qualifications which had to be met by the one who would replace Judas as an apostle of Christ:
 - (1) He must have accompanied the apostles during all the time Jesus lived and worked with them.
 - (2) He must serve as a witness of the resurrection of Christ.
 - f. In verse 23 two men are identified who meet these requirements - Joseph and Matthias.
 - g. In verses 24-25 the apostles prayed for the Lord's will to be done in choosing between these two men.
 - h. In verse 26 the apostles sought the Lord's guidance by the casting of lots and Matthias was chosen to replace Judas as an apostle.
 4. Summary of chapter 1, Waiting for the promise:
 - a. Acts 1-2 Introduction.
 - b. Acts 3-8 The promise given.
 - c. Acts 9-11 Ascension of Christ.
 - d. Acts 12-14 Apostles in Jerusalem.
 - e. Acts 15-26 Appointment of Matthias.

2. THE PROMISE FULFILLED AND THE CHURCH ESTABLISHED:

OVERVIEW OF CHAPTER 2

- a. (1-13) Apostles filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues.
- b. (14-36) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicts the crowd of sin, righteousness and judgment.
 - (1) (14-21) Inspired interpretation of these events.
 - (2) (22-24) *Jesus*: Attested by God; killed by Jews; raised by the Father.
 - (3) (25-32) *Jesus*: The proof from prophecy.
 - (4) (33-36) *Jesus*: Exalted and enthroned.
- c. (37-41) Response of some in the crowd / inspired conditions of pardon.
- d. (42-47) The church continues steadfastly.

a. (2:1-13) APOSTLES FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND SPEAK WITH OTHER TONGUES

2:1

1. The apostles were gathered together on the day of Pentecost.
2. Pentecost was one of the three annual feasts when every adult male was required to be present in Jerusalem (Ex 23:14-17; Deut 16:16). These feasts were as follows:
 - a. Passover (Lev 23:5-6).
 - b. Pentecost, also known as the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Harvest, when the firstfruits of their harvest were offered to the Lord (Lev 23:15-17; Num 34:22-23; Ex 23:16).
 - c. Tabernacles (Lev 23:34-44).
3. "Pentecost" in Greek means "fiftieth."
4. That is an appropriate name because the Feast of Pentecost took place on the fiftieth day after the Passover (Lev 23:15-16).
 - a. Now, according to these verses the count for those fifty days began on the day after the Sabbath of the Passover Feast.
 - b. The Sabbath was the seventh day of the week or Saturday as we know it.
 - c. Thus, the count began on Sunday which is the first day of the week.
 - d. From that day they would count seven Sabbath days (Saturdays) for a total of forty nine days (seven weeks).
 - e. Then the next day the "day after the seventh Sabbath" would be the fiftieth day or the Day of Pentecost.
 - f. And since it was one day after the seventh Saturday it always fell on Sunday, the first day of the week.
5. It is significant to notice that the condemnation and death of Jesus had taken place during the previous major annual feast which was the Passover (Mt 26:17-27:62).
 - a. Now, fifty days later, when Jews from all over the world would again be gathered in Jerusalem, God chose this special day of Pentecost for a very special purpose.
 - b. That purpose was to show before all the victory of His beloved Son and the establishment of His church!
 - c. And, as we have just seen, this took place on Sunday, the first day of the week.
 - d. There are several other things associated with the first day of the week in the New Testament which are significant:
 - (1) Mark 16:9.
 - (2) Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2.
6. "Had fully come."
 - a. The Hebrew day began at sunset - approximately 6:00 p.m.
 - b. Therefore, the first part of the day was filled with darkness which was not suitable for the special events of this special day.
 - c. Thus, for this purpose, the day was "fully come" when it was daylight!

7. “They were all with one accord in one place.” *Who* was all with one accord in one place?
 - a. Remember the original text of the Bible was not divided into chapters and verses.
 - b. Thus, there would not have been any division between what we know as 1:26 and 2:1.
 - c. Read these verses together without a pause.
 - d. When this is done it is clear the “they” was the twelve apostles!
 - e. This is consistent with rules of grammar.
 - (1) The rule is - a word or phrase to which a pronoun (such as “they”) refers can be found by looking back to the nearest noun or pronoun with which it agrees in number, etc.
 - (2) In this case the pronoun “they” in 2:1 clearly refers back to the noun “apostles” in 1:26 - *not* to the 120 disciples way back in 1:15!
 - f. As we study verse 4 of this chapter we will notice with more detail that it was the apostles of Christ, and *only* His apostles, who were gathered together.

2:2

1. A mighty *sound* filled the place where the apostles were.
2. Notice the sound is described as being “as of” a rushing, mighty wind.
3. That is, not necessarily a wind, but a sound *like* wind.

2:3

1. A mighty *sight* consisting of tongues like fire appeared to the apostles.
2. Again, it was not literal fire, but it appeared “as of” or “like” fire.
3. A tongue sat upon each of the apostles.

2:4

1. The apostles were all filled with the Holy Spirit.
2. This was obviously the baptism with the Holy Spirit which Jesus had promised to them (1:4-5,8).
3. When that happened they received miraculous *power* to speak in other tongues as the Holy Spirit enabled them.
4. “Other tongues” - ἑτέραις γλώσσαις.
 - a. ἑτέραις - another of a *different* kind.
 - b. γλώσσαις - language.
 - (1) Vine’s *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* - “the supernatural gift of speaking in another language without its having been learnt.”
 - (2) Thayer’s *Greek-English Lexicon* - “a tongue, i.e., the language used by a particular people in distinction from that of other nations; to speak with other than their native, i.e., in foreign tongues, Acts 2:4 (cf. 6-11; to speak with new tongues which the speaker has not learned previously, Mk 16:17.”
 - c. Thus, it is clear from the meaning of the Greek words used that this miraculous ability to speak in “other tongues” was the ability to speak in languages which the apostles had never learned before.

- d. In addition to the meaning of the Greek words the *context* also makes it clear that tongues were foreign languages which the apostles had never learned.
 - e. We will study that context in a moment.
5. This miraculous outpouring or baptism with the Holy Spirit is further proof that it was Christ's apostles, and *only* His apostles, who were gathered together in one place to receive this *power* - *not* the 120 disciples, or any others! That conclusion is also made clear from the following scriptures:
- a. Acts 1:2-5 Jesus said the promise of Luke 24:49 would come when the *apostles* were baptized with the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Acts 1:8 Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit came upon the *apostles* they would receive power and they would be Christ's witnesses.
 - c. Acts 2:7 The ones who spoke in tongues by the power of the Holy Spirit were *Galileans*.
Acts 1:11 The apostles were *Galileans*.
 - d. Acts 2:14 Peter stood up with the *eleven* (apostles) to speak to the crowd.
 - e. Acts 2:37 Those in the crowd appealed to Peter and the other *apostles* to find out what to do about their sinful condition.
 - f. Acts 2:42 The early Christians continued steadfastly in the *apostles'* doctrine.
 - g. Acts 2:43 Many wonders and signs were done by the *apostles*.
 - h. Acts 3:6-7 The lame man was healed miraculously by the *apostle* Peter.
 - i. Acts 4:33 The *apostles* gave *witness* to Jesus' resurrection with great *power*.
 - j. Acts 5:12 Through the hands of the *apostles*, many signs and wonders were done.
 - k. Can there be any doubt that it was the apostles of Christ, and *only* His apostles, who were baptized with the Holy Spirit on this occasion?
6. While we are on the subject it might be a good idea to notice the following points about baptism with the Holy Spirit:
- (1) It was a promise (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:5,8; 2:33).
 - (2) It was administered by Christ (Mt 3:11; Acts 2:32-33).
 - (3) The element was the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5,8).
 - (4) The purpose was *not* the forgiveness of sins, but rather to:
 - (a) Empower the apostles for the special work of revealing and confirming the word of God (Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; Jn 16:13).
 - (b) Prove God's acceptance of the Gentiles (Acts 11:15-18).
 - (5) It was connected with the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4; 10:46).
 - (6) It occurred only twice (Acts chapters 2 and 10).
 - (7) It was described in *limited* terms, i.e., to the apostles of Christ (Acts 1:2-4, 26; 2:1-4).
7. When we study 2:38 we will have an opportunity to compare the baptism with the Holy Spirit with the baptism in water for the forgiveness of sins.
8. As the final point of our study of verse 4, please recall our study of 1:8.
- a. In that study we combined the teaching of Matthew 16:18-19; Mark 9:1; and Acts 1:8.

- b. In those verses God teaches that the kingdom (church) would come with *power* and that *power* would be received by Christ's apostles when the Holy Spirit came upon them.
- c. Now, in 2:4 we see the Holy Spirit come upon Christ's apostles and give them power to speak in other languages.
- d. Therefore, we must conclude that the kingdom (church) of our Lord was established on this day of Pentecost just as Jesus said it would be.
- e. And, in 2:47 we see the church referred to in the present tense for the first time. It came into existence on that special day and has existed ever since.

2:5-8

1. In verse 5 we learn that devout Jews from every part of the world were in Jerusalem at that time.
 - a. Remember this was the Feast of Pentecost (cf. v. 1).
 - b. "Devout" - εὐλαβεῖς - careful not to offend God; careful to observe His commandments; religious.
 - c. The regions from which these people came are specified in verses 9-11.
2. In verse 6 a multitude of these people came together and were confused.
 - a. They were confused because they all heard the apostles speak in the *languages* of the hearers.
 - b. Thus, these visitors to Jerusalem were confused because they did not expect to hear the apostles speak in the languages of those from every part of the world.
 - c. Notice the apostles were speaking in *languages* which could be understood - *not* in some mysterious collection of words or sounds that could not be understood.
3. In verses 7-8 Luke described the multitude as those who marveled and were amazed at what they saw and heard.
 - a. They were amazed because those who spoke were Galileans, yet the multitude heard them speak in the language in which they (the multitude) were born.
 - (1) Notice the multitude identified the speakers as Galileans.
 - (2) And that is exactly the way the angels had identified the *apostles* in 1:11 - "men of Galilee" (cf. Lk 22:58-59)!
 - (3) As noted in our study of 2:4 this is yet another way of knowing that the recipients of the baptism with the Holy Spirit and those who were speaking in different languages were the apostles of Christ *not* the 120 or any other group of men.
 - b. Why would the multitude be amazed that Galileans were able to speak in other languages?
 - (1) Galileans were looked upon as ignorant, rude and uncivilized (Jn 1:46; 7:52).
 - (2) Their own dialect was looked upon as crude and corrupt, therefore it would be amazing that they would know other dialects and languages (Mk 14:70; Mt 26:73).
 - (3) These facts would give further evidence to the crowd that the apostles were speaking these languages by *supernatural* power!

2:9-11

1. In these verses we have a listing of the regions and countries of the multitude who came together to hear the apostles.
 - a. “Proselytes” (v. 10) - persons from a foreign country who changed to the Jewish religion (Mt 23:15).
2. These people heard the apostles speak about the wonderful works of God and the multitude heard this being done in their own tongues (languages), *not* the language of the apostles as they would have expected.
3. Experts believe the number of major languages spoken in these areas must have been at least seven or eight, with many other dialects represented.
 - a. Examples of the major languages would have included Persian, Syriac, Chaldee, Greek, Latin and Arabic.

2:12-13

1. Luke described the multitude as having two major reactions to this miraculous power which the Holy Spirit allowed the apostles to use:
 - a. Many were amazed and uncertain, doubtful or confused as to what all of this meant.
 - b. Others mocked (ridiculed, or made fun of) the apostles accusing them of being drunk.
2. “Mocking” – διαχλευάζω - using a rude and sarcastic manner to ridicule and to show you consider another person as very low or worthless.
3. “New wine” - γλεῦκος - literally, sweet wine.
 - a. According to Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible and other authorities sweet wine was made from what was considered to be the best juice of the grape.
 - (1) The juice that flowed from the ripe grapes before men began to walk on the grapes to force the rest of the juice out of them.
 - (2) The following statement concerning sweet wine is a good summary from Smith’s Dictionary: “But the explanations of the ancient lexicographers rather lead us to infer that its luscious qualities were due, not to its being recently made, but to its being produced from the very purest juice of the grape.”
 - (3) In other words, based upon the meaning of the Greek word γλεῦκος, this wine was not new, i.e., recently made.
 - (4) The fact that the wine was not recently made is also consistent with the fact that about eight months had passed between the harvest of the grapes and the Feast of Pentecost.
 - (5) Instead of being recently made this wine was especially sweet because it was produced from the best juice of the grape.
 - (6) Thus, “sweet wine” is a much better translation than new wine.
 - b. Furthermore, the use of this Greek word in the Bible and other literature points to a liquid which was often both fermenting and intoxicating.
 - (1) Compare with Job 32:19 in the Septuagint.

- (2) Certainly these mockers used the word to indicate that the apostles were drunk.
- (3) And just as certainly that is the way Peter understood the accusation when he responded which is recorded beginning in the next verse.
4. While it is clear the word translated “new wine” in this verse often refers to a fermented, intoxicating drink it is *not* the case that every time we read the word “wine” in the Bible it refers to a fermented, intoxicating beverage!
5. Although a detailed study of this subject is beyond the scope of this course, the following information is provided to show that Bible words translated “wine” do not always refer to a fermented, intoxicating drink. This information is from W. D. Jeffcoat’s book entitled, *The Bible and “Social” Drinking*, published by Robinson Type-setting, Corinth, MS, U.S.A.:
 - a. “A summary of the results of the investigation of the terms for wine in the Bible reveals the following:
 - (1) There are nine terms in the Old Testament and three in the New Testament that are rendered ‘wine’ either singly or in connection with some other term.
 - (2) There are ten additional terms in the Old Testament and two in the New Testament which refer to the juice or products of the grape, or of other fruits.
 - (3) There are a total of twenty-four terms in the Bible which are applied to products of the grape, or of other fruits.
 - (4) Of the twenty-four terms, four have no reference whatever to the juice of the grape, or to the juice of any fruit.
 - (5) Of the remaining twenty terms and phrases which do refer to the juices of fruits, three Hebrew terms, ‘yayin,’ ‘shekar,’ and ‘chemar’ and three Greek terms, ‘oinos,’ ‘gluekos,’ and ‘sikera’ are generic.
 - (6) One Hebrew term, ‘chomets’ and one Greek term, ‘oxos,’ denote a wine that has entered the acetic stage of fermentation (vinegar).
 - (7) Three Hebrew terms, ‘mesek,’ ‘mimsak,’ and ‘mezeg’ denote a wine, either fermented or unfermented, which has been drugged or diluted.
 - (8) Five Hebrew terms, ‘tiros,’ ‘dam-anabim,’ ‘dam-enab,’ ‘mishrath-anabim,’ and ‘mamtaqqim’ denote some form of grape or other juice.
 - (9) With the exception of one Hebrew term, ‘sobe,’ there is no term in the Bible that must indicate an intoxicating beverage.
 - (10) On the other hand there are eight terms, ‘shemanim,’ ‘dam-anabim,’ ‘dam-enab,’ ‘mishrath-anabim,’ ‘ashishah,’ ‘anabim,’ ‘yekeb’ and ‘mamtaqqim,’ which signify an unfermented article.
 - (11) Ten other terms, ‘yayin,’ ‘tiros,’ ‘shekar,’ ‘asis,’ ‘chemar,’ ‘chamar,’ ‘mesek,’ ‘mimsak,’ ‘mezeg’ and ‘oinos,’ the most important and most frequently employed, allow persons to determine by considering the context or circumstances whether an intoxicating beverage is intended. Persons should not assume that such is the case without examining the facts.”
 - b. Notice the following contexts where “wine” is the translation, but it is clear that the reference is to an unfermented item:
 - (1) Numbers 18:12-13 (cf. Neh 10:37).

- (2) Isaiah 16:10.
- (3) Isaiah 62:8-9.
- (4) Isaiah 65:8.
- c. From these scriptures, as well as the study of the words which are translated “wine” in the Bible, it is clear these words do not *automatically* refer to fermented, intoxicating drinks.
 - (1) Rather, these words can refer to the grape and to unfermented grape juice.
 - (2) Therefore, before a definite conclusion is drawn, a careful study of the context must be made to determine how *God* intended the word to be used.
 - (3) Jeffcoat, in the book just mentioned, studies the subject of the drinking of alcoholic beverages thoroughly.
 - (4) He draws the conclusion that this practice is sinful in God’s sight and must be avoided by those who intend to please the Lord.
- 6. Summary of 2:1-13 - Apostles filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues:
 - a. In verse 1 the apostles were all together on the day of Pentecost.
 - b. In verse 2 a sound like a rushing, mighty wind filled the house where they were.
 - c. In verse 3 tongues like fire appeared to the apostles and one sat on each of them.
 - d. In verse 4 the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit Who enabled them to speak in other languages which they had never learned before.
 - e. In verse 5 religious Jews from every part of the world were in Jerusalem.
 - f. In verses 6-12 they were confused and amazed when they heard the apostles (who were from Galilee) speak in foreign languages which they had never learned before.
 - g. In verse 13 others reacted differently by ridiculing the apostles, accusing them of being drunk.

b. (2:14-36) THE HOLY SPIRIT (THROUGH PETER) CONVICTS THE CROWD OF SIN, RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUDGMENT.

(1) (2:14-21) INSPIRED INTERPRETATION OF THESE EVENTS.

2:14-15

- 1. Peter responded that he and the other apostles were not drunk as had been charged by some in the crowd.
- 2. He gave as his reason for the apostles not being drunk - that it was just the third hour of the day.
 - a. The third hour of the day would have been 9:00 in the morning.
 - b. There are several reasons why Peter offered the time of day as a reason why these men would not have been drunk:
 - (1) It was the time of the morning worship or sacrifice.
 - (2) It was unusual for even drunkards to become drunk in the daytime (1 Thess 5:7).

- (3) According to Albert Barnes in his commentary on Acts it was customary for the Jews not to eat or drink *anything* until after the third hour of the day.
- (4) And this was especially true on the Sabbath and all festival occasions (such as Pentecost).
- 3. Peter's most convincing demonstration proving he and the other apostles were not drunk was his stirring sermon which he was about to deliver.
- 4. Notice in verse 14 Peter exhorted the audience to pay very close attention to the *words* which he was about to speak.
 - a. Thus, the Holy Spirit, through Peter, was communicating with the audience through the *words* Peter spoke.
 - b. This fact will be very important to remember when we get to 2:37.

2:16

- 1. In this verse Peter gave the inspired explanation of what the crowd heard and saw and the reason why he and the other apostles could speak in tongues.
- 2. Rather than being a result of the apostles being drunk it was a fulfillment of a prediction which the prophet Joel had made previously.
- 3. Peter said very clearly that what was happening on that day of Pentecost was exactly what Joel had prophesied in the Old Testament.

2:17-18

- 1. In these and the following verses Peter, by inspiration, identified the specific prophecy by quoting from Joel 2:28-32.
- 2. In those verses Joel predicted a time when God would pour out of His Spirit on "all flesh."
- 3. The result would be that many different kinds of people would prophesy, see visions and dream dreams.
- 4. And, this would happen in the "last days."
 - a. But, Peter said by inspiration that which was happening on the day of Pentecost was the fulfillment of what Joel said would occur in the last days.
 - b. Thus, we can conclude that the last days began on the day of Pentecost of Acts 2 when the apostles experienced this outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. And, as we studied previously, this was when Jesus the Messiah's church was established.
 - d. And since they are the "*last*" days they represent the *last* period of time.
 - e. That is, the period from the establishment of the church built by the Messiah until His final coming at the end of time.
 - f. Thus, mankind has been in the last days for about 2,000 years!
 - g. And *no* man knows when the last days will end (Mt 24:36-44)!
- 5. In this prophecy, quoted and interpreted by Peter, God said He would pour out of His Spirit upon "all flesh."
 - a. It is crucial we determine what God meant by "all flesh."
 - b. For example, did He mean that *everyone* would receive miraculous powers from the Holy Spirit?

- c. In answering this question it is essential we recognize that the word “all” as used in the Bible does not always mean every individual.
 - d. Compare with John 12:32 and Revelation 21:8.
 - e. With this in mind it is at least possible that this promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit *was limited* by God to fewer than every person.
 - f. To help find out whether God did limit this promise, several questions need to be asked and answered.
 - (1) First, did “all flesh” include human flesh and animal flesh?
 - (a) Surely, all would agree that God did *not* pour out of His Spirit upon animals, fish and birds!
 - (b) For a parallel application of this principle please see Isaiah 66:23.
 - (c) Thus, we must conclude that God *did* limit the “all flesh” in verse 17!
 - (2) Second, did “all flesh” include all human beings?
 - (a) Again, certainly all will agree that God would *not* pour out of His Spirit upon rebellious sinners who had not obeyed Him!
 - (b) Furthermore, in verse 18, God specifies those who would receive this outpouring as His “menservants” and “maidservants.”
 - (c) Thus, we must conclude God *did* limit this promise to those who were *His servants*.
 - (3) Third, did “all flesh” include all Christians?
 - (a) All that is necessary to answer this question is to determine whether all Christians in the first century were able to work miracles such as prophesying, having miraculous visions, etc.
 - (b) 1 Corinthians 12:29-30.
 - g. But, if God limited this promise, what does “all flesh” mean in this verse?
 - (1) It means that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit which existed in the first century would be given by God to all major categories of His people.
 - (2) Biblical writers often divided the world into broad categories of people (cf. Gal 3:28).
 - (3) With that concept in mind notice how God distributed this outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon “all flesh” in the first century when miracles were being performed:
 - (a) To Jews (this chapter) and Gentiles (chapter 10).
 - (b) To males (“your sons”) and females (“your daughters”) (Acts 21:9 cf. 1 Cor 14:34).
 - (c) To older people (“your old men”) and younger people (“young men”).
 - (d) Thus, when God said He would pour out of His Spirit on “all flesh” He meant He would do that on all categories of His people.
6. Before we leave these two verses it is important to notice that elsewhere in the New Testament *God* placed a limit on the amount of time He would allow these miraculous gifts to be used.
- a. 1 Corinthians 13:8-10.
 - b. So, these miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit ended in the first century when God completed His revelation of the New Testament.

2:19-20

1. These verses are a continuation of Joel's prophecy in Joel 2:30-31.
2. He predicted a time when God would show great signs and wonders in heaven and on earth.
3. These wonders included such things as blood, fire, and smoke which are often used to symbolize wars and other destruction.
 - a. It is interesting to note the historian Josephus reported such things during the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 A.D.
 - b. For example, he described fiery meteors, a flaming sword hanging in the sky, and a fiery comet pointing down to the city (Bales, *Hub of the Bible*, p. 72).
 - c. Other historians documented continual pillars of smoke rising into the air from the burning of synagogues, homes, etc. during that destruction.
4. Other wonders predicted by Joel included the darkening of the sun as well as the moon being turned into blood.
 - a. This is symbolic language which the prophets used to predict the destruction of those who opposed God.
 - (1) Isaiah 13:1, 9-13.
 - (2) Isaiah 29:1,6.
 - (3) Ezekiel 32:2, 6-8.
 - b. In addition, the Lord Jesus used remarkably similar language to describe the coming destruction of Jerusalem (Mt 24:15-29; Lk 21:20-26).
 - c. Furthermore, similar events occurred during and after the crucifixion of Christ in the days just preceding this day of Pentecost.
 - (1) Matthew 27:45, 50-54.
 - (2) In fact, Tertullian reported that Pontius Pilate wrote to the Emperor Tiberias that, "The moon, being like blood, did not shine the whole night, and yet, she happened to be at the full" (*Ante-Nicene Fathers, Pilate to Tiberias*, Vol. III, p. 463).
5. Notice the prophet Joel said these wonders and signs would occur some time before the "great and notable day of the Lord."
 - a. In the Old Testament the phrase "the day of the Lord" was used to describe a time when God executed His wrath on those who rebelled against Him.
 - b. It was also used to predict the downfall of rebellious nations.
 - c. In addition to the scriptures discussed above concerning Babylon, Jerusalem and Egypt please consider the following:
 - (1) Obadiah 15.
 - (2) Amos 5:18-20.
 - d. In the New Testament the phrase "the day of the Lord" refers to the day of judgment at the end of time.
 - e. On that day God will implement the final execution of His wrath on those who have not obeyed Him.
 - (1) 2 Peter 3:10.
 - (2) Compare with 1 Corinthians 5:5; 2 Corinthians 1:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:2.
 - f. It is my belief the "great and notable day of the Lord" Joel predicted in these verses was the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

- (1) That would certainly be consistent with the use of this phrase in the Old Testament during which time Joel prophesied.
 - (2) In the destruction of Jerusalem God executed His wrath on the rebellious nation of Israel.
 - (3) He had worked patiently and mercifully with them for hundreds of years, but they continued in their rebellion against Him.
 - (4) The signs which Joel predicted would take place before that day certainly were seen in the heavens and the earth during the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - (5) In addition, the language Joel used is remarkably similar to that which Jesus used when He predicted the destruction of Jerusalem in Matthew 24 and Luke 21.
 - (6) Finally, by the time of the destruction of Jerusalem God had poured out of His Spirit on "all flesh," i.e., Jew/Gentile, male/female, etc.
 - (7) Thus, the activities which surrounded the destruction of Jerusalem certainly fit Joel's prophecy very well!
- g. It is also certainly possible that the "great and notable day of the Lord" Joel predicted will be a day of judgment.
- (1) This would definitely be consistent with the use of this phrase in the New Testament.
 - (2) One precaution would be necessary if this view were taken.
 - (3) That precaution would be to warn that the signs in verses 19 and 20 *cannot* be used to predict the end of the world.
 - (a) As we have seen, similar signs have been present several times in the history of the world including at the crucifixion of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - (b) Thus, these signs are not conclusive evidence that the end of the world and the Judgment Day are near.
 - (c) All that God has said in this prophecy is that *some time* before the "great and notable day of the Lord" these signs would occur.
 - (d) Since these signs have *already* occurred several times in history you and I need to be prepared for the judgment *every day*!
 - (e) Remember the words of our Savior in Matthew 24:36-44.
 - (f) In any case God makes it clear in the New Testament that the Judgment Day is a certainty which all accountable people will have to face (cf. Rom 14:12; 2 Cor 5:10-11).

2:21

1. God through Joel predicted that during the last days those who "call upon the name of the Lord" shall be saved.
2. Remember the last days began with Jesus' ministry and will continue until the Judgment Day.
3. But, what does it mean to call upon the name of the Lord?
 - a. There are several ways to determine God's answer to that question.
 - b. One way is to study what the Lord does *not* mean by the phrase.

- c. He surely *does not* mean just calling the Lord's name and praying as is done in the denominational world today.
 - (1) Luke 6:46.
 - (2) Matthew 7:21-23.
 - d. Another way to determine the meaning of this phrase is to study its use in this context of Acts chapter 2.
 - (1) Joel prophesied about things which would happen in the last days (v. 17).
 - (2) Among those things was calling upon the name of the Lord to be saved (this verse).
 - (3) But, Peter said by inspiration that what happened on that day of Pentecost was the beginning of the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy.
 - (4) Consequently, we would expect to find people calling upon the name of the Lord to be saved on that day of Pentecost.
 - (5) Therefore, if we identify those who were saved that day and *how* they were saved we will have the inspired answer on what it means to call upon the name of the Lord.
 - (6) Those who were saved on the day of Pentecost were those who:
 - (a) Heard the gospel (vv. 22-36).
 - (b) Believed the gospel message and were sorry for their sins (v. 37).
 - (c) Repented and were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins (vv. 38,41).
 - (d) Continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, including proper worship (v. 42).
 - (e) And, were added by the Lord to His church (v. 47).
 - (7) From this inspired account we conclude that to call upon the name of the Lord is to faithfully and lovingly obey His commands (including baptism) thereby receiving forgiveness through God's mercy and grace.
 - d. A third way to determine the meaning of calling upon the name of the Lord is to study other contexts where this phrase is found.
 - (1) Acts 22:16.
 - (2) Romans 10:13-17.
 - (a) Summary:
 - 1. One sent to preach/teach the gospel (v. 15).
 - 2. Hear the gospel to create faith (vv. 14,17).
 - 3. Believe in the Lord (v. 14).
 - 4. Obey the gospel, thus calling upon the name of the Lord (v. 13).
 - (b) From this inspired account we draw the same conclusion we drew from the other two:
 - 1. To call upon the name of the Lord is to faithfully and lovingly obey the gospel.
 - 2. This includes being baptized for the remission of sins (to have sins washed away).
4. Summary of 2:14-21 - Inspired interpretation of these events.
- a. In verses 14-15 Peter denied he and the other apostles were drunk as had been charged.

- b. In verse 16 Peter said that what was happening was the fulfillment of the prophecy revealed in Joel 2:28-32.
 - c. In that prophecy God said He would pour out of His Spirit on all categories of His people (vv. 17-18).
 - d. This would enable His people to prophesy, dream dreams and see visions miraculously by the power of the Holy Spirit (vv. 17-18).
 - e. In addition, at some time before the day of the Lord, God would show great signs and wonders in the heavens and on earth (vv. 19-20).
 - f. In the last days those who call on the name of the Lord (faithfully and lovingly obey the gospel) will be saved (v. 21).
5. Brief review of chapter 2 - The promise fulfilled and the church established:
- a. (1-13) Apostles filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues.
 - b. (14-36) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicts the crowd of sin, righteousness and judgment.
 - (1) (14-21) Inspired interpretation of these events

**(2) (2:22-24) JESUS: ATTESTED BY GOD, KILLED BY JEWS,
RAISED BY THE FATHER**

2:22

1. In this verse Peter began to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the power and wisdom of God (cf. 1 Cor 1:18, 23-2:2).
2. He did that by making six powerful, penetrating and astounding points.
3. His first point was that Jesus was approved by God the Father as demonstrated by the mighty miracles that God performed through Jesus.
 - a. Notice that these were not imitation, pretended or deceitful miracles worked by some imposter.
 - b. Instead, they were genuine, real, true miracles worked by almighty God through His beloved Son!
4. Not only that, but his second point was that these miracles were worked in the very midst of the Jews, thus, they were very well aware of these miracles.
5. They knew the miracles had been performed and they could not deny that they were valid, authentic, true miracles.
6. Thus, even the worst enemies of Jesus could not disprove the validity of the miracles which He worked!

2:23

1. As his third point Peter announced that Jesus was delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God the Father.
 - a. This simply means God planned ahead of time for Jesus to die for the sins of the world.
 - (1) Revelation 13:8.
 - (2) Galatians 4:4.

- b. The Jews delivered Jesus because of envy, but God delivered His only begotten Son for the sins of each of us!
 - (1) Matthew 27:18.
 - (2) Romans 4:25.
 - (3) Romans 8:32.
 - c. Thus, the *primary* reason for Jesus being delivered was not His weakness or inability to rescue Himself, nor was it the envy of the Jews.
 - d. Instead, the primary reason was that it was God's plan to deliver Him for the sins of mankind.
 - e. However, the fact that God knew beforehand that these events would occur did *not* affect any person's freedom of choice!
 - f. Consistent with God's dealing with man from the beginning each of the participants in this stirring drama, including Jesus, freely chose the action they took.
 - (1) Joshua 24:15.
 - (2) Revelation 22:17.
 - (3) John 10:17-18.
2. As his fourth point Peter placed responsibility for the crucifixion and death of Jesus on the Jews ("you").
- a. Imagine the effect of this inspired statement on this Jewish audience, especially in light of what Peter had already said:
 - (1) God approved of Jesus by the miracles He worked.
 - (2) These miracles had been worked in the midst of the Jews in such a way that they could not deny them.
 - (3) Jesus was delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God.
 - (4) And yet, the Jews had Jesus crucified and killed!
3. Notice the Jews had taken Jesus "by lawless hands."
- a. It appears these words refer to the Roman officers and soldiers who carried out the actual crucifixion of Jesus.
 - b. The words can mean "men without law," which would refer to Gentiles including Romans who did not have the law of Moses (cf. Rom 2:14).
 - c. This would certainly be consistent with what actually happened (Mt 27:1-2,26-27).

2:24

- 1. Peter did not need to spend a great deal of time proving the *crucifixion* and *death* of Jesus. These were facts already well-known and believed by all.
- 2. But, he did need to spend more time proving the *resurrection* of Christ so those with honest and good hearts would believe in it as a fact.
- 3. Thus, as his fifth point, Peter spoke about the resurrection of Christ. Notice the progression of his arguments in this section:
 - a. God showed His approval of Jesus by miracles that none could deny (v. 22).
 - b. Yet, the Jews by lawless hands had crucified and killed Jesus (last verse).
 - c. Therefore, they pronounced the death sentence.

- d. But God reversed that unjustified sentence of death and again showed His divine approval of His beloved Son by raising Him from the dead.
- 4. In doing this God “loosed the pains of death.”
 - a. “Loosed” - λύσας - the opposite of being bound or tied up with a rope or cord. It means to untie, liberate or make free.
 - b. Thus, in raising Jesus from the dead and the grave, God liberated or freed Jesus from the death which He experienced for every man (Heb 2:9).
- 5. As his sixth point, Peter said Jesus was raised from the dead because it was not possible for Him to be held captive by death after the three days appointed by God (cf. Lk 24:46).
- 6. The importance of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead can also be seen in several other scriptures:
 - a. 1 Corinthians 15:17.
 - b. Romans 4:25.
 - c. Romans 1:4.
- 7. Because of that importance Peter spent the next eleven verses dealing with the subject of the resurrection.
- 8. Summary of 2:22-24 - Jesus: Attested by God; Killed by Jews; Raised by the Father.

In this remarkable section we have seen Peter preach six powerful, penetrating and astounding points:

- a. First, God had openly shown His approval of Jesus by the mighty miracles which He performed through Jesus (v. 22).
- b. Second, the validity of these miracles was very well-known and that fact could not be denied either by the Jews or by others (v. 22).
- c. Third, contrary to what the Jews thought God delivered His only begotten Son to them by His determined counsel and foreknowledge (v. 23).
- d. Fourth, in spite of God’s approval of His Son the Jews crucified and killed Him by lawless hands (v. 23).
- e. Fifth, God reversed this unjustified sentence of death by raising Jesus from the dead (v. 24).
- f. And sixth, it was not possible for Jesus to be held captive by death after the three days appointed by God (v. 24).
- 9. Brief review of chapter 2 - The promise fulfilled and the church established:
 - a. (1-13) Apostles filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues.
 - b. (14-36) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicts the crowd of sin, righteousness and judgment.
 - (1) (14-21) Inspired interpretation of these events.
 - (2) (22-24) *Jesus: Attested by God; Killed by Jews; Raised by the Father.*

(3) (2:25-32) JESUS: THE PROOF FROM PROPHECY

2:25-28

- 1. In these verses Peter began his proof of the resurrection of Jesus by quoting from the Old Testament scriptures in which his audience believed.

2. Notice verse 25 begins with the key word “for.”
 - a. The word “for” tells us there is a connection between what was said at the end of verse 24 and what is said in these verses.
 - b. At the end of verse 24 Peter said it was not possible for Jesus to be held captive by death.
 - c. In verses 25-28 he explained *why* it was not possible.
 - d. He said it was not possible for Jesus to be held captive by death because God predicted the resurrection of the Christ, the Messiah (through David in the Old Testament).
3. The specific passage Peter quoted was Psalm 16:8-11.
 - a. We will study the inspired meaning of that Psalm as given by Peter in verses 29-32 of this chapter.
 - b. But first let us notice *who* Peter said David was talking about in Psalm 16:8-11.
 - c. Then we will analyze *what was said* in that Psalm.
4. First, Peter said by inspiration in verse 25 that David spoke the things in Psalm 16:8-11 “concerning Him.”
 - a. But, who is the “Him?”
 - b. Of course, Peter was referring to Jesus who could not be held captive by death (v. 24).
5. In reading this Psalm it sounds as if David were talking about himself.
 - a. But, Peter made it clear that in revealing this portion of Psalm 16 David was not referring to himself as the one who would eventually speak these words.
 - b. In fact, Peter would show in verses 29-32 of this chapter that this portion of Psalm 16 could *not* have applied to David.
 - c. Rather, by the inspiration of God, David was prophesying about the long-awaited *Messiah!*
 - d. The Messiah was the anointed one, the coming King, the Christ who would be the Savior of mankind (cf. Jn 1:41).
 - e. So, in Psalm 16 David was predicting things about the coming Messiah, the Christ, the Savior.
 - f. But, the inspired apostle Peter said David spoke those things about Jesus (“Him”).
 - g. Therefore, the audience would have concluded that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior about whom David prophesied in Psalm 16:8-11.
 - h. You and I should make the very same conclusion!
6. In the last part of verse 25 and the first part of verse 26 this Messiah is predicted as seeing the Lord God in His presence watching over Him and delivering Him from trouble.
 - a. This would give the Messiah both confidence and joy.
 - b. And it would show God’s approval of the One who was called the Messiah.
7. In the last half of verse 26, and in verses 27 and 28, we see David also predicted the following things concerning the Messiah:
 - a. His flesh would rest in hope (v. 26b).
 - b. That was true because God would not leave the Messiah’s soul (spirit) in hades (v. 27a).

- (1) As we will study, hades is where our spirit goes when we die physically.
- (2) That tells us the Messiah was going to die physically, but God would not allow His soul to remain in hades.
- c. Nor would God allow the Messiah's body to see corruption (i.e., to decay and return to dust like our bodies do) (v. 27b).
- d. Rather, the Messiah would live again after dying (v. 28a).
- e. Thus, He would be victorious over death.
- f. And after that victorious resurrection the Messiah would rejoice when He ascended to be in the presence of God in heaven (v. 28b).
- g. This was another obvious indication that the crucified Savior was approved by God rather than being under His curse!
- 8. Also in verse 27 notice David referred to the Messiah as God's "Holy One."
 - a. Peter identified this Holy One as the Lord Jesus (3:13-15)!
 - b. Stephen identified the Just One as the Lord Jesus (7:52)!
 - c. And, Paul identified that Holy One as the Lord Jesus (13:33-37)!
- 9. What a remarkable prophecy concerning the Messiah, the Christ! It is remarkable for several reasons:
 - a. First, it was given *hundreds* of years before the Messiah came to earth.
 - b. Second, God prophesied *amazing* things about the Messiah which man would not predict.
 - c. Third, the prophecy contains remarkably exact and precise details which uninspired men could not guess or dream up.
 - d. As we have seen these details included the following:
 - (1) He would come to live in the flesh and He would die.
 - (2) Yet, His soul would not remain in hades and His body would not decay in the grave.
 - (3) Thus, He would be victorious over death by rising from the dead.
 - (4) And, after that glorious resurrection, He would ascend into heaven - returning to the joys of that wonderful place.
 - (5) Can there be any doubt that Jesus was that long-awaited Messiah?!
 - (6) He fulfilled every element of this astounding prophecy completely and precisely!
 - (7) And, can there be any doubt that the Bible, with its amazingly exact predictions, is the word of God?!
- 10. Before we leave verses 25-28 there is one more point which deserves further study.
 - a. In verse 27, according to the older version of the King James translation, God would not leave the Messiah's soul in "hell."
 - b. The ASV and NKJV translations show that God would not leave the Messiah's soul in "hades."
 - c. Is there any difference between the two words translated "hell" and "hades?" If so, what is the difference?
 - d. There *is* a difference and the proper translation in this verse is "hades."
 - e. In fact, it is the actual Greek word which is found in this as well as several other verses in the New Testament.

- f. There is an entirely different Greek word which is translated “hell” (γέεννα) which is *not* found in this verse.
 - (1) The word translated “hell” describes the place where the wicked will be punished *eternally*.
 - (2) Compare with Mark 9:43-44.
- g. On the other hand, the word “hades” refers to the unseen realm or region where our human spirit will go *temporarily* when it departs from our body upon physical death.
 - (1) In this realm or region there are two separate sections.
 - (2) There is also a wide area separating these two sections.
 - (3) At physical death the spirit of each righteous person goes to one of these sections of hades, and the spirit of each unrighteous person goes to the other section.
 - (4) The spirits in the unrighteous section cannot cross over the wide area into the righteous section and vice versa.
- h. To understand all of this properly we need to study several passages of scripture.
 - (1) 1 Thessalonians 5:23.
 - (2) James 2:26.
 - (3) Ecclesiastes 12:7.
 - (4) Luke 16:19-31.
 - (5) Luke 23:43.
 - (6) Revelation 20:12-15.
- i. There are faithful, studious, good students who believe the paradise portion of hades is now located in heaven.
 - (1) Although the study of that belief is beyond the scope of this course it is a well-documented, carefully thought out one which is worthy of further individual study.
 - (2) I personally believe the case for the paradise section of hades being in heaven is a strong one.
 - (3) Those who have obtained the notes for this course will find additional material on this subject at Appendix “A” of those notes.

2:29

1. Here, Peter clearly stated Psalm 16:8-11 *could not* have applied to David; thus, David was prophesying about someone else and not himself.
2. Peter said the Psalm could not have applied to David because he was dead and buried and his tomb was still there in Jerusalem.
3. In other words, in contrast with the person prophesied about in the Psalm, David’s body had experienced the normal decay and corruption by that time.
 - a. Compare with 13:36 where the inspired apostle Paul also said that David’s body suffered decay in the grave!
4. Thus, David’s body had *not* been raised from the dead as was predicted concerning the One in the Psalm.

5. The only conclusion that could be drawn was that the Psalm applied to someone *other* than David.
6. Peter would remove all doubt as to who that person was in the next several verses.
7. But before that, notice Peter referred to David as “the patriarch.”
 - a. A patriarch is the head, or ruler, of a family.
 - b. Apparently, the word is used here to apply to David as the head of the family through whom the Messiah would come (cf. Mt 1:1).

2:30-31

1. In these two verses Peter gave the inspired meaning of Psalm 16:8-11.
2. He did that by making four broad points.
 - a. First, he said that in Psalm 16 David was speaking as a prophet of God, i.e., as one who spoke the word of God.
 - b. Second, Peter said that in speaking these words David remembered God’s promise to raise up the Christ to sit on David’s throne.
 - c. Third, David spoke these words concerning raising up the Christ to sit on David’s throne as an inspired prediction of the *resurrection* of the Christ, the Messiah.
 - d. Finally, Peter gave two important facts about that special resurrection of the Christ.
 - (1) His soul would not be left in hades,
 - (2) And His body would not decay in the grave.
2. With those four broad points in mind let us study several important details found in these two verses.
3. In verse 30 Peter said that when David made the prophecy in Psalm 16:8-11 he was aware of a promise God had made to him previously.
 - a. Furthermore, God’s promise to David involved one of David’s descendants (i.e., “the fruit of his body”).
 - b. More specifically, God promised that the Christ, the Messiah, would come from David’s family.
 - c. And He promised the Christ would be raised up to sit on David’s throne.
 - (1) It is clear God was not talking about the Christ ruling on the *literal, physical* throne of David.
 - (2) Rather, to sit on David’s throne meant to rule, to reign, to have power as a King over His kingdom.
 - (3) Compare with Luke 1:31-33.
 - d. This promise from God to David is found in 2 Samuel 7:12-16 (cf. Psa 132:11; 89:3-4).
4. In verse 31 Peter gave the exact *time* when this promise was fulfilled.
 - a. It would *not* be fulfilled hundreds, or even thousands of years after the first century.
 - b. Rather, Peter said by inspiration that God’s promise to David *was* fulfilled in the resurrection of the Christ *in the first century*.
 - c. Thus, when the Christ was victoriously raised from the dead in the first century He was raised to rule as a King on David’s throne!

- d. He was raised to rule and to have power over His kingdom.
- e. And all of this was in the first century, *not* at some date far in the future!
- f. It is critically important we realize that fact because of the false doctrine of premillennialism which is taught widely in the religious world today.
- g. We will study that doctrine, and why it is false, at the end of this chapter.
- h. Until then, please keep this thought firmly in your mind.
 - (1) The Christ was raised from the dead *in the first century* to rule as King on David's spiritual throne.

2:32

1. Peter boldly declared that Jesus, whom the apostles were preaching, was the fulfillment of God's promise to David!
2. Notice how precisely Jesus fulfilled God's promise to David:
 - a. He was a descendant of David (cf. Mt 1:1; Rev 22:16).
 - b. God did not allow His soul to remain in hades.
 - c. The Father did not allow His body to decay in the grave.
 - d. And God raised Him from the dead to rule as King on David's throne.
 - e. Therefore, there is only one legitimate conclusion.
 - f. The conclusion is that this Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior of mankind, the King over His kingdom!
 - g. Peter's profound argument can be summarized as follows:
 - (1) God prophesied He would raise *the Christ, the Messiah*, from the dead, His soul would not remain in hades and His body would not decay in the grave.
 - (2) God raised *Jesus* from the dead, *His* soul did not remain in hades and *His* body did not decay in the grave.
 - (3) Therefore, *Jesus was the Christ*, the Messiah, who had been prophesied!
 - h. Can you imagine the impact of this statement on the audience that day?!
 - i. Can you appreciate the impact that this statement should have on our lives today?!
3. But, Peter did not just prove these facts from the scriptures and make this bold declaration.
4. He also assured his audience that he and the other apostles were *eyewitnesses* to the fact that God raised Jesus from the dead.
 - a. Remember, Jesus had told His apostles they would be His witnesses (Jn 15:27; Acts 1:8).
 - b. In fact, they *had* to be a witness of His resurrection to be apostles of Christ (Acts 1:21-22).
 - c. They had seen and heard Him giving many *infallible* proofs of His resurrection after His death and burial (1:3).
 - d. Not only that but they had eaten with Him, and touched Him; including the holes in His hands and side (Lk 24:36-43; Jn 20:26-29; 1 Jn 1:4)!
 - e. And they saw Him ascend back into heaven (Acts 1:9-11).
 - f. Thus, their testimony could not be successfully denied.

5. Before we leave these verses, it is important to recognize there are two other inspired references to God's promise to David. And both of them confirm that promise as being fulfilled by Jesus the Christ!
 - a. In Acts 13:32-39 (especially vv. 34-35) Paul referred to both Psalm 16 and 2 Samuel 7:12ff saying these prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus.
 - b. And, in Hebrews 1:1-5 (especially v. 5) the inspired writer of Hebrews quoted from 2 Samuel 7:12ff and said God's promise to David was fulfilled in Jesus.
 - c. Thus, there are three separate New Testament references to this Old Testament promise and they all draw the same conclusion without error or contradiction.
 - d. Several conclusions can be drawn from this fact:
 - (1) First, it provides overwhelming evidence that Jesus was the Christ whom God prophesied would be raised to rule on David's throne.
 - (2) And second, it shows the amazing unity and harmony of the Bible. This is one of the strong evidences that this holy book was originated by God, not by men!
6. Summary of 2:25-32 - *Jesus*: The proof from prophecy.
 - a. In verse 25 Peter proved several things by quoting from Psalm 16:8-11.
 - (1) First, he proved his claim that it was not possible for Jesus to be held captive by death.
 - (2) Second, he proved the resurrection of Jesus from the dead as the One predicted by David in this Psalm.
 - (3) Third, he proved that Jesus' resurrection from the dead confirmed He was the Messiah for whom Israel had waited so long!
 - b. Also in verse 25 Peter said that although the words of Psalm 16:8-11 were written by David they did not apply to David. Instead, they applied to Jesus.
 - c. In that Psalm the inspired David predicted the following amazing things about the Messiah (vv. 25-28).
 - (1) The Lord would always be in the Messiah's presence, watching over Him and delivering Him from trouble (v. 25),
 - (2) That fact would give the Messiah comfort, confidence and joy (v. 26).
 - (3) Not only that but the Messiah would be filled with hope (v. 26).
 - (4) That was true because although the Messiah would die physically God would not leave the Messiah's soul (spirit) in hades (v. 27).
 - (5) Nor would God allow the Messiah's body to decay in the grave (v. 27).
 - (6) Rather, the Messiah would win the victory over death by being raised from the dead to live again (v. 28).
 - (7) And, after that victorious resurrection the Messiah would ascend and rejoice in the presence of God in heaven (v. 28).
 - d. Next, in verse 29, Peter declared that the words of the Psalm *could not* have applied to David because he died and his body had decayed in his tomb in Jerusalem.
 - e. In verses 30 and 31 Peter made the following major points in giving the inspired meaning of Psalm 16:8-11:
 - (1) First, in that Psalm, David spoke the word of God as one of His prophets.

- (2) Second, in speaking these words David remembered God's promise to raise up the Christ to sit on David's throne.
- (3) Third, that promise to raise up the Christ to sit on David's throne was an inspired prediction of the *resurrection* of the Christ, the Messiah.
- (4) Fourth, involved in that unique resurrection would be the fact that the Christ's soul would not remain in hades and His body would not decay in the grave.
- (5) Fifth, Peter said by inspiration that God's promise to David was fulfilled in the resurrection of the Christ in the first century.
- f. In verse 32 Peter boldly said Jesus was the fulfillment of God's promise to David!
 - (1) God the Father had raised Jesus from the dead as prophesied.
 - (2) Jesus' soul was not left in hades, nor was His body allowed to decay in the grave.
 - (3) Therefore, Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior, the King of whom David had prophesied.
 - (4) And not only had Peter proved this remarkable fact from the scriptures,
 - (5) But the apostles also gave eyewitness testimony to that astounding resurrection which could not be denied!
- g. Thus, in this remarkable section, Peter, by the inspiration of God, proved that Jesus was the long-awaited Messiah, the Christ, the Savior.
 - (1) He did so by quoting from the Old Testament scriptures with which his Jewish audience was familiar.
 - (2) And he confirmed that proof *with the eyewitness verification of the twelve apostles* that God raised Jesus from the dead just as prophesied.
 - (3) But, even though the case was proved Peter and the apostles added further evidence supporting their claim that Jesus was the Christ.
 - (4) We will see that evidence in verses 33-36.
- 6. Brief review of chapter 2 - The promise fulfilled and the church established.
 - a. (1-13) Apostles filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues
 - b. (14-36) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicted the crowd of sin, righteousness and judgment
 - (1) (14-21) Inspired interpretation of these events
 - (2) (22-24) *Jesus: Attested by God; Killed by Jews; Raised by the Father.*
 - (3) (25-32) *Jesus: The Proof from prophecy.*

(4) (2:33-36) JESUS: EXALTED AND ENTHRONED

2:33

- 1. In verses 25-31 Peter had quoted and explained Psalm 16:8-11.
- 2. He did so to prove that the Christ would be raised to rule as King on David's throne.
 - a. He also gave the eyewitness testimony of the twelve apostles that God had raised Jesus, the Christ, from the dead in fulfillment of that Psalm.
 - b. A natural question would then arise - "Where did Jesus go after He was raised from the dead?"
 - c. Peter answered that question in this verse.

3. In doing so, he made several bold and extremely important claims concerning Jesus. He declared Jesus:
 - a. Had been exalted to the right hand of God,
 - b. Had received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father and
 - c. Had poured out the miraculous events which occurred on that amazing day of Pentecost.
4. Let us analyze those claims in more detail.
5. First, the claim that Jesus had been exalted to the right hand of God.
 - a. Of course, this meant Jesus was in heaven with the Father.
 - (1) Clearly, the Father showed His approval of Jesus by raising Him up to heaven.
 - b. “Exalted” - ὑψωθείς - to lift up on high; to glorify.
 - (1) Thus, the Father glorified His Son by lifting Him up to heaven on high (cf. Phil 2:9; Heb 2:9; Eph 1:20ff).
 - (2) It is interesting to compare the use of this same word in another passage of scripture:
 - (a) John 8:28.
 - (b) Also compare with John 3:14; 12:32-33.
 - c. Next, not only was Jesus exalted, but He was exalted “to the right hand of God.”
 - (1) In the Bible the right hand, especially the right hand of God, is a position of power and authority (cf. Job 40:14; Psa 17:7; 18:35).
 - (2) Jesus, then, was glorified by the Father by being lifted up to heaven in a position of power and authority.
 - (3) Therefore, Jesus was ruling as the Messiah, the King, in heaven just as prophesied in Psalm 16:8-11!
 - (4) And, Jesus’ ruling as King began in the *first* century - not hundreds or thousands of years later as religious leaders teach today!
 - (5) This is entirely consistent with what God teaches in other passages concerning when Jesus the Christ began to rule:
 - (a) It was *after* He made purification for sins (Heb 1:3ff).
 - (b) It was *after* His resurrection from the dead (2:30-32).
 - (c) It was *at* His ascension back into heaven (cf. Dan 7:13-14).
 - (6) Another passage confirming Jesus was exalted at the right hand of God in the first century is Ephesians 1:19ff.
 - (7) Compare with Romans 8:34; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22.
 - d. From these things we can see that when Peter claimed Jesus had been exalted to the right hand of God he made an extremely important claim!
6. Second, Peter claimed that in heaven Jesus received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father.
 - a. As we studied previously this promise was for the Holy Spirit to be sent to the apostles to give them miraculous powers, including the ability to reveal the New Testament of Christ.
 - b. Please see our discussion of 1:4 for verification.
 - c. Please also remember Jesus said He would not be able to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles until He went back to the Father in heaven (Jn 16:5-7).

- d. John also said the Holy Spirit would not be given until Jesus was glorified (Jn 7:39)!
- e. Thus, the fact that this promise was fulfilled that day was conclusive evidence proving Jesus had gone back to heaven and had been glorified!
- 7. Third, Peter claimed Jesus had poured out the miraculous events which the audience was seeing and hearing that very day. This referred to several things:
 - a. First, the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles (2:1-4);
 - b. Second, the miraculous ability of the apostles to speak in other languages which they had never learned before (2:4-13);
 - c. And third, the miraculous ability of the apostles to reveal the truth, the word of God and interpret prophecy (2:14ff).
- 8. Notice how Peter has dealt with the earlier charge by some in the audience that what happened that day was a result of the apostles being under the influence of wine (2:13).
 - a. In verses 16-21 he first demonstrated that this miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit had been prophesied by the Lord in the scriptures.
 - b. Then in verses 22-31 he proved that the resurrection of Jesus had also been predicted in the scriptures.
 - c. In verse 32 he showed that the apostles were eyewitnesses to the resurrection.
 - d. In this verse he made reference to the promise of Jesus to send the Holy Spirit to the apostles.
 - e. All of these undeniable facts and scriptures were a reasonable and logical explanation of what happened that day.
- 9. All of these things also served as conclusive confirmation that Peter and the other apostles were speaking by the authority and power of almighty God!

2:34-35

- 1. Peter again pointed out to his audience that David had not ascended into the heavens.
 - a. One reason Peter pointed this out was to show that the statements in the last verse could not have applied to David.
 - b. They could only have applied to Jesus, the Christ, as Peter claimed by inspiration in the last verse.
 - c. In addition, Peter was showing that the Psalm he was about to quote could not have applied to David either.
- 2. Next, Peter quoted David as recorded in Psalm 110:1.
 - a. In that Psalm the Lord (literally Jehovah) spoke to one whom David referred to as, "my Lord."
 - (1) Since David referred to this person as Lord, He was obviously someone superior to David.
 - (2) In fact, the Jews recognized this as a Psalm which predicted something about the Messiah, the Christ (cf. Mt 22:41-46; Lk 20:41-44).
 - (3) Therefore, in this Psalm, God the Father was speaking to David's Lord who was the Christ, the Messiah.
 - b. What the Father said to the Christ in that Psalm is also very important.

- (1) He told the Christ to sit at His (i.e., the Father's) right hand.
 - (a) As we studied earlier the right hand of God is a position of power and authority.
 - (b) This indicates that one is ruling as a King with supreme power.
 - (c) Thus, the Father was predicting a time when the Christ would rule as King at the Father's right hand in heaven.
 - (d) But, Peter had already proved conclusively by use of Psalm 16:8-11 that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah.
 - (e) And, in the last verse, Peter claimed by inspiration that Jesus had been "exalted to the right hand of God."
 - (f) Therefore, Peter was using Psalm 110:1 as one more scriptural piece of evidence to prove Jesus was the prophesied Christ, the Messiah! His logical reasoning was as follows:
 1. Jesus had been exalted to the right hand of God (v. 33).
 2. But, David prophesied that the Christ would sit at the right hand of God (vv. 34-35; Psa 110:1).
 3. Therefore, *Jesus was the Christ* who fulfilled this prophecy!
 - (g) The only legitimate conclusion that could be drawn was that Jesus, the Christ, was in heaven at the right hand of God as the fulfillment of this prophecy.
 - (h) And in that position of power and authority He was ruling as the king over His kingdom.
 - (i) And again, His rule began *in the first century, not* hundreds or thousands of years later!
 - (j) Furthermore, He *has been* ruling as King over His kingdom ever since!
 - (k) It is interesting to note that the inspired writer of Hebrews also applied this Psalm to Jesus as the Christ (Heb 1:13)!
- (2). In Psalm 110:1 the Father also told the Messiah *how long* His rule would last by designating when it would end!
 - (a) God said the Messiah would rule until God made all of the Messiah's enemies His footstool.
 - (b) This is another way of saying the Messiah would rule until all His enemies were put under His feet, defeated and conquered.
 - (c) In a remarkably similar and inspired use of Psalm 110:1 the apostle Paul further specified what the last enemy is:
 1. Death - 1 Corinthians 15:23-26.

2:36

1. God, through Peter, announced the grand conclusion of His argument.
2. Peter introduced the conclusion with the word "therefore" and addressed the conclusion to all of Israel.
3. He said they could know absolutely, for certain, without a doubt that the conclusion was a valid one.
4. Before we study that conclusion notice just how certainly God had proved His case through Peter:

- a. Peter had *preached* the following about Jesus:
 - (1) His life was approved by God through the mighty, undeniable miracles which He worked (v. 22).
 - (2) His crucifixion and death at the hands of lawless men (v. 23).
 - (3) His burial, although His flesh did not decay (vv. 27,31).
 - (4) His resurrection from the dead as had been prophesied concerning the Messiah (vv. 30-32).
 - (5) His ascension into heaven (v. 33).
 - (6) His being exalted as King on David's throne at the right hand of God in heaven (vv. 33-35).
 - (7) And, His receiving from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit and the outpouring of the miraculous events of that day (v. 33).
- b. Furthermore, the inspired Peter had *proved* what he *preached* about Jesus with the following overwhelming evidence:
 - (1) The miracles Jesus worked as well as those which Peter and the other apostles worked that day as described in verses 4-22.
 - (2) The precise, detailed prophecies concerning the Christ which Jesus fulfilled exactly, including Psalms 16:8-11 and 110:1 as described in verses 25-35.
 - (3) The logical reasoning, such as showing that the prophecies *could not* have applied to David, as seen in verses 29 and 34.
 - (4) And the eyewitness testimony of the twelve apostles to undeniable facts (v. 32).
- c. When we consider all of this, it is no wonder Peter said Israel could know the conclusion of his argument without a doubt!
- d. Thus, it is also certainly no wonder that many in the audience were convinced without a doubt.
- e. And it is no wonder that many today are convinced by the overwhelming evidence concerning our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ!
- 5. The grand conclusion of God's argument involved the same Jesus whom the Jews had crucified.
- 6. More specifically, the Father raised Jesus from the dead and placed Him at His own right hand, thus making Jesus both "Lord" and "Christ." Those are two very important words!
 - a. "Lord" - Κύριος.
 - (1) The word indicates one who is supreme in power, rank and authority; superior to all others; an owner; a master to whom service is due on any ground.
 - (2) Thus, the Father had made Jesus the supreme ruler; superior to all others; and the master to whom service is due on the basis of His death, resurrection and exaltation.
 - (3) Compare with Philippians 2:8-11.
 - b. "Christ" - Χριστός.
 - (1) This word means anointed, a term often associated with kings.
 - (2) In the New Testament, it was used to refer to the Messiah, the King whom the Jews expected to be the savior of their nation.

- (3) Thus, the Father had made Jesus the Messiah, the Savior, the greatest of kings.
- c. When we combine the words Lord and Christ, and the meaning of those words, the effect is overwhelming!
 - (1) The Father had made Jesus the *Lord* (i.e., the Master who is supreme in power, rank and authority).
 - (2) And, He made Jesus the *Christ* (i.e., the Messiah, the Savior and the greatest of kings)!
 - (3) In effect then the Father was saying that Jesus is God, He is deity, He is divine, He is the One to be obeyed as Ruler!
 - (4) Truly, He is the Lord of lords and the King of kings (Rev 17:14)!
- d. Thus, the audience was guilty of crucifying Jesus, the One whom the Father raised up to rule as the Lord and Christ over all men.
- e. You can imagine the effect that this fact had on the hearts of those in the audience as they allowed these inspired words to penetrate their minds!
- f. We will study the effect of these inspired words in the next section of this chapter.
- 7. But before we do that, please pause for a moment to make practical application of this powerful verse.
 - a. Have *I* thought about what it means when I say, “Jesus is my Lord and my Christ?”
 - b. Have *you* thought about what it means when you say this?
 - c. Would we all be better Christians if we thought more frequently about what “Jesus is my Lord and Christ” means?
- 8. Also, before we summarize this section, please notice the powerful use Peter made of Old Testament prophecies and the important conclusions drawn from those prophecies.
 - a. Peter showed by the inspiration of God that:
 - (1) Acts 2:29-32 - Jesus was the Christ who fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 16:8-11 .
 - (2) Acts 2:33-36 - Jesus was the Christ who fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 110:1.
 - b. Please observe several conclusions to be drawn from these prophecies and their fulfillment:
 - (1) Since it was prophesied the Christ would be raised up to *sit on David’s throne* (2:30-31),
And since Jesus the Christ was raised up to *sit at God’s right hand in heaven* in fulfillment of that prophecy,
David’s throne is at God’s right hand in *heaven*, *not* anywhere on this earth!
In conclusion then, Jesus was raised from the dead in the first century to rule *in heaven* as the Christ, the King (2:29-33; Eph 1:19-23).
 - (2) Since Jesus the Christ’s rule as King *in heaven* will last until all His enemies are defeated (2:34-35),
And since the last enemy is death (1 Cor 15:26),

Jesus will rule as King *in heaven* until death is conquered in the end, at His second coming (1 Cor 15:23-26).

- c. We will have more to say about these conclusions when we conduct our brief study of premillennialism at the end of this chapter.
9. Summary of 2:33-36 - *Jesus*: Exalted and enthroned.
- a. In verse 33 Peter made three bold claims concerning Jesus.
 - (1) First, He had been exalted to the right hand of God in heaven.
 - (2) Second, Jesus had received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father.
 - (3) Third, Jesus had poured out the miraculous events which occurred on Pentecost.
 - b. In verses 34 and 35 Peter quoted Psalm 110:1, a Messianic Psalm, as being fulfilled by Jesus.
 - (1) In that Psalm the Father told the Messiah to rule in a position of power and authority at His right hand in heaven.
 - (2) And the Messiah would rule in heaven until all His enemies were defeated.
 - (3) Therefore, as the Christ, Jesus was ruling as King in heaven in the first century and will continue to do so until all His enemies are defeated, the last enemy being death.
 - c. In verse 36 Peter confidently concluded God's argument by stating the Father had made Jesus both Lord and Christ.
 - (1) "Lord" indicating that Jesus is the Master who is supreme in power, rank and authority.
 - (2) And "Christ," indicating that Jesus is the Messiah, the Savior and the greatest of Kings.
 - (3) Thus, Jesus is God! He is the One to be obeyed as ruler!
10. Brief review of chapter 2 - The promise fulfilled and the church established.
- a. (1-13) Apostles filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke with other tongues.
 - b. (14-36) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicts the crowd of sin, righteousness and judgment.
 - (1) (14-21) Inspired interpretation of these events
 - (2) (22-24) *Jesus*: Attested by God; Killed by Jews; Raised by the Father.
 - (3) (25-32) *Jesus*: The Proof from Prophecy.
 - (4) (33-36) *Jesus*: Exalted and Enthroned.

c. (2:37-41) RESPONSE OF SOME IN THE CROWD / INSPIRED CONDITIONS OF PARDON

2:37

1. Here we see the response of those in the audience who had honest and good hearts.
2. Notice carefully their response was based upon what they "heard," i.e., the inspired words spoken by Peter.
3. These people obviously believed those inspired words spoken by Peter concerning Jesus. Remember, Peter had told the audience:
 - a. They were guilty of crucifying Jesus, the Messiah.

- b. The Father had reversed their unjustified sentence of death by raising Jesus from the dead.
 - c. Not only was Jesus alive, but He was ruling as the Lord and Christ at the Father's right hand.
 - d. In that position Jesus had all power and authority.
4. Those inspired words "cut to the hearts" of those in the audience!
- a. "Cut" - κατενύγησαν - to pierce or penetrate with a sharp object; to sting sharply; to pierce with deep grief or severe pain and anguish.
 - b. Peter had pierced the hearts of the audience by using the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword (cf. Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12).
 - c. And with that powerful sword he had motivated them to create in their hearts deep grief, severe pain and genuine sorrow for their sins.
5. As a result of sorrow for their sins they asked Peter and the other apostles the question of the ages.
- a. They asked what they should do.
 - b. The question shows these individuals knew they were guilty of sin.
 - c. And, it shows they wanted to know what they needed to do to receive forgiveness of those sins.
 - d. In other words, they were asking, "What shall we do to be saved from our sins?" (cf. Acts 16:30)!
6. Now, let us summarize the condition of those who asked this great question that day.
- a. They were guilty of sin.
 - b. They believed the inspired words Peter preached concerning Jesus the Christ.
 - c. And they had deep grief and terrible pain in their hearts because of their sins.
7. Before we leave this verse it is essential that we draw out one other very important point which is revealed here.
- a. This point has to do with the question of how the Holy Spirit works on the minds of people to influence them to do anything.
 - (1) It is widely taught in the religious world today that the Holy Spirit works directly on people's minds, without using any instrument or agent.
 - (2) This is often expressed by people saying the Holy Spirit led them to do, or to say one thing or another.
 - (3) It is at least implied, and usually meant, that the Holy Spirit led this person by working directly on their minds.
 - (4) This attitude is also seen in the belief that man is so totally sinful it is not possible for a person to have faith unless the Holy Spirit directly and miraculously works on their mind.
 - b. In studying this question we must clearly define what the issue is.
 - (1) The issue is not *whether* the Holy Spirit guides, leads or produces faith in people.
 - (2) Rather, the issue is *how* does the Holy Spirit guide, lead and produce faith in people!
 - c. There is no doubt the Holy Spirit does the following:

- (1) He guides and leads people (cf. Rom 8:14; Gal 5:18). He certainly led people to Jesus the Christ in this chapter,
- (2) And He produces faith in people. Again, He did in this case.
- d. The issue is - *how* does the Holy Spirit do these things?
- e. We believe this and other contexts in the book of Acts provide the inspired answer that should clearly settle the issue.
- f. To see why we hold this belief please consider the following points:
 - (1) Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16.
 - (2) John 16:13; 17:17.
 - (3) Acts 2:1-4.
 - (4) On that day it was quite obvious the Holy Spirit was working miraculously. For example:
 - (a) Acts 2:1-11.
 - (b) Acts 2:16-21, 25-32, 33-36.
 - (c) Acts 2:22-36.
 - (5) Thus, there is no doubt the Holy Spirit was present that day and that He was working miraculously.
 - (6) But the issue is - *how* did the Holy Spirit *guide, lead* and *create faith* in those people who asked the question, "What shall we do?"
 - (7) The best way to determine how the Holy Spirit did what He did is to carefully analyze the sequence of events that day.
 - (a) When we do this, it becomes clear the Holy Spirit was most visibly and audibly active that day in 2:2-13:
 - 1. Verse 2.
 - 2. Verse 3.
 - 3. Verses 4-13.
 - (b) But notice the reaction of the crowd to these miraculous signs:
 - 1. Verses 6-12.
 - 2. Verse 12.
 - 3. Verse 13.
 - (c) In addition to what the crowd did do please notice what they did *not* do in verses 2-13:
 - 1. They *did not* indicate that they believed in Jesus as the Christ.
 - 2. They *did not* give any indication that they were guilty of, or sorry for, their sins.
 - 3. And they *did not* ask what they needed to do to be saved from their sins.
 - (d) We see here, although the Holy Spirit was most visibly and audibly active in verses 2-13, the audience failed to show faith, sorrow for sins and an awareness of the need to be saved.
 - (e) But in verse 14 Peter stood up with the other apostles and exhorted the audience to pay very close attention to the *words* which he was about to speak (by inspiration of the Holy Spirit).
 - (f) Then Peter, by the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, began to preach the gospel as Jesus had commanded him, including the following:

1. In verses 15-21 Peter used *words* to give the inspired meaning of these events as the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy.
 2. In verses 22-24 Peter used *words* to teach that Jesus was approved by God, killed by Israel and raised by the Father.
 3. In verses 25-32 Peter used *words* to preach that Jesus fulfilled prophecy concerning the Christ.
 4. In verses 33-36 Peter used *words* to show that Jesus was exalted and enthroned by the Father, as prophesied.
 5. In verse 38 he would use *words* to tell them what to do to be forgiven.
 6. In verse 39 he would use *words* to tell them about a promise.
 7. In verse 40 he would use *words* to exhort them to save themselves.
 8. And, in verse 41 those who gladly received his *words* were baptized.
- (g) In verse 37 after some "heard" these words they responded favorably to that gospel message.
1. They obviously believed that message.
 2. They were pierced with sorrow in their hearts because of their sins.
 3. And they asked what they needed to do to be saved.
- (h) Thus, between verses 14 and 36, the Holy Spirit through Peter had:
1. *Influenced* them to change their minds.
 2. *Led* them to Jesus as the Christ.
 3. And *created faith* in their hearts.
- (i) And, as we have just seen, the Holy Spirit had done this through the word of God which Jesus had sent Him to guide Peter and the other apostles to do.
1. Thus, even though spectacular miracles were obviously being worked in the first century, the Holy Spirit did not work directly and miraculously on the hearts of those people.
 2. He obviously had the power to work miraculously and directly on people's hearts, but He chose not to!
 3. Instead, He used His agent (Peter) and His instrument (the word of God) to guide, lead and create faith in those people.
 4. That is why the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth - because He *revealed* the truth, which is the word of God (Jn 16:13; 17:17).
 5. And Jesus sent Him to guide the apostles (and other inspired men) into *all* of the word of God in the first century (Jn 16:13).
 6. The Holy Spirit completed the revelation of God's word in the first century and God forbade adding anything to it (Gal 1:6-9).
 7. Therefore, today, the Holy Spirit is not using human *agents* to reveal any more scripture like He did in the first century.
 8. However, we still have His *instrument*, the inspired word of God to use for the purpose of guiding, leading and creating faith in the minds of people.

9. That the word of God is the Holy Spirit's instrument to guide, lead and create faith is seen in the fact that the word of God is the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph 6:17).
 10. And Christians are to take that sword of the Spirit and use it as part of the whole armor of God (Eph 6:10-17)!
- (j) Another way we know the word is the Holy Spirit's instrument is seen in that the response of the people was entirely voluntary on their part. This was even true during the miraculous age in the first century.
1. The Holy Spirit did not force certain ones to receive that message by directly influencing their mind in a way that could not be resisted.
 2. Instead, the words were spoken to "all" (v. 14); to "all the house of Israel" (v. 36); and to "every one" of them (v. 38).
 3. But only certain ones voluntarily chose to "gladly receive" this word of God (v. 41)!
 4. And, as we see in another part of the book of Acts, others freely chose to contradict, blaspheme, oppose and reject God's word thus judging themselves "unworthy of everlasting life" (13:45-46)!
- (k) The fact that the Holy Spirit still uses the word of God as His instrument today to guide, lead and create faith in people is also seen in the following passages:
1. It is the word, the gospel, which is preached and heard which will create faith (Rom 10:8-17).
 - a. In fact, the word is written so that we might believe (Jn 20:30-31).
 - b. And some will choose to obey that word, while others will choose to disobey it (Rom 10:16).
 2. Furthermore, it is the word of God which effectively works in the hearts of those who choose to believe (1 Thess 2:13).
 3. It is the word of the truth of the gospel which works in hearts to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit (Col 1:5-6; Gal 5:22-23).
 4. It is the word which enlightens us as we journey through life (Psa 19:8; 119:105,130). Therefore, we do not need to be "enlightened" by the Holy Spirit in some mysterious and miraculous way to understand the word.
 5. It is the word which we place in our hearts and which we allow to continue to live in our hearts, which strengthens and builds us up (Psa 119:11; 1 Jn 2:14; Acts 20:32).
 6. It is the word which gives life when we faithfully and lovingly obey it (Jn 6:63; 1 Pet 1:23; Phil 2:16).
 7. It is the word which is powerful enough to save our souls if we engraft it in our minds, stand in it and cling tightly to it (Rom 1:16; Jas 1:21; 1 Cor 15:1-2).
 8. That is why the Lord tells us to be very careful of what and how we hear (Mk 4:24; Lk 8:18).

9. And He sternly warns - "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (in His instrument, the word) (Rev 2: 29).
 10. That is why He warns us not to grieve the Holy Spirit (by rejecting His instrument, the word) (Eph 4:30)!
 11. And that is why we need to be careful to avoid resisting the Holy Spirit (by rejecting His instrument, the word) (Acts 7:51)!
- (I) However, the fact that the Holy Spirit uses the word of God as His instrument to guide, lead and create faith in people rather than operating directly on our hearts is probably seen more clearly in the book of Acts than any other place in the Bible.
1. We will have several other good opportunities to verify this fact in more detail as we continue our study of this great book.

2:38

1. This is Peter's inspired response to the question, "What shall we do?" (v. 37).
 - a. In studying this verse we will first make a broad survey of what Peter said here.
 - b. Then we will study several points in more detail.
2. Remember from verse 37 the spiritual condition of those who asked this question:
 - a. They knew they were guilty of sin.
 - b. They believed the inspired words Peter preached concerning Jesus as the Christ.
 - c. They had deep grief and terrible pain in their hearts because of their sins.
 - d. And they wanted to know what they should do to receive forgiveness of those sins.
3. Thus, with their spiritual condition in mind, Peter's response contains several inspired conditions which believers who are sorry for their sins must meet to obtain forgiveness of those sins.
4. Notice that Peter gave two conditions which had to be met by these believers who were sorry for their past sins. They had to repent *and* they had to be baptized.
5. And the fact that repentance and baptism are connected with each other by the conjunction "and" tells us that both conditions must be met to obtain the result promised by God.
6. Thus, both conditions, repentance and baptism, are equally important in obtaining the desired result.
7. The result promised by God to those sorrowful believers who are willing to repent and be baptized is remission (forgiveness) of sins.
8. Furthermore, those who meet these inspired conditions would also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
9. With that broad overview of the verse in mind let us study several points in more detail.
10. First of all Peter said, by inspiration, that the first condition these sorrowful believers needed to meet to receive forgiveness of their sins was to repent.

- a. Remember, these people had already been cut to the heart by the gospel message, i.e., they had deep grief and terrible pain in their hearts because of their sins.
 - b. This tells us that repentance is not sorrow for sins as is taught in the religious world!
 - c. These people were already deeply sorry for their sins and Peter knew that from their question.
 - d. Yet, Peter told them they still needed to repent in addition to being sorry for their sins.
 - e. Then what is repentance?
 - (1) One way to determine the meaning of repentance is to give a definition of the word which is translated “repent” in this verse (μετανοήσατε).
 - (a) According to Greek language experts like Vine, Thayer, Arndt and Gingrich, the word, as used in the Bible, means a change in one’s mind, with specific reference primarily to sin.
 - (b) Thus, according to the biblical meaning of the word to repent means to change one’s mind with respect to sin.
 - (2) Another way to determine what it means to repent is to study several key passages where the word or concept is found.
 - (a) 2 Corinthians 7:9-10.
 - (b) Acts 26:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 1:9.
 - (c) Matthew 3:7-8.
 - (3) When we combine all of this information biblical repentance may be defined as follows:
 - (a) Repentance is a change of mind.
 - (b) This change of mind is based upon sincere, godly sorrow for past sins.
 - (c) In addition, this change of mind leads to a change of behavior which includes a turning away from sin and a turning to serve the living God.
 - e. Other verses showing that repentance is essential to salvation from our sins include Luke 13:3,5.
11. Second, Peter said by inspiration that sorrowful believers who repent also need to be baptized to receive remission of sins.
- a. This verse forever proves that to receive initial forgiveness of sins each accountable person *must* be baptized!
 - b. Thus, baptism is *essential* to salvation contrary to what is taught in the religious world.
 - c. Other verses which show that it is necessary to be baptized in order to be saved from our sins include the following:
 - (1) Mark 16:15-16.
 - (2) Acts 22:16.
 - (3) Romans 6:3-4.
 - (4) 1 Corinthians 12:13 compared with Ephesians 5:23.
 - (5) Galatians 3:27.
 - (6) Colossians 2:12-13.
 - (7) 1 Peter 3:20-21.

- d. Furthermore, the word which is translated “be baptized” (βαπτισθήτω, a form of βαπτίζω) means “to dip, plunge, immerse or submerge.”
- (1) Thus, the baptism that God commands is an immersion in water, not pouring or sprinkling as practiced by most in the religious world today.
 - (2) The fact that scriptural baptism is an immersion in water is also clearly seen in the following scriptures:
 - (a) Acts 8:35-39.
 - (b) Romans 6:3-4 (cf. Col 2:12).
 - (3) Another very interesting indication that scriptural baptism is an immersion in water comes from the field of archaeology.
 - (a) Archaeology is the scientific study of the life and culture of ancient people by the digging up of cities and historical objects.
 - (b) A good example of how archaeological discoveries have confirmed the fact that scriptural baptism is an immersion in water is seen in the following quotes on screen.
 - (c) As a sidelight, in a very interesting and informative article, Wayne Jackson has identified archaeological findings which confirm many other things recorded in the book of Acts.
 1. While a detailed study of these archaeological findings is beyond the scope of this course, we have included a copy of this article at Appendix “B” in the written notes for the course.
 2. In addition, the following facts and quotations are interesting:
 - a. In the book of Acts Luke mentions 32 countries, 54 cities, 9 Mediterranean islands, and 95 persons (62 of whom are not mentioned anywhere else in the New Testament).
 - b. Sir William Ramsey began by trying to prove the inaccuracy of the book of Acts by his own explorations. After his archaeological work, he said that Luke, “should be placed along with the very greatest of historians.”
 - c. The famous archaeologist, Dr. Nelson Gleuck said: (SEE TV SCREEN)
 3. As Wayne Jackson concluded at the end of his article: (SEE TV SCREEN)
 - (4) In summary - God commands baptism by immersion in water. We have seen that from the following:
 - (a) The meaning of the Greek word.
 - (b) New Testament examples such as Acts 8:35-39.
 - (c) The inspired description of baptism as a *burial*.
 - (d) And the confirming testimony of archaeological findings.
 - (5) Since God commands baptism by immersion in water, baptism by any other mode such as pouring or sprinkling is not acceptable to God!
 - (a) Sprinkling or pouring water on someone is obviously not the same as immersing them in water.
 - (b) Clearly then, to baptize by sprinkling or pouring is to refuse to baptize in the way that God commands.

- (c) This is disobedience of God, violation of His word, which is sinful (1 Jn 3:4).
- e. While on the subject of baptism we must address the issue of infant baptism.
 - (1) This is necessary because the practice of baptizing infants is wide spread in the denominational world.
 - (2) In the written notes for this course we have included a number of scriptural facts on this subject.
 - (3) These facts show clearly that infants are *not* eligible candidates for scriptural baptism for the following reasons:
 - (a) There is not one example of the baptism of an infant in the New Testament.
 - (b) There is no need for an infant to be baptized since they are innocent of sin (Mt 18:1-3).
 - (c) An infant is not capable of meeting the conditions which must be met before submitting to scriptural baptism, i.e., hearing, believing, repenting and confessing.
 - (4) Since infant baptism is a sinful addition to God's word we lovingly plead with all who practice it to give up that practice (Rev 22:18-19)!
 - (5) If you want to study this subject in more detail please refer to the written notes on this verse.
- f. Please observe that the people on the day of Pentecost were capable of doing the following before they were eligible to be baptized scripturally:
 - (1) They had heard the gospel concerning Jesus, the Christ (vv. 22-36).
 - (2) They believed the gospel message (as indicated by their question in verse 37).
 - (3) In fact, they *gladly* received the gospel message (v. 41).
 - (4) They had been cut to the heart by the gospel (indicating sincere and deep sorrow for sin) (v. 37).
 - (5) They had been told to repent of their past sins (v. 37).
 - (6) Therefore, we can conclude from this one example that to be a candidate for scriptural baptism a person must be capable of hearing, believing and receiving the gospel gladly as well as responding to its saving message with sincere sorrow and repentance.
 - (7) Furthermore, this one example in the book of Acts is not unique.
 - (8) A study of other passages where baptism is mentioned reveals the following actions which people had the intellect and ability to do before being baptized scripturally (cf. Mk 16:15-16; Acts 8:12-13,30-39; 10:44-48; 16:14-15,30; 18:8; 19:1-5):
 - (a) Hearing, understanding and believing the gospel,
 - (b) Asking and answering questions, paying close attention to things spoken by others and obeying commands,
 - (c) Worshiping God, and
 - (d) Confessing Christ with the mouth.

- (9) A valid conclusion to be drawn from these facts is that infants are *not* eligible candidates for scriptural baptism. That conclusion is consistent with the following points:
- (a) There is not one example of the baptism of an infant in the New Testament.
 - (b) There is no need for infants to be baptized since they are innocent of sin (Mt 18:1-3).
 - (c) An infant is not capable of meeting the following conditions which must be met before submitting to scriptural baptism:
 1. Hearing the gospel (in a manner where they are capable of believing it) (Acts 18:8).
 2. Believing the gospel (Mk 16:15-16).
 3. Repenting of their past sins (2 Cor 7:9-10).
 4. Confessing Jesus as Lord with their mouth (Rom 10:9-10).
12. In summary - thus far in our study of verse 38 we have seen that Peter responded to the audience's question of what they should do by telling them to repent and to be baptized.
13. As our next point we want to notice Peter told them to do this "in the name of Jesus Christ."
- a. Literally Peter told them to repent and be baptized on or upon the name of Jesus Christ.
 - b. To be baptized on or upon the name of Jesus Christ means to be baptized resting or relying upon His name.
 - c. It means that the name of Jesus Christ is the foundation of baptism.
 - d. In Bible times, the name of a person was often used to reflect their character, power, authority, dignity, work, etc.
 - e. For a good example, just notice the names associated with Jesus:
 - (1) Jesus - means Savior (Mt 1:21).
 - (2) Lord - means Master, Owner, Ruler (recognizing His authority and influence).
 - (3) Christ - means the Anointed One, the King.
 - f. Therefore, to be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ means to be baptized resting or relying upon the fact that He is our Savior, Master, Ruler and King!
 - g. When one is baptized properly they are acknowledging the fact that Jesus is the Savior, Master, Ruler and King of their life.
14. Next, Peter told the audience they were to repent and be baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ "for the remission of sins."
- a. This tells us the divine purpose of repentance and baptism by sorrowful believers.
 - b. The purpose is "for" (KJV, NKJV) or "unto" (ASV) the remission, or forgiveness, of sins.
 - c. The word translated "for" or "unto" (εἰς) means "in order to; to obtain; the end or purpose to be obtained."

- (1) Thus, by use of this word the Holy Spirit, through Peter, was saying that these sorrowful believers (and all since then) must repent and be baptized in order to obtain forgiveness of past sins.
- (2) Or, said another way, the “end or purpose to be obtained” by a sorrowful believer who repents and is baptized is the forgiveness of past sins.
- d. Despite the clarity of this language, there are two major arguments which some use to deny that this verse teaches that baptism is required to obtain the forgiveness of sins.
- e. These two arguments are stated and shown to be false in the written notes for this course.
- f. If you would like to study that material, please refer to those notes.
 - (1) The first major argument that some use is that the word translated “for” means “because of” or “on account of.”
 - (a) They claim a person should be baptized because their sins have already been forgiven (at the point of faith).
 - (b) In other words these people say that instead of baptism being *for* the remission of sins it is actually because sins have already been forgiven *before* baptism.
 - (c) Please carefully consider the following reasons why this teaching is wrong:
 - 1. Without even studying the meaning of the Greek word it is clear that this teaching violates the context of verses 37 and 38.
 - a. These sorrowful believers had asked what they must do to receive forgiveness of sins (v. 37).
 - b. Peter’s inspired response to their question was that they needed to repent and to be baptized (v. 38).
 - c. Thus, even if the phrase “for the remission of sins” was not mentioned in verse 38, we would know that both repentance and baptism are required to receive forgiveness.
 - d. We would know this because these are the two conditions Peter gave in response to their question asking what they must do to receive forgiveness of sins.
 - 2. The second indication the word translated “for” should not be translated “because of” is that no recognized translation of the Bible translates it in that way.
 - 3. The third indication is the overwhelming majority of Greek-English lexicons translate this word “for,” “unto,” “in order to obtain,” etc.
 - 4. In addition, Thomas Warren conducted a study of the word translated “for” in which he listed quotations from twenty Greek language experts.
 - a. Every one of these scholars confirmed that the word means “for,” “unto,” “in order to obtain,” etc.
 - b. The word involves a looking forward to something to be obtained, not a looking backward to something which was already obtained.

- c. It is also significant to note that most of these experts were members of denominations which deny the necessity to be baptized to receive the forgiveness of sins!
 - d. The complete study by Thomas Warren, including the remarkable comments of these scholars, is included at Appendix "C" of the written notes for this course.
5. Still another way to know that the word translated "for" should not be translated "because of" is to study a parallel passage (Mt 26:28).
- a. In this passage, Jesus said His blood was shed for many, "for the remission of sins."
 - b. These passages are parallel, as shown below.
 - [1] Acts 2:38 - "Repent and be baptized...for the remission of sins."
 - [2] Mathew 26:28 - "My blood...shed...for the remission of sins."
 - c. In addition to this parallel in English, the same Greek word translated "for" in Acts 2:38 is found in Mathew 26:28 where it is also translated "for."
 - d. To be consistent, those who hold this false view would have to substitute "because of" in the place of "for" in Mathew 26:28, just as they do in Acts 2:38.
 - e. When this is done, notice the result:
 - [1] Mathew 26:28 - "My blood...shed...*because of* the remission of sins."
 - [2] We know that Jesus did not shed His blood because of the remission of sins.
 - [3] That is, He did not shed His blood because sins had already been forgiven.
 - [4] Rather, He shed His blood in order to make forgiveness of sins possible (cf. Heb 9:22; Eph 1:7).
 - [5] Therefore, it is clear that the word translated "for" or "unto" does not mean "because of!"
- (2) The second major argument some use to deny this verse teaches that baptism is required to obtain forgiveness of sin can be stated as follows:
The phrase "for the remission of sins" cannot modify both of the verbs, "repent" and "be baptized."
- (a) In other words these people claim that the phrase "for the remission of sins" only applies to repentance and not to baptism.
 - (b) Thus, they conclude that repentance is necessary to receive forgiveness of sins, but baptism is not required to receive forgiveness.
 - (c) There are several reasons why this claim is false:
 - 1. First, as we studied earlier, this position violates the context of verses 37 and 38 where Peter responded to their question of what to do to receive forgiveness of sins by telling them that both repentance *and* baptism were required.

2. A second reason why this claim is false is that it violates several other clear passages of scripture where God says that one must be baptized to receive forgiveness of sins:
 - a. Mark 16:16.
 - b. Acts 22:16.
 - c. Romans 6:3-4.
 - d. Colossians 2:12-13.
 - e. Galatians 3:26-27.
 - f. 1 Peter 3:20-21.
 3. A third reason why this claim is false is the overwhelming testimony of Greek scholars.
 - a. For example, in the study referred to earlier, Thomas Warren listed quotations from sixteen Greek language experts.
 - b. Every one of these men stated that it is not only possible that the phrase “for the remission of sins” modifies both “repent” and “be baptized,” but it is the case that it does modify both verbs!
 - c. Again, most of these men were members of denominations which deny that it is necessary to be baptized in order to receive forgiveness of sins.
- (3) Thus, we have studied the two major arguments which some use to deny that this verse teaches it is necessary to be baptized to receive forgiveness of sins.
- (a) And we have found that both arguments are false!
 - (b) Therefore, we conclude God clearly teaches in this verse that a sorrowful believer must repent and be baptized to receive forgiveness of sins.
15. In summary then - in our study of verse 38 we have seen Peter respond as follows to the question, “What shall we do?”
- a. He commanded them to repent.
 - b. He commanded them to be baptized.
 - c. He said that was to be done relying upon the name of Jesus Christ.
 - d. And, he said that the purpose of repenting and being baptized was to receive the forgiveness of their sins.
16. As our next point notice Peter promised that those sorrowful believers who repented and were baptized for the forgiveness of sins would receive, “the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
- a. This phrase, “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” has been the subject of a great deal of study through the years.
 - b. Much study is required because several different, reasonable conclusions have been drawn as to the meaning of the phrase.
 - c. Although brethren have come to different conclusions as to what the gift of the Holy Spirit is they have usually conducted discussions on this subject with an attitude of harmony and love.
 - d. Likewise, it is our intention to approach this study with that kind of attitude.

17. Before we begin a more detailed analysis of the gift of the Holy Spirit, we want to make two other introductory points.
 - a. First, because of the complexity and number of the different conclusions that have been drawn, we will have to briefly summarize most of them.
 - (1) We are sorry this must be done, but there is just not enough time to study each conclusion thoroughly.
 - (2) For those who are interested in studying some of these conclusions in more detail, additional material is attached to the written notes for this course.
 - b. Second, before we proceed further, it is crucial to understand that God makes it clear that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased when the New Testament was completed around the end of the first century.
 - (1) We saw that fact in our study concerning why Jesus sent the Holy Spirit and miraculous powers to His apostles and other inspired men in the first century.
 - (a) John 16:13.
 - (b) Hebrews 2:3-4.
 - (2) Through that God-given power, these men revealed in the first century:
 - (a) 2 Peter 1:3.
 - (b) Jude 3.
 - (c) James 1:25.
 - (d) Galatians 1:6-9; Revelation 22:18-19.
 - (3) These and other scriptures tell us that the word of God was both *revealed* and *confirmed* in the first century.
 - (4) Thus, God's purpose for the miraculous gifts had been fulfilled.
 - (5) And it would be quite logical that when God's purpose had been fulfilled, the miraculous gifts would be done away.
 - (6) Not only is it logical, but that is exactly what God said would happen, as we studied earlier in 1 Corinthians 13:8-10!
 - (7) And since God chose to eliminate miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit in the first century, those miraculous gifts do not exist today!
 - (8) Therefore, no matter what the "gift of the Holy Spirit" is in this verse, we know it does not include the ability to work miracles today!
 - (9) In addition, the Holy Spirit does *not* lead or influence us to say or do anything through some mysterious, direct influence on our minds.
 - (10) Instead, as we noticed in our study of verse 37, the Holy Spirit only leads and guides the minds of people through His instrument, the word of God.
 - (11) As long as we are in agreement on these points taught clearly in the scriptures, we do not believe the different views on the gift of the Holy Spirit are cause for disruption of fellowship between brethren.
18. With that background information in mind, let us discuss the gift of the Holy Spirit.
19. From the standpoint of Greek grammar, the phrase, "the gift of the Holy Spirit" can mean either of two things:
 - a. A gift given by the Holy Spirit, or
 - b. The Holy Spirit Himself as a gift.

- c. The context, either immediate or remote, must be studied to determine which of these two possibilities God intended in this verse.
 - d. We will study that context in more detail later.
20. But, before we study the context, we feel obligated to list several of the conclusions that have been drawn concerning the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 21. First, those who believe that the gift of the Holy Spirit is a gift given by the Holy Spirit have drawn several different conclusions as to what the gift is.
 22. Those conclusions include the following:
 - a. Some say the gift is spiritual blessings including salvation and eternal life.
 - b. Others believe the gift was miraculous powers given by laying on of the apostles' hands in the first century.
 - c. And others think the gift is the word of God revealed by the Holy Spirit in the first century.
 23. Although we certainly respect those who have drawn these conclusions I do not believe they are the proper conclusions based upon the biblical evidence available.
 - a. As stated earlier we do not have time to study why these are not the proper conclusions.
 - b. However, those of you who have the written notes for this course will find a more detailed analysis of these conclusions in your notes.
 - c. Also, you will find additional material on this subject at Appendix "D" of those notes.
 24. Let us briefly analyze these conclusions, one by one.
 - a. First - Is the gift of the Holy Spirit spiritual blessings, including salvation and eternal life?
 - (1) We do not believe it is!
 - (2) As we have seen in our study of verse 38 Peter gave these sorrowful believers a conditional command in response to their question.
 - (3) He said that if they would repent and be baptized they would receive forgiveness of their sins.
 - (4) The word "and" between the words "repent" and "be baptized" tells us there are two separate and different conditions.
 - (5) These two conditions are repentance and being baptized upon the name of Jesus Christ.
 - (6) Thus, their forgiveness depended upon their meeting God's conditions of repentance and baptism.
 - (7) After showing that forgiveness of sins was the result of obeying that conditional command Peter added another "and" before he gave the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - (8) In other words Peter was saying that those who repent and are baptized will receive something in addition to forgiveness of sins.
 - (9) He promised them they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in addition to forgiveness.
 - (10) Therefore, we conclude the gift of the Holy Spirit is different from and in addition to the forgiveness of sins.
 - (11) Furthermore, it does not appear that the gift of the Holy Spirit is eternal

life.

- (a) As we have seen, Peter promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to those who repented and were baptized for the forgiveness of sins.
- (b) If the gift of the Holy Spirit was eternal life,
- (c) Then, in effect, Peter promised eternal life to each person who repents and is baptized for the forgiveness of sins.
- (d) But we know it takes more than repentance, baptism and initial forgiveness of sins to receive eternal life.
- (e) For example, to receive eternal life one must:
 - 1. *Continue* to walk in the light of God's word to continue to receive forgiveness of sins (1 Jn 1:7).
 - 2. *Endure* until the end (Mt 10:22).
 - 3. *Remain faithful* unto death (Rev 2:10).
- (f) Therefore, we conclude that the gift of the Holy Spirit is *not* eternal life!
- (g) This point can be summarized as follows:
 - 1. Peter promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to those who repented and were baptized for the remission of sins.
 - 2. But, to receive eternal life it takes *more* than repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
 - 3. Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit is *not* eternal life!
- b. Second, was the gift of the Holy Spirit miraculous powers received through the laying on of the apostles' hands in the first century?
 - (1) With all due respect and love for those who hold this view we do not believe the gift of the Holy Spirit in this verse involved miraculous powers, either then or now.
 - (2) There are several reasons why I believe the gift of the Holy Spirit in this verse did not and does not involve miraculous powers.
 - (a) First, please consider the following facts:
 - 1. If this view is true, that the gift of the Holy Spirit involved miraculous powers through laying on of the apostles' hands, then there were 3,000 people on the day of Pentecost who received the power to work miracles (2:41).
 - 2. By the time of 4:4, there were 5,000 men who had miraculous power.
 - 3. In 5:14 we learn that multitudes were added to this number.
 - 4. And in 6:17 we see that the number of disciples multiplied exceedingly!
 - 5. Thus, according to this theory, there were thousands of penitent believers who had been immersed for the forgiveness of sins who could work miracles because the apostles had laid hands on them to give them the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - 6. If this were true, we would expect to find a record of the miracles worked by at least some of those Christians.

7. However, when we carefully study the first five chapters of the book of Acts there is not even one mention of such miracles being worked by anyone other than the apostles of Christ!
8. Please consider the following passages as confirmation of the fact that the only record we have of anyone working miracles in those chapters shows it was the apostles of Christ who worked them.
 - a. Acts 2:43 - many wonders and signs done through the *apostles*.
 - b. Acts 3:1-11; 4:13-16 - Peter and John healed the lame man in a way that none could deny.
 - c. Acts 4:33 - with great power the *apostles* gave witness to Christ's resurrection.
 - d. Acts 5:12 - through the hands of the *apostles* many signs and wonders were done among the people.
9. At this point let us review what we have studied concerning this view of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - a. The view is that the promised gift of the Holy Spirit was miraculous powers received through the laying on of the apostles' hands.
 - b. According to such a theory there should have been thousands of Christians other than the apostles who were working miracles.
 - c. But, according to the inspired record in the first five chapters of Acts, there were not thousands of people other than the apostles working miracles.
 - d. In fact, the only record we have is that the apostles of Christ were the only ones working the miracles.
 - e. Therefore, since this view is in direct conflict with the overwhelming evidence of the first five chapters of Acts we conclude that this view is wrong!
10. This conclusion is reinforced when we go a step further and study Acts 6:5 (see conclusion in 11c below).
11. In summary then - the first indication that the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 was not miraculous powers is the overwhelming evidence of the first six chapters of Acts where we have seen the following:
 - a. There were not thousands of Christians working miracles as a result of their receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit after their repentance and baptism for the remission of sins.
 - b. Instead, each reference to miracles and miraculous power in these chapters is a reference only to the apostles of Christ.
 - c. Before the apostles laid hands on Stephen, Philip and others in chapter 6, these men were described as being "full of faith and the Holy Spirit" (6:3,5).

- [1] “Full of the Holy Spirit” obviously did not mean that they could work miracles because only the apostles had done so up to this time.
 - [2] Thus, this phrase certainly appears to refer to the fact that the Holy Spirit was dwelling in them in a non-miraculous measure (or way).
 - [3] Apparently they had received the “gift of the Holy Spirit” promised by Peter as a result of their faith, repentance and baptism for the remission of sins.
 - [4] But, they still did not have the ability to work miracles even though the Holy Spirit was dwelling in them.
- (b) For a second indication that the gift of the Holy Spirit was not miraculous powers received through the laying on of the apostles’ hands please consider the following information.
1. As we studied previously the church grew in numbers and spread geographically rather quickly.
 2. In fact, when persecution arose all but the apostles were scattered from Jerusalem and went everywhere preaching the word (8:4).
 3. For example, they went to Samaria (8), Caesarea (10), Antioch, Phoenicia, Cyprus (11) and to many other places (13-21).
 4. As they went to these places preaching the word, many believed, repented, were baptized and received the remission of sins.
 5. Those who did obey the gospel in this manner also received the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 6. But, according to this view of the gift of the Holy Spirit it was necessary for the apostles to lay hands on each of these Christians so that they could receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 7. Thus, these believers would have received forgiveness when they were baptized, but would have to wait until an apostle came and laid hands on them to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 8. Does that sound like what Peter promised in this verse?
 9. Furthermore, until an apostle came and laid hands on them those who were baptized did not have the Spirit of Christ dwelling in them, therefore they did not belong to Him (Rom 8:9-11).
 - a. They had been placed in Christ and had put Him on in baptism (Gal 3:27).
 - b. They had been bought with the price of Christ’s precious blood (1 Cor 6:19-20; 1 Pet 1:18-19).
 - c. They had all spiritual blessings in Him (Eph 1:3).
 - d. Yet, they did not belong to Him and did not have His Spirit dwelling in them until an apostle came and laid hands on them.
 - e. Surely, that cannot be true!
 10. In addition, can you imagine how many places the apostles would have had to travel and how quickly they would have had to move to

lay hands on each new Christian to give them the gift of the Holy Spirit?

11. When you consider facts like these it is clear that it was physically impossible for the apostles to have laid hands on all those Christians.
 12. This physical impossibility, then, is the second reason why we believe the gift of the Holy Spirit was not miraculous powers received by the laying on of the hands of the apostles.
- (c) For a third reason that the gift of the Holy Spirit was not miraculous powers received through the laying on of the apostles' hands please consider the following.
1. The gift of the Holy Spirit was promised to all sorrowful believers who repented and were baptized for the forgiveness of sins.
 2. Therefore, according to this theory, all who repented and were baptized should have received miraculous gifts through laying on of the apostles' hands.
 3. But, even in the first century when miraculous gifts existed not all Christians could work miracles (1 Cor 12:29).
 4. Thus, there is a difference between what this view of the gift of the Holy Spirit required and what actually happened.
 5. As far as I know, there are only two explanations for this conflict:
 - a. Either God failed to give the gift of the Holy Spirit which He so faithfully promised to those who believed, repented and were baptized for the forgiveness of sins, or
 - b. The gift of the Holy Spirit in this verse was not the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit described in 1 Corinthians 12-14 and other passages.
 6. We know God did not fail to keep His promise!
 7. Therefore, we must conclude the gift of the Holy Spirit in this verse was not the ability to work miracles through the laying on of the apostles' hands.
- (d) A final indication that the gift of the Holy Spirit was not miraculous powers received through the laying on of the apostles' hands is seen in the following facts.
1. According to 2:39 this promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit was extended to, "as many as the Lord our God will call."
 2. But, God called people then and He calls people today through the gospel of Christ (2 Thess 2:14).
 3. Therefore, if the gift of the Holy Spirit was miraculous power, then all who obeyed the call of the gospel then and all who obey it today received miraculous gifts.
 4. As we have studied we know that is absolutely not true!
 5. Therefore, this is just one more indication that the view that the gift of the Holy Spirit was miraculous powers received through the laying on of the apostles' hands is not correct.

- c. A third view of the gift of the Holy Spirit in this verse is that the gift is the word of God revealed through the Holy Spirit in the first century.
- (1) These who hold this view believe the gift of the Holy Spirit is the word of God and the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian through the word of God, and only through the word of God.
 - (2) There is no doubt the Holy Spirit revealed and confirmed the word of God through the apostles and other inspired men in the first century (Jn 16:13; Heb 2:3-4).
 - (3) And, there is no doubt the Holy Spirit uses the word of God as His sword to influence our minds today (Eph 6:17) rather than any direct, mysterious influence.
 - (4) In addition, there is no doubt God's word is a wonderful gift of tremendous value (Psa 119:97,127).
 - (5) But, I personally have serious doubts that the gift of the Holy Spirit in this verse is the word of God.
 - (6) Those doubts are based upon a careful study of the context of this verse.
 - (7) In this context please notice these people received the word of God *before* they were immersed in water for the forgiveness of sins.
 - (a) Acts 2:37 - pricked in their heart by the word of God.
 - (b) Acts 2:38 - with the word of God Peter told them what to do to receive forgiveness.
 - (c) Acts 2:40 - with the word of God Peter exhorted them to be saved.
 - (d) Acts 2:41 - they gladly received that word of God.
 - (e) Acts 2:41 – then, and only then, they were baptized for the forgiveness of sins.
 - (8) Thus, in this context, it is abundantly clear these people received the word of God *before* they were baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins.
 - (9) But, in this verse Peter promised these people they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit after they repented and were baptized for the forgiveness of sins.
 - (10) Therefore, we conclude that the gift of the Holy Spirit is not the word of God.
 - (11) This conclusion may be summarized as follows:
 - (a) The gift of the Holy Spirit is received *after* one is baptized for the forgiveness of sins.
 - (b) The word of God must be received *before* one is baptized for the forgiveness of sins.
 - (c) Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit in this verse is not the word of God.
25. It is my personal belief the gift of the Holy Spirit promised in this verse is the Holy Spirit Himself as a gift.
- a. More specifically, the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian in a way which does not enable the Christian to work miracles or receive direct leading, guidance or influence from the Holy Spirit.
 - b. This belief is based upon study of the grammar - this verse itself, the context surrounding this verse and the remote context of the New Testament.

- c. There are two major reasons why I believe the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 is the Holy Spirit Himself.
 - (1) While we do not have time to study those two major reasons in detail I would like to mention them to you briefly.
 - (a) The first reason is the use of the exact same phrase “the gift of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 10:44-47.
 - (b) The second is the context of the rest of the New Testament on this subject.
 - (c) The written notes contain a more detailed analysis of these two reasons.
 - d. I encourage you to study those notes and to search the scriptures carefully to determine whether this is the correct conclusion (Acts 17:11).
 - e. Please keep in mind that my belief that the Holy Spirit actually dwells in the Christian *in no way* changes what we taught earlier on two important topics.
 - (1) First, the scriptures clearly teach that the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased around the end of the first century.
 - (a) This took place when the New Testament was revealed and confirmed.
 - (b) Therefore, there are *no* miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit today!
 - (c) The written notes mentioned earlier contain additional confirmation that the gift of the Holy Spirit *did not* and *does not* involve miraculous powers.
 - (2) Second, the *only* way that the Holy Spirit leads and guides us is by the word of God, the sword of the Spirit.
 - (a) He does not lead, guide or influence us through mysterious feelings, hunches, voices in the night, dreams, visions or any direct contact with our mind!
 - (b) Now, no one who respects God’s word will deny that God works in providence, i.e., in ensuring that His faithful children have the things which they need to survive (cf. Mt 6:33; Phil 4:19).
 - (c) And no one will deny that God rules in the kingdoms of men (Dan 4:17, 25, 32).
 - (d) However, in all of these activities, God still allows us freedom of will. We can choose what we think, say and do (Josh 24:15; Rev 22:17).
 - (e) Thus, neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit influence directly or overpower our minds, leading us in some direct way.
 - (f) Instead, He leads, guides and influences us through His instrument which is the inspired word of God.
26. With these preliminary thoughts and precautions in mind please consider two primary reasons for believing that the gift of the Holy Spirit promised in this verse is the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian in a non-miraculous way.
- a. The first reason is the use of the phrase “the gift of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 10:44-47.
 - (1) As we studied earlier, from the standpoint of grammar, this phrase can mean either of two things:
 - (a) It can mean something the Holy Spirit gives, or

- (b) It can mean the Holy Spirit Himself as a gift.
- (2) Language experts tell us that the actual meaning depends upon the context.
- (3) There is very little in Acts 2:38 which gives us an indication which of these two meanings God specified in this verse.
- (4) However, the exact same phrase, “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” is found in Acts 10:45.
- (5) Therefore, a study of that context (10:44-47) is crucially important in helping us determine the meaning of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) (44) the Holy Spirit fell on those who heard the word.
 - (b) (45) this is referred to as the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - (c) (47) Peter by inspiration said the recipients of this gift received the Holy Spirit.
 - (d) From this context it is clear that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself as a gift.
 - 1. The Holy Spirit Who fell on them (v. 44).
 - 2. The Holy Spirit Whom they received (v. 47).
- (6) Now, let us summarize and draw a conclusion from what we have seen in this context.
 - (a) The phrase, “the gift of the Holy Spirit” is found in Acts 10:44-47.
 - (b) In that context the gift of the Holy Spirit was the Holy Spirit Himself as a gift.
 - (c) The only other place the exact same phrase is found is in Acts 2:38.
 - (d) Therefore, it seems very likely that the gift of the Holy Spirit promised in Acts 2:38 is the Holy Spirit Himself as a gift.
 - (e) That likelihood will be made even stronger if we find support for this view in the context of this verse.
- (7) Before we leave 10:44-47 it is very important to notice one major difference between that context and 2:38.
 - (a) In Acts 10 it is clear Cornelius and his household received a miraculous measure (or manifestation) of the Holy Spirit.
 - 1. (46) When they received the Holy Spirit, God gave them the miraculous ability to speak in other languages which they had never learned.
 - 2. However, God made it clear that their receiving a miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit was for a very special and unique purpose.
 - 3. Acts 11:17-18 - that unique purpose was to show God’s approval of the Gentiles to receive salvation through obedience to the gospel just like those with a Jewish background.
 - (b) However, the scriptures clearly teach it is possible for the Holy Spirit to dwell in a person without enabling that person to work miracles.
 - 1. Luke 1:15 - John the Immerser was filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother’s womb.

2. John 10:41 - Yet, John did not work any miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- (c) Thus, it should not be surprising if the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 is a promise for the Holy Spirit to dwell in Christians in a non-miraculous measure (or manifestation).
- (d) In fact, there are several ways in which we can see that the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 did not and does not involve miraculous powers.
1. First, God promised that all who will repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (2:38).
 - a. Thus, if the gift of the Holy Spirit involved miraculous power all who repented and were baptized would have had the ability to work miracles.
 - b. But, every person who repented and was baptized did not receive the power to work miracles even in the first century when miracles were being worked by the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:29-30).
 - c. Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit is not the Holy Spirit dwelling in a person in such a manner as to enable them to work miracles.
 2. Second, the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit is to all whom the Lord will call (2:39).
 - a. So, if the gift of the Holy Spirit involved miraculous power all whom the Lord called would have had the ability to work miracles.
 - b. God called people then and He calls people now by the gospel of Christ (2 Thess 2:14).
 - c. But, all who obeyed the call of the gospel did not receive the power to work miracles (1 Cor 12:29-30).
 - d. Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit is not the Holy Spirit dwelling in a person in such a way as to enable them to work miracles.
 3. And third, those who received the gift of the Holy Spirit in a miraculous measure in Acts 10 demonstrated miraculous power immediately by speaking in languages which they had never learned before (10:46).
 - a. In sharp contrast those who received the promised gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 did not demonstrate such miraculous power.
 - b. In fact, the only record we have indicates that only the apostles of Christ worked miracles during the period covered by the first five chapters of Acts (cf. 2:43; 3:1-11; 4:13-16; 4:33; 5:12).
 - c. The first record of one other than an apostle working a miracle is Stephen (Acts 6:8).

- d. But, that was because an apostle of Christ had laid hands on him to enable him to work miracles, not because the gift of the Holy Spirit enabled him to work miracles (6:6; 8:17-19).
 - e. Thousands of people repented, were baptized and received the gift of the Holy Spirit in the period covered by Acts 2-5.
 - f. Yet, none of them worked any miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - g. The only legitimate conclusion we can draw is that the gift of the Holy Spirit did not involve miraculous power, even in the age of miracles in the first century!
- (8) To summarize our study of the phrase “the gift of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 10:44-47, we draw the following conclusions:
- (a) The gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself as a gift.
 - (b) Cornelius and his household received the Holy Spirit in a miraculous measure on this very unique occasion to show God’s approval of the Gentiles to receive salvation.
 - (c) However, the context of Acts 2 makes it clear that the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 did not involve miraculous powers.
 - (d) Instead, it was a promise to every sorrowful believer who will:
 - 1. Answer the Lord’s call extended in the gospel (v. 39).
 - 2. Obey the gospel including repenting and being baptized for the forgiveness of sins (2:38).
 - (e) Not every person who met those conditions in the first century could work miracles.
 - (f) Furthermore, no person who meets those conditions today can work miracles.
 - (g) Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit promised by Peter to persons who will meet those conditions is the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian in a non-miraculous measure.
- b. The second reason for believing the gift of the Holy Spirit promised in Acts 2:38 is the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian in a non-miraculous measure is the testimony of the rest of the New Testament (the context).
- (1) If this view of the gift of the Holy Spirit is true, then it will be consistent with what the rest of the New Testament says.
 - (2) If this view is false it will contradict what the rest of the New Testament says.
 - (3) With those facts in mind let us investigate what the rest of the New Testament says.
 - (a) John 7:39 - John confirmed that Jesus promised the Holy Spirit to those who believed in Him. The Holy Spirit would not be given until Jesus was glorified.
 - (b) Acts 2:38 with Acts 3:19 - Notice the parallel:

ACTS 2:38

Repent Repent
Be baptized Be converted
Remission of sins Sins blotted out
Gift of the Holy Spirit Refreshing from the presence of
the Lord

ACTS 3:19

Therefore, from these two parallel verses, we can safely conclude that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the presence of the Lord in the obedient Christian.

- (c) Acts 2:38 with Acts 5:32 - Notice the similarity:

ACTS 2:38

Gift of the Holy Spirit Holy Spirit given to those who:
to those who:

ACTS 5:32

Repent and are baptized Obey the Lord

Therefore, from these two verses, we can safely conclude the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit Whom God gives to each person who obeys the Lord, including repenting and being baptized.

- (d) Romans 8:9,11 -

The Spirit of God dwells in you.

If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

The Spirit dwells in you.

His Spirit dwells in you.

- (e) 1 Corinthians 6:19 - the Christian's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Temple - ναός - the actual dwelling place of God.

- (f) Galatians 3:26-27 with 4:6 -

Sons of God through faith in Christ.

Baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.

Because you are sons, God sent forth His Spirit into your hearts.

- (4) Now, let us summarize and draw proper conclusions from our study of these passages:

- (a) The gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to sorrowful believers who repent and are baptized for the forgiveness of sins (2:38).

- (b) The gift of the Holy Spirit is the same as refreshing from the presence of the Lord which is promised to those who repent and are converted to have their sins blotted out (2:38 and 3:19).

- (c) The Holy Spirit is given to those who obey God (5:32). Notice this striking parallel:

1. The gift of the Holy Spirit is promised to those who obey God (by believing, repenting and being baptized for forgiveness) (2:38).

2. The Holy Spirit is given to those who obey God (5:32).
 3. Therefore, the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself, given by God when a person obeys the gospel and receives forgiveness of sins!
 - (d) The Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian (Rom 8:9-11).
 - (e) The Christian's body is the temple (actual dwelling place) of the Holy Spirit, Who is in the Christian (1 Cor 6:19).
 - (f) When a person becomes a child of God through faith and baptism God sends the Holy Spirit into that person's heart (Gal 3:26-27; 4:6).
 - (g) We believe that these scriptures make it clear that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit Himself actually dwelling in the Christian in a *non-miraculous* way (measure).
27. A natural question that arises concerning the gift of the Holy Spirit can be stated as follows:
- a. "If the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian does not enable the Christian to work miracles or receive direct guidance or influence what *purpose* does His indwelling serve?"
 - b. This is a good question, for which several answers are revealed in the scriptures.
 - (1) First, in Ephesians 1:13-14.
 - (a) "Sealed" - ἐσφραγίσθητε.
 1. An indication of ownership.
 2. Thus, the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian is an indication of God's ownership of His child (cf. 1 Cor 6:19-20)!
 - (b) "Guarantee" (NKJV), "earnest" (KJV, ASV) - ἀρράβων.
 1. A down payment, pledge or other assurance that the full blessing will be given in the future.
 2. The future blessing is identified as "our inheritance" in verse 14.
 3. Thus, the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Christian is God's pledge or assurance of the Christian's inheritance which is eternal life in heaven (1 Pet 1:3-4).
 4. Of course, God's pledge of this inheritance is conditional!
 5. The Christian will receive that inheritance of eternal life if he/she is faithful to the Lord unto death (Rev 2:10)!
 - (2) Second, in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.
 - (3) Third, in Romans 8:26-27.
28. There are good, faithful, studious people who have objections to this view of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- a. Although we do not have time to study those objections now I believe they are dealt with very adequately in the written material at Appendix "D" in the notes for this course.
29. Looking back on everything that we have studied in verse 38 we have seen that Peter told those sorrowful believers the following things:
- a. They needed to repent and be baptized.
 - b. This was to be done upon the name of Jesus Christ.

- c. They were to take these actions in order to obtain the forgiveness of sins.
 - d. And, they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
30. Before we leave this verse those of you who have obtained the written material for this course will find a chart at Appendix "E" which portrays five baptisms of the New Testament - John's; Suffering; Holy Spirit; Fire; and the Great Commission.
31. Finally, we want to study a very important chart about two of these baptisms.
- a. This chart contrasts water baptism, as commanded in this and other verses, with Holy Spirit baptism which we studied in 1:5.
 - b. Study chart on screen.

2:39

1. In this verse Peter made it clear that this promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit was available to all classes of mankind who meet God's conditions for receiving forgiveness of sins.
2. Thus, all who hear the gospel, believe it, repent of their sins, confess faith in Christ and are immersed in water for the forgiveness of sins receive the gift of the Holy Spirit which is the Holy Spirit dwelling in them in a non-miraculous measure.
3. He classified all of mankind into several groups as follows:
 - a. "You" = the Israelite people who were responsible for the Lord's crucifixion (2:22,36).
 - b. "Your children" = descendants of that nation of Israel.
 - c. "All who are afar off" = Gentiles (cf. Eph 2:11-17).
 - d. "As many as the Lord our God shall call" = anyone who would respond obediently to God's call which is extended to all of mankind through the gospel of Christ (2 Thess 2:14).

2:40

1. Peter used many other words to exhort this audience to save themselves.
2. This makes it clear that, contrary to what is taught in the religious world, man must do something to be saved (cf. Phil 2:12)!
 - a. It is absolutely true no one can be saved without the love, mercy and grace which the Father extended to each of us in His beloved Son (Eph 2:4-5).
 - b. However, God's love, mercy and grace do not eliminate our responsibility to obey the Savior in order to be saved (Heb 5:8-9)!
 - c. In fact, we must have a living, active, obedient faith which works by love in order to be saved or justified (Jas 2:14-26; Gal 5:6).
 - d. And, as we have just seen, this obedient faith includes baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
 - e. Furthermore, we must keep ourselves in the love of God if we hope to receive God's mercy (Jude 21).
 - f. And, we must strive to continue in His grace (Acts 13:43).
 - g. Finally, we must remain faithful unto death if we want to receive the crown of eternal life (Rev 2:10).

2:41

1. Certain ones in that audience were glad to receive the inspired words spoken by Peter on that great day.
2. They rejoiced in learning what they could do to receive forgiveness of their sins!
3. They not only rejoiced in hearing that good news, but they also responded obediently by being baptized as Peter commanded!
4. The number who obeyed from the heart on that day was 3,000.
5. Before we leave this verse please notice something very important:
 - a. In verse 40 Peter had exhorted these people to “save themselves.”
 - b. *Question* - What did these people do to “save themselves?”
 - c. *Answer* - This verse tells us that they were baptized just as Peter had commanded them to do in verse 38.
 - d. *Question* - According to God, is it essential to be baptized to be saved?
5. Summary of 2:37-41 - Response of some in the crowd / Inspired conditions of pardon.
 - a. In verse 37 some sorrowful believers responded to Peter’s inspired words about the crucified and exalted Jesus by asking what they needed to do to be saved from their sins.
 - b. In verse 38 Peter told them to repent and be baptized.
 - (1) This was to be done upon the name of Jesus Christ.
 - (2) It was for the purpose of receiving forgiveness of sins.
 - (3) And it included the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. In verse 39 that promise was extended to all who would obey the call of the gospel, including the Israelites, their descendants and the Gentiles.
 - d. In verse 40 Peter exhorted the audience to save themselves.
 - e. And in verse 41 we learn there were 3,000 people who gladly received these words and were baptized to be saved.
6. Brief review of chapter 2 - The promise fulfilled and the church established.
 - a. (1-13) Apostles filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues.
 - b. (14-36) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicts the crowd of sin, righteousness and judgment.
 - (1) (14-21) Inspired interpretation of these events.
 - (2) (22-24) *Jesus*: Attested by God; Killed by Jews; Raised by the Father.
 - (3) (25-32) *Jesus*: The Proof from prophecy.
 - (4) (33-36) *Jesus*: Exalted and enthroned.
 - c. (37-41) Response of some in the crowd / Inspired conditions of pardon.

d. (2:42-47) THE CHURCH CONTINUES STEADFASTLY

2:42

1. As we saw in verse 41 those who gladly received the inspired conditions of pardon were baptized to obey the Lord.
2. However, in this verse we learn that their obedience did not stop in the waters of baptism!
3. These early Christians continued steadfastly (literally, endured, persevered) in several things as follows:

- a. First, they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine.
 - (1) "Doctrine" - διδασκαλί - teaching, instruction.
 - (2) Thus, they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles which we have today as the New Testament of Christ.
 - (3) Said another way, these new Christians continued to walk in the light of God's word and wanted to be careful to avoid going beyond the teaching of Christ (1 Jn 1:7; 2 Jn 9-11).
 - (4) Can we do any less today and still please the Lord who died for us?
- b. Second, they continued steadfastly in fellowship.
 - (1) This word "fellowship" (κοινωνία) can be translated in two ways:
 - (a) First, its broadest meaning involves a relationship between individuals which includes common interests, joys, desires, hopes, values, etc.
 - 1. This includes a mutual, active participation and sharing in those common interests, joys, desires, hopes, values, etc.
 - 2. And, it includes the idea of close friendship, community, unity, togetherness, etc.
 - 3. Compare with 1 John 1:3,7.
 - 4. Compare with Colossians 2:2.
 - 5. Thus, these early Christians were a united, close-knit community of individuals who actively participated in the common privileges and obligations of the Christian life!
 - (2) The second meaning of the word translated "fellowship" is the contribution or giving of goods, money or other help.
 - (a) This contribution or giving comes out of the desire for others to share in the blessings of the Christian life.
 - (b) Compare with Romans 15:26.
 - (3) In this context, I believe the word "fellowship" refers primarily to their active, joint participation in the common privileges and obligations of the Christian life.
 - (a) However, included in this would be the gathering together on the first day of the week to worship the Lord (Jn 4:23-24; Acts 20:7, etc.).
 - (b) Also included would be the weekly contribution that they made to further the work of the Lord's church (1 Cor 16:1-2).
- c. Third, they continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread.
 - (1) This is an obvious reference to the remembrance of the Lord's death by partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine (Lord's Supper, communion) each first day of the week.
 - (2) I believe that is what is referred to for two reasons:
 - (a) First, the immediate context of this verse.
 - 1. This verse includes three other avenues of worship - the teaching of God's word, the contribution and prayers.
 - 2. Thus, it is only logical that the breaking of bread referred to in this verse is that which is part of the Christian's worship each first day of the week (cf. 1 Cor 11:23ff).
 - (b) Second, the context of the rest of the New Testament.

1. Compare with 1 Corinthians 10:16.
- d. The fourth thing these early Christians continued steadfastly in was prayers.
 - (1) Of course, this is another of the five avenues of worship commanded by God in the New Testament.
 - (2) As we noted in our study of background material for the course the early Christians were people who believed in the power of prayer!
 - (3) Thought for practical application - if we prayed as they prayed, and worked as they worked we would accomplish what they accomplished!
- e. To summarize then, in describing the activities of those first Christians, the Lord identified four of the five avenues of acceptable New Testament worship:
 - (1) Teaching and preaching God's word,
 - (2) A financial contribution to the Lord for His work,
 - (3) Remembrance of the Lord's death in partaking of the Lord's Supper,
 - (4) And prayer.

2:43

1. Here we learn that the apostles of Christ performed many miracles ("wonders and signs").
2. Of course they performed those miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit Whom Jesus had promised and had sent to them.
3. The effect of those miracles was to create fear in the hearts of those who saw or heard about them.
4. Obviously then, when people observed or heard about true, biblical miracles, they knew that those who worked the miracles performed them by the power of almighty God.

2:44-45

1. In these verses Luke painted a beautiful picture of the fellowship that existed in the early church.
2. He described those first Christians in several ways:
 - a. First, they were "together."
 - (1) They were united in thought and action (cf. Rom 15:6).
 - (2) It is also possible many of them lived together in temporary quarters or in the homes of natives of Jerusalem.
 - b. Second, they "had all things common."
 - (1) They did not consider their earthly possessions as just their own.
 - (2) They were willing to share those possessions with their brethren (cf. 4:32).
 - c. And third, they were willing to sell what they had and to distribute the proceeds to those who were in need (cf. 1 Jn 3:17).
 - (1) "Possessions" - property such as land, houses, vineyards, etc.
 - (2) "Goods" - probably refers to their personal, movable property.
3. Some claim that these two verses, along with 4:32-37 and 5:1-10, teach communism.
4. For the following reasons, I do not believe communism is taught in these verses:

- a. First of all, it is clear this was a *temporary* measure to meet a *special need* in the church at Jerusalem.
 - (1) Acts 2:5-11 - These multitudes came to Jerusalem from every nation under heaven for this special feast of Pentecost.
 - (2) Acts 2:37-41 - After their arrival, they were converted to Christianity.
 - (3) Apparently, this made it necessary for them to stay in Jerusalem longer than they had originally planned.
 - (4) Being away from home for longer than planned they experienced unexpected needs such as food.
 - (5) These unique, special needs presented an opportunity for those Christians to express their love by sharing with each other.
 - (6) Thus, rather than teaching communism, these verses give a clear example of the unselfish love of Christians sharing with each other to meet a temporary, special need in the Jerusalem church.
 - b. Second, the belief that the practice of having all material things common was a temporary measure to meet a one-time special need is reinforced when we recognize that no church outside of Jerusalem did the same thing.
 - (1) Acts 9:36 - Dorcas did relief work in Joppa as an individual. This would not have been possible if everything had been put in a common fund.
 - (2) Acts 11:29 - Those in Antioch sent relief to others, according to their own ability. This also would not have been possible if everything had been put in a common fund.
 - (3) 1 Corinthians 16:2 - Christians in Corinth (and all others) were commanded to give as they had been prospered. Thus, individuals have control of their own private property.
 - c. Third, according to the definition of communism, all property is owned by the government.
 - (1) Yet, in this very context, it is clear that Christians retained the right to hold personal property.
 - (2) Compare with 2:46 - "from house to house."
 - (3) And, in the midst of another of these passages in the book of Acts where Christians were sharing their goods the right of private property is clearly seen.
 - (4) Compare with Acts 5:4
 - d. And finally, according to the definition of communism, there is equal distribution of economic goods to all.
 - (1) In sharp contrast, in verse 45, it is clear that the proceeds of the sale of their material things were distributed "as anyone had need!"
 - (2) In other words, the purpose of these distributions was to meet the urgent material needs of individual brethren, not to ensure that everybody had the same amount (cf. Jas 2:15-16).
5. For those four reasons, we do not believe that communism is taught in these verses or anywhere else in the Bible.
 6. What we do see in these verses is the kind of mutual love and unselfishness which Jesus said would identify His followers.

- a. Compare with John 13:34-35.

2:46-47

1. Here, we have a continuation of Luke's beautiful description of the early Christians.
2. Notice six individual elements of that description.
 - a. First, they continued daily in their activities for the Lord.
 - (1) Literally, they endured and persevered in those activities.
 - (2) In addition, their Christianity was displayed daily and not limited to the first day of the week!
 - (3) Obviously they firmly believed passages like Philippians 1:20-21 and Colossians 3:3-4!
 - b. Second, they were "with one accord."
 - (1) That is, they were a united, harmonious group.
 - (2) Further study of the New Testament shows they were united because they:
 - (a) 1 Corinthians 1:10.
 - (b) Philippians 3:16.
 - (c) Philippians 2:2.
 - (d) Philippians 2:3.
 - (e) Philippians 2:5.
 - (f) 1 Peter 4:11.
 - c. Third, they gathered together at the appointed times in the temple.
 - (1) The temple was the place where they worshiped God and which they used as a center from which to work.
 - (2) Apparently, they continued to meet there for some time.
 - (3) It is inspiring to see they were not willing to forsake the assembling of themselves together (Heb 10:25)!
 - d. Fourth, they spent time together, including eating meals together in their homes.
 - (1) Notice the use of the phrase "breaking bread" in verse 46.
 - (2) There is a distinct difference between the use of that phrase here and in verse 42.
 - (3) In this context, it is clear that it refers to eating of common meals, rather than the partaking of the Lord's Supper.
 - (4) That is true because in this same verse, Luke mentions they "ate their food."
 - (5) Also, this is something that they did "daily" rather than only on the Lord's Day to which the Lord restricts the partaking of the Lord's Supper (cf. 20:7).
 - e. Fifth, they performed all of these activities with two very beautiful characteristics - "gladness" and "simplicity" of heart.
 - (1) "Gladness" - ἀγαλιόσει.
 - (a) This word means exultation (extreme, abundant joy or delight).
 - (b) Thus, for these people it was an abundant joy to be a Christian and to live as a Christian!
 - (c) Rather than being grumbly hateful they were humbly grateful!
 - (d) Philippians 4:4.

- (e) Galatians 5:22-23.
- (2) “Simplicity of heart” (NKJV); “singleness of heart” (KJV) (ASV) - ἀφελότητι καρδίας.
 - (a) The word translated “simplicity” or “singleness” actually means unworldly simplicity and plainness.
 - (b) In other words they were not in love with the material things of this world (1 Jn 2:15-17).
 - (c) Matthew 6:24.
 - (d) Philippians 4:11-13.
 - (e) Hebrews 13:5-6.
- f. A sixth thing they continued to do was praise God.
 - (1) This is something that Christians should always strive to do!
 - (2) Compare with 1 Peter 2:9-10.
 - (3) Hebrews 2:12.
- g. As a result of the way these early Christians conducted themselves they were viewed with approval by the people of Jerusalem.
 - (1) Matthew 5:16.
 - (2) Philippians 2:15-16.
- h. What a pattern and model these early Christians provided for us to imitate today!
 - (1) Listen to a summary of God’s description of them.
 - (a) They persevered daily in their activities for the Lord.
 - (b) They were a united, harmonious group.
 - (c) They gathered together to work and worship in the temple.
 - (d) They enjoyed spending time together, including eating meals with each other in their homes.
 - (e) They displayed a wonderful attitude in their daily life.
 - 1. This included an abundant joy or delight to be a Christian and to live as a Christian.
 - 2. In addition, rather than loving the material things of this world their sole desire was to serve their Master, the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (f) They praised God.
 - (g) And because of the way they conducted themselves they were viewed with approval by the people of Jerusalem.
- 3. At the end of verse 47 we find the very important fact that the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.
- 4. There are several things that are crucially important about this fact.
 - a. First, please notice *the Lord* adds a person to the church when that person is saved.
 - (1) That means men do not have authority from God to add a person to the Lord’s church, either by voting them into the church or any other way.
 - (2) Instead, once a person meets God’s conditions to be saved, the Lord (not men) adds that person to the Lord’s church.
 - (3) This also means one cannot go out and just “join the church of your choice” with God’s approval!

- (4) Again, when we meet His conditions to be saved, He adds us to His church, not to some man-made denomination.
- b. Second, please observe the Lord adds only those to His church *who are saved* from their sins.
 - (1) That means the church of the Lord consists of those who are saved from their sins.
 - (2) That is consistent with the fact that the Lord purchased His church with His own precious blood which is the only thing powerful enough to wash away sins (Acts 20:28).
 - (3) But, who were the ones who were saved and added by the Lord to His church in this chapter?
 - (4) If we can determine what they did we can know what a person must do to be saved and added to the Lord's church.
 - (5) As we have studied, those who were saved and added to the Lord's church on that day were those who:
 - (a) 22-36.
 - (b) 41.
 - (c) 37.
 - (d) 38,41.
 - (e) In other passages God tells us that before a person can be baptized properly they have to confess their belief in Jesus as the Christ (Acts 8:37; Rom 10:9-10).
 - (6) Thus, when a person meets these conditions they are saved and added by the Lord to His church.
5. The third thing so vitally important about this verse is that it is the *first* place in the New Testament where the church is described as existing in the *present* tense!
 - a. Please recall our study of 1:6-8 where Jesus' apostles asked Him if He would restore the kingdom to Israel when the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit.
 - b. In that study we saw several things:
 - (1) Isaiah 2:2-4 - Isaiah had predicted the establishment of the Lord's church in Jerusalem *in the last days*.
 - (a) Acts 2:16-17 - Peter said that they were in the last days on the day of Pentecost.
 - (b) In fact, please notice the striking parallel between Isaiah 2:2-4 and Acts 2 as shown in the chart on the screen.
 - (2) Daniel 2:44.
 - (3) Matthew 3:2.
 - (4) Matthew 4:17.
 - (5) Matthew 16:18-19.
 - (6) Mark 9:1.
 - (7) Acts 1:8.
 - (8) From these scriptures, we concluded that the kingdom (church) would be established when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles of Christ.

- c. But, in our study of 2:1-4 we have seen the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles of Christ and gave them *power* on the day of Pentecost shortly after Jesus' ascension into heaven.
 - d. Therefore, we would expect that the kingdom (church) which Jesus promised was established on that day.
 - e. That expectation is fulfilled when we get to 2:47 and find God referring to the church as existing in the present tense for the first time.
 - f. Thus, the kingdom (church) was established in the first century, in the city of Jerusalem just as God predicted it would be.
 - g. After that day the kingdom (church) was always referred to as existing.
 - (1) Colossians 1:13.
 - (2) Revelation 1:9.
 - (3) Acts 11:15.
6. But *why* is it so important to determine and document when the Lord's kingdom (church) was established?
- a. The first reason is to identify the one true church of the Lord and to distinguish it from the denominations in the religious world.
 - (1) Ephesians 4:4.
 - (2) This is so vitally important because, according to 2:47, the Lord adds those who are *saved* to that one church.
 - (3) That one church was established by Jesus on the day of Pentecost, in the city of Jerusalem as recorded in this chapter.
 - (4) All other churches established after that day were established by men and are not accepted by God (Mt 15:13).
 - b. The second reason it is important to document when the Lord's kingdom (church) was established is to expose the false doctrine of premillennialism.
7. While we do not have time to study that doctrine in great detail we must discuss it briefly because it is so widely believed in the religious world.
8. Let us begin by giving a short definition and description of premillennialism.
- a. First, the word "premillennialism" is a combination of 3 root words.
 - (1) Pre = before.
 - (2) Millennium = 1,000 years.
 - (3) Ism = doctrine, theory, system.
 - (4) Putting these parts together, this word may be defined as a doctrine concerning a period of 1,000 years.
 - (5) More specifically, premillennialism is a doctrine concerning the Lord's coming back before a period of 1,000 years.
 - b. With this definition in mind I would like to briefly describe some of the major points of this doctrine.
 - (1) It is taught by most who believe this doctrine that Jesus came the first time to establish His kingdom.
 - (2) However, the Jews rejected and crucified Him.
 - (3) Therefore, Jesus did not establish His kingdom as planned.
 - (4) However, Jesus will come again to establish His kingdom.
 - (5) He will physically return to the city of Jerusalem.

- (6) And, He will rule on David's throne in Jerusalem for 1,000 years.
- c. Going one step further, these major points of the doctrine of premillennialism can be reduced to two key elements as follows:
 - (1) First, that Christ failed to establish His kingdom as planned when He came to earth the first time.
 - (2) And second, that at His next coming Jesus will return to Jerusalem to establish His kingdom and to rule on David's throne for 1,000 years.
 - (3) Now, let us analyze those key elements one at a time.
- 9. First, did Christ fail to establish His kingdom when the Jews rejected Him in the first century?
 - a. We have seen very clearly in our study of Acts 1 and 2 that Christ most certainly did *not* fail to establish His kingdom in the first century!
 - b. Instead, we have studied in detail how He set up His kingdom at the exact time and place, and in the precise manner which He and other inspired men had predicted.
 - c. In addition, some of those prophecies were given *hundreds* of years in advance.
 - d. Thus, they were not accidents or guesses!
 - e. Those prophecies were so detailed and they fit together so well that there could be no mistake, accident or deception!
 - f. Christ's kingdom was established on the day of Pentecost as recorded in this chapter of Acts.
 - g. And, as we studied earlier, from that day forward His kingdom is spoken of as existing.
 - h. With this overwhelming testimony of the scriptures there can be absolutely no legitimate doubt that Jesus established His kingdom in the first century *in spite of* His rejection by the Jews.
 - i. Therefore, since the doctrine of premillennialism contradicts this overwhelming evidence that doctrine is false and is to be rejected.
- 10. Still on the subject of the establishment of Christ's kingdom - some claim the following:
 - a. Since Christ failed to establish His kingdom He set up the church as an emergency replacement.
 - b. This means that God did not plan to establish the church.
 - c. Thus, when Jesus was rejected He delayed establishment of the kingdom and substituted the church as a temporary replacement.
- 11. This claim is absolutely false for three major reasons:
 - a. First, as we have studied, Jesus said the kingdom and the church were the same institution (Mt 16:18-19).
 - (1) Therefore, God absolutely did not delay establishment of the kingdom and substitute the church for the kingdom!
 - (2) Instead, as we have seen, the church was established at the same time as the kingdom because those two words refer to the same institution.
 - b. Second, it is clear from the scriptures that the church was part of God's *eternal* purpose.

- (1) That certainly means that the church was *not* a last-minute, unplanned substitution for the postponed kingdom!
- (2) Compare with Ephesians 3:9-11.
- c. Third, Jesus said He would build His *church* and that was *before* the Jews rejected Him.
 - (1) Compare with Matthew 16:18.
 - (2) Thus, rather than the church being a last-minute substitution for the kingdom it was in the mind of the Christ to establish His church, even *before* the Jews rejected Him!
- d. From these straight-forward passages of scripture it is absolutely clear that the church was in the *eternal* purpose of God.
- e. Thus, it was *not* an afterthought created by God because of the rejection of Jesus by the Jews.
- 12. To summarize then - the first key element of premillennialism is that Christ failed to establish His kingdom when He came the first time.
 - a. We have seen that this key element is false without a doubt.
 - b. It is false because it contradicts many clear passages of scripture such as those that we have studied.
 - c. Since this first key element of premillennialism is false the entire doctrine is false and must be rejected by those who love the Lord and His word.
- 13. A second key element of premillennialism is that at Jesus' next coming He will return to Jerusalem to establish His kingdom and to rule on David's throne for 1,000 years.
- 14. This second key element of premillennialism is also false for several reasons as follows:
 - a. First, it is false because as we have just studied, Jesus the Christ established His kingdom in the first century.
 - (1) Since that kingdom is eternal (Dan 2:44) it has been in existence ever since its establishment on the day of Pentecost.
 - (2) And, it will remain in existence forever (Dan 2:44).
 - (3) Therefore, Christ is not coming back to establish His kingdom, He already did that in the first century!
 - b. Second, this key element of premillennialism is false because Jesus is not coming back to rule on David's throne in Jerusalem for 1,000 years.
 - (1) As we have studied in 2:29-36 Jesus was raised from the dead in the first century to rule on David's throne.
 - (a) And that throne is *in heaven, not* on this earth!
 - (b) Therefore, Jesus does not have to come back to Jerusalem to rule on David's throne.
 - (c) He has been doing that in heaven for almost 2,000 years already!
 - (2) We can verify this conclusion by briefly reviewing a summary of our study of 2:29-36.
 - (3) In that section, you will remember Peter made powerful use of Old Testament scriptures to prove the following two things:
 - (a) First, Jesus was the Christ who fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 16:8-11.

1. He did that by being raised from the dead in the first century to rule as King over His kingdom on David's throne (2:29-32).
 - (b) Second, Jesus was the Christ who fulfilled the prophecy in Psalm 110:1.
 1. He did that by being exalted to the right hand of God *in heaven* to rule *there* until His last enemy is destroyed (2:33-36).
 - (4) From those passages several valid conclusions can be drawn as follows:
 - (a) Since it was prophesied that the Christ would be raised up to *sit on David's throne* (2:30-31),
 And since Jesus the Christ fulfilled that prophecy by being raised up to *sit at God's right hand in heaven* (2:33),
 David's throne is therefore at God's right hand in *heaven*, *not* anywhere on this earth!
 Therefore, Jesus was raised from the dead in the first century to rule *in heaven* as the Christ, the King (2:29-33; Eph 1:19-23).
 - (b) Since Jesus the Christ's rule as King *in heaven* will last until all His enemies are defeated (2:34-35),
 And since the last enemy is death (1 Cor 15:26),
 Jesus will rule as King *in heaven* until death is conquered in the end, at His second coming (1 Cor 15:23-26).
 At that time He will deliver His kingdom to the Father *in heaven*, not in Jerusalem or any other place on earth (1 Cor 15:24).
 - c. Third, this key element of premillennialism is false because Christ is not coming back to rule anywhere on this earth.
 - (1) 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.
15. In summary - we have studied the doctrine of premillennialism and found it to be false because it contradicts many clear passages of scripture.
 16. Additional information showing that premillennialism is a false doctrine can be found in WVBS Course *Genesis*, and *Old Testament History*.
 17. Summary of 2:42-47 - The church continues *steadfastly*.
 - a. In verse 42 we see that the early Christians continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, the breaking of bread and in prayers.
 - b. In verse 43 we are told that the apostles of Christ worked many miracles and that people were filled with fear.
 - c. In verses 44 and 45 God described the love the early Christians had for one another by saying they:
 - (1) Were together,
 - (2) Had all things common and
 - (3) Were willing to sell their possessions and to distribute the proceeds among those who had need.
 - d. In verses 46 and 47 God continued His description of these Christians by saying that they:
 - (1) Persevered daily in their activities for the Lord.
 - (2) Were a united, harmonious group.
 - (3) Gathered together to work and worship in the temple.

- (4) Enjoyed spending time together, including eating meals with each other in their homes.
 - (5) Had a wonderful attitude in their daily life.
 - (a) This attitude included an abundant joy to be a Christian and to *live* as a Christian.
 - (b) And, it included their sole desire to serve the Lord rather than material things.
 - (6) Praised God.
 - (7) And because of their conduct they were viewed with approval by the people of Jerusalem.
 - e. Finally, at the end of verse 47, we learn that the Lord added to His church daily those who were being saved as they obeyed His gospel.
18. Brief review of chapters 1 and 2:
- I. Part One: (1-7) The church established in Jerusalem.
 - A. (1-2) The church began with power.
 - 1. Chapter 1, Waiting for the promise.
 - a. (1-2) Introduction.
 - b. (3-8) The promise given.
 - c. (9-11) Ascension of Christ.
 - d. (12-14) Apostles in Jerusalem.
 - e. (15-26) Appointment of Matthias.
 - 2. Chapter 2, The promise fulfilled and the church established.
 - a. (1-13) Apostles filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues.
 - b. (14-36) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicts the crowd of sin, righteousness and judgment.
 - (1) (14-21) Inspired interpretation of these events.
 - (2) (22-24) *Jesus*: Attested by God; Killed by Jews; Raised by the Father.
 - (3) (25-32) *Jesus*: The Proof from prophecy.
 - (4) (33-36) *Jesus*: Exalted and enthroned.
 - c. (37-41) Response of some in the crowd / Inspired conditions of pardon.
 - d. (42-47) The church continues steadfastly.
19. Brief overview of Part IB of our outline:
- B. (3-7) The church grew in Jerusalem.
 - (1) (3:1-4:31) Miracle of Peter and John / Opposition of Sadducees.
 - (2) (4:32-5:11) Wrestling with a social problem / Ananias and Sapphira lie.
 - (3) (5:12-42) Prosperity and renewed opposition.
 - (4) (6:1-7) Appointment of the seven.
 - (5) (6:8-7:60) Pharisees aroused by Stephen / Stephen's death.
20. Brief overview of Part IB1 - Miracle of Peter and John / Opposition of Sadducees (3:1-4:31).
- a. (3:1-11) Peter heals the lame man.
 - b. (3:12-26) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicts another crowd.

- (1) (3:12-17) *Jesus*: Killed by the Jews / Raised and glorified by the Father.
- (2) (3:18-26) *Jesus*: Predicted by the prophets / Inspired conditions of pardon.
- c. (4:1-4) Peter and John put into custody.
- d. (4:5-12) Peter preaches to Sanhedrin - Salvation only in Christ's name.
- e. (4:13-22) Sanhedrin commands Peter and John not to preach.
- f. (4:23-31) Apostles' prayer for boldness.

B. (3-7) THE CHURCH GREW IN JERUSALEM

1. (3:1-4:31) PETER AND JOHN / OPPOSITION OF SADDUCEES

a. (3:1-11) PETER HEALS THE LAME MAN

3:1-5

1. In verse 1 Peter and John went to the temple at the "ninth hour."
 - a. "Ninth hour" = about 3 P.M. which was the time of the evening prayer.
 - b. A great number of people would have been coming to the temple at that time.
2. In verse 2 a lame man was carried to the Beautiful Gate of the temple. The lame man was described as follows:
 - a. "Lame from his mother's womb."
 - (1) He had *always* been unable to walk.
 - (2) No deception here!
 - b. He was "laid daily" at this gate.
 - (1) People would have been familiar with him because they saw him regularly.
 - (2) The fact that people knew his circumstances is another confirmation that there was no deception here!
 - c. He "asked alms" from those who entered the temple (v. 3).
 - (1) Alms were various forms of charity, mercy or pity shown toward those in special need.
 - (2) This lame man had to beg for the necessities of life.
3. In verse 3 the lame man asked Peter and John for alms.
4. In verse 4 Peter told the lame man to look at him and John.
5. In verse 5 the lame man paid close attention to Peter and John because he *expected to receive something from them*.

3:6-8

1. In verse 6 Peter responded by saying that he did not have any money for the lame man.
 - a. However, Peter did offer what he had - the power to enable the lame man to walk.
 - b. Notice, Peter promised to do that "in the name of" (or by the authority of) Jesus Christ of Nazareth.
 - c. Thus, rather than drawing attention to himself, Peter was giving credit for the miracle he was about to work to Jesus the Christ.
2. In verse 7 we see Peter lifted the lame man and his feet and ankles received strength immediately!

- a. This immediate result was a distinctive characteristic of genuine Bible miracles (cf. Jn 5:8-9; Mt 9:6-7; 12:13).
- 3. Not only that but, in verse 8, the lame man jumped up and went into the temple, leaping and praising God.
- 4. Thus, what we have recorded in these verses is the *immediate* and *complete* healing of a man who had been lame all of his life!

3:9-11

- 1. In these verses we see the reaction of those who saw the lame man walking and praising God.
- 2. They reacted as follows:
 - a. They recognized he was the lame man who begged at the temple gate daily.
 - b. They were filled with wonder and amazement at what happened to him.
 - c. They ran to Solomon's porch in the temple.
- 3. Before we leave these verses, please notice the amazing difference between this *genuine* miracle and the *counterfeit* miracles which are claimed today:
 - a. First, the lame man had a genuine, obvious physical defect from birth and that fact was well-known by those who observed the miracle. This was not a pretended sickness or injury.
 - b. Second, the people who observed the miracle were familiar with the lame man because they had seen him at the temple gate frequently.
 - c. Third, the apostles did not arrange to have the lame man there; he just happened to be there when Peter and John arrived.
 - d. Fourth, rather than having great faith, the lame man was begging for and expecting *material* help from the apostles.
 - (1) In fact, even when Peter told the lame man to rise up and walk, he did not do so (vv. 6-7).
 - (2) Instead, Peter had to reach down and lift the lame man up before he believed he was healed (v. 7).
 - (3) Obviously then, he did not show faith in Jesus or Peter's healing power until he saw he was able to stand and walk.
 - (4) This proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that it was not necessary for the person being healed to have faith.
 - (5) Compare with Jn 11:38-44 (Lazarus).
 - e. Fifth, rather than drawing attention to himself Peter gave credit to and glorified Jesus.
 - f. Sixth, the lame man was healed *immediately* as was characteristic of true Bible miracles.
 - g. Seventh, the lame man was healed *completely* not partially - walking and leaping.
 - h. Eighth, the people who were familiar with the lame man were convinced he was truly healed. They were "filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him."
 - i. Ninth, even the enemies of Christ could not disprove that a remarkable miracle had been worked (cf. 4:14).

- j. And tenth, the wonder and amazement of the crowd were a clear indication that no man could perform such a miracle without God's help.

b. (3:12-26) THE HOLY SPIRIT (THROUGH PETER) CONVICTS ANOTHER CROWD.

(1) (3:12-17) JESUS: KILLED BY THE JEWS / RAISED AND GLORIFIED BY THE FATHER

3:12

- 1. When Peter saw the crowd gather he asked them why they looked at him and John as if *they* worked the miracle by their own power.
- 2. In other words, he rebuked the crowd for not automatically concluding it was *God* who was responsible for the miracle.

3:13-15

- 1. In these verses Peter convicted the crowd of sin, just as he had to the crowd on the day of Pentecost (cf. 2:22-24,36).
- 2. Notice the amazing contrast he drew between the actions of the nation of Israel and those of almighty God in these verses:

ISRAEL

GOD

Delivered Jesus up.

Denied Him before Pilate, even when he wanted to let Jesus go free.
Denied the Holy and Just One.

Glorified His Servant Jesus.

Asked for a murderer in Jesus' place.
Killed the Prince of Life.

Raised Jesus from the dead.

- 3. As we have already seen, and will continue to see in the book of Acts, apostolic preaching was bold and it convicted people of sin!
 - a. Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 6:17; Acts 2:37.
 - b. Galatians 4:16.
 - c. Ephesians 4:15.
 - d. We need more preaching like that today!
- 4. Also, please notice the beautiful terms that Peter used to describe the Lord Jesus Christ:
 - a. (13) "His Servant."
 - (1) This is a clear reference to God's special, suffering Servant Whom He predicted would come forth to be the Savior of mankind!
 - (2) Compare with Isaiah 42:1-9; 52:13-53:12.
 - b. (14) "The Holy One."

- (1) A beautifully accurate description of Jesus, who was truly set apart from worldliness and dedicated to the Lord!
 - (2) This was also a phrase which was used to refer to the Messiah (Psa 16:10; Acts 2:27).
 - c. (14) “the Just” - δίκαιον.
 - (1) This word means “righteous; innocent; completely free from guilt.”
 - (2) What a perfect description of Jesus...completely innocent, the one who committed no sin (cf. Heb 4:15; 1 Pet 2:22).
 - (3) Thus, Israel was guilty of denying the sinless Jesus and asking for the murderer Barabbas in His place!
 - d. (15) “Prince of Life” - ἀρχηγὸν.
 - (1) The word translated “Prince” means “the originating source, founder or author.”
 - (2) Thus, when Peter said Jesus is the “Prince of Life,” he was saying that Jesus is the originating source of life (cf. Jn 1:3-4; 5:26; 1 Cor 15:45).
 - (3) With that meaning in mind notice what Peter had accused Israel of:
 - (a) They had delivered up Jesus to Pilate who wanted to let Him go (v. 13).
 - (b) They had denied the holy and sinless Jesus (v. 14).
 - (c) They asked for the murderer Barabbas to be delivered to them instead of Jesus (v. 15).
 - (d) Not only that, but they had killed Jesus the originating source of life (v. 15).
 - e. What was the reaction of almighty God to this injustice?
 - (1) He raised Jesus from the dead (v. 15).
 - (2) He glorified His faithful Servant, Jesus (v. 13).
 - f. You can imagine the terrible guilt which must have been felt by those in the audience who had honest and good hearts!
5. At the end of verse 15 Peter again added the eyewitness testimony of the apostles to verify that the Father raised His Son from the dead (cf. 2:32).

3:16

- 1. In this verse Peter gave credit for this miracle to Jesus.
 - a. Peter said that the name of Jesus (through faith in His name) had made this lame man strong.
 - b. Remember from our study of 2:38 the name of a person frequently represented the character, power and authority of that person.
 - c. Thus, Peter was saying this miracle was worked by the power and authority of Jesus.
- 2. But, what did Peter mean when he said this miracle was worked “through faith” in the name of Jesus? Whose faith was he talking about?
 - a. As we saw in verses 9-11 it certainly was not the faith of the lame man!
 - (1) Rather than expressing faith in Christ he was begging for and expecting material help from the apostles.
 - b. The only other possibility is that it was the apostles’ faith in Christ which enabled them to work this amazing miracle.

- c. This is certainly consistent with the fact that during the age of miracles that faith on the part of the one working the miracles was absolutely essential.
 - (1) Compare with Luke 17:6.
 - (2) Matthew 14:28-31.
 - (3) Matthew 17:14-20.
 - d. Therefore, when someone who claims miraculous powers today fails to work a miracle, and blames the failure on the lack of faith of the sick or handicapped person, we know that he or she is an imposter!
3. Finally, Peter emphasized the certainty and validity of the miracle by pointing out the following distinctive characteristics:
- a. All in the audience could “see” the evidence clearly with their own eyes.
 - b. They *knew* the lame man and his handicap personally.
 - c. They could observe his “*perfect*” (*complete*) soundness in healing.
 - d. And this amazing miracle was worked in the *presence of all of them*.

3:17

- 1. After using the sword of the Spirit to convict these people of sin, Peter tenderly, lovingly and kindly appealed to the audience as his “brethren.”
- 2. Next, he recognized that they crucified the Lord Jesus in ignorance, i.e., they were ignorant of the fact that He was the prophesied Messiah.
 - a. They and their rulers were ignorant of the wisdom of God revealed in the scriptures (cf. 1 Cor 2:8).
 - b. Although Peter recognized their ignorance it is clear their ignorance did not make them *innocent*!
 - (1) This is obvious because Peter had just convicted them of being *guilty* of killing Jesus (vv. 13-15).
 - (2) In addition, in verses 19-21, he urged them to *repent* and to be *converted* so that their sins could be blotted out!
 - c. This is entirely consistent with a very important Bible principle.
 - (1) Lk 12:47-48.
- 3. Summary of 3:12-17 - *Jesus*: Killed by the Jews / Raised and glorified by the Father.
 - a. In verse 12 Peter asked the crowd why they looked at him and John as if they worked the miracle on the lame man by their own power.
 - b. In verses 13-15 Peter convicted the crowd of sin by pointing out that they:
 - (1) Delivered Jesus up and denied Him before Pilate, even when he wanted to let Jesus go free;
 - (2) Denied Jesus who was the holy and completely innocent one;
 - (3) Asked for a murderer to be released rather than Jesus, and
 - (4) Killed the Prince of Life.
 - c. In sharp contrast with these wicked actions, Peter said that God the Father had:
 - (1) Raised Jesus from the dead, and
 - (2) Glorified Jesus as His suffering Servant who was prophesied in the Old Testament.

- d. In verse 16 Peter stated his and John's faith in Jesus made this amazing miracle of healing possible.
- e. In verse 17 Peter recognized that Israel did what they did to Jesus through their ignorance.

(2) (3:18-26) JESUS: PREDICTED BY THE PROPHETS / INSPIRED CONDITIONS OF PARDON

3:18

1. Peter affirmed the suffering which Jesus experienced as the Christ was predicted by God through the Old Testament prophets (cf. Lk 24:44-46).
 - a. Thus, the Israelites had done all of these things exercising their freedom of choice and thinking they were doing their own will to destroy Jesus.
 - b. Yet, all along, God had predicted these things would be done for His glory and that of His beloved Son Jesus as well as the salvation of man!
 - c. Compare with Romans 11:33-36.
2. The fact that those prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus, as the Christ, was a further indication of the tremendous guilt of Israel in crucifying Jesus!
3. They had killed the One who came to seek and save that which was lost!

3:19-21

1. Peter had previously convicted Israel of the sin of killing Jesus.
2. In these verses he told them what they needed to do to receive forgiveness of their sins.
3. First, in verse 19, he told them that they needed to repent.
 - a. As we studied in 2:38 repentance is a change of mind.
 - b. This change of mind is based upon godly sorrow for past sins.
 - c. It leads to a change in the conduct or behavior of the one who repents.
 - d. Thus, Peter was telling this crowd they needed to have a change of mind which was based upon godly sorrow and which led to a change in their behavior.
4. Next, also in verse 19, Peter told them they needed to "be converted" (KJV, NKJV) or "turn again" (ASV).
 - a. The word translated "be converted" or "turn again" - ἐπιστρέψατε - literally means "to turn again"; it means "to turn away from sins; to reform."
 - b. Therefore, it is clear that what Peter commanded when he told them to turn again was to change their *behavior* or *conduct*.
 - (1) Thus, when he told them to *repent* he commanded them to change their *mind*.
 - (2) And when he told them to *turn again* he commanded them to change their *behavior*.
 - c. Obviously, their change of behavior had to *begin* at some point.
 - d. And that point had to be *after* they repented.
 - e. When we go to 2:38, which is parallel to this verse, it is clear that after repentance, a person's change of behavior includes baptism in water for the forgiveness of sins.

Acts 3:19	REPENT		SINS BLOTTED OUT
Acts 2:38	REPENT		REMISSION OF SINS
Acts 3:19	REPENT	TURN AGAIN	SINS BLOTTED OUT
Acts 2:38	REPENT	BE BAPTIZED	REMISSION OF SINS

- f. From these two parallel verses we may conclude that a person's turning away from sin and turning to God includes baptism in water for forgiveness of sins!
5. Still, in verse 19, Peter listed two blessings that will be received by each person who repents and turns away from sins and to the Lord.
- a. First, their sins will be "blotted out" - ἐξαλειφῆναι.
- (1) This word means "to wash completely out; to wipe away or off; to obliterate."
 - (2) It was used to indicate the complete removal of any record of a debt owed to a creditor.
 - (3) Thus, God promises to completely remove any record of prior sins committed by those who will repent, turn away from sins and turn to the Lord, including baptism in water.
 - (4) What a wonderful and comforting thought (cf. Heb 8:12)!!
- b. The second blessing promised in verse 19 is "that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."
- (1) Notice this blessing comes only *after* a person repents, turns again and has their sins blotted out.
 - (2) Each person who does that receives refreshing from the Lord's presence.
 - (3) But, what is meant by the Lord's presence?
 - (4) Again, the fact that this verse and 2:38 are parallel gives us the inspired answer to the question of what is meant by the Lord's presence.

ACTS 2:38	ACTS 3:19
REPENT	REPENT
BE BAPTIZED	TURN AGAIN
REMISSION OF SINS	SINS BLOTTED OUT
GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT	REFRESHING FROM PRESENCE OF THE LORD

- (5) Thus, when one faithfully and lovingly obeys the gospel, thereby receiving the forgiveness of sins, God dwells in His child (no miracles, no direct guidance or influence).

- (6) It is *refreshing* for the faithful child of God to be aware of the fact his sins are forgiven and that, as a result, God dwells in him/her!

3:20-21

1. In verse 20 we see another reason why Peter commanded his audience to repent and turn again.
2. That reason was so the Father would send Jesus Christ to them.
 - a. The sending of Jesus Christ is an obvious reference to the second coming of Christ.
 - b. At that time, those who have died in Christ and those who are alive and faithful to Him will be caught up in the air to remain with the Lord forever (1 Thess 4:13-17).
 - c. They will be delivered up to spend eternity in heaven (1 Cor 15:24).
 - d. Now, it is clear God wants all of mankind to be in that number by responding obediently to the gospel (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9).
 - e. But, man has freedom of will to choose whether to obey that gospel or not (Heb 5:9).
 - f. For those reasons Peter gave this inspired exhortation for all to repent and turn again to the Lord so He can send Jesus to bring many faithful ones to Him!
3. Then in verse 21 Peter stated Jesus must remain in heaven “until the times of restoration of all things.”
 - a. This is a truly interesting and challenging phrase!
 - b. It is a challenge to determine exactly what is meant by the phrase “the times of the restoration of all things.”
 - (1) It is not only a *challenge* to determine what is meant by this phrase it is also *very important!*
 - (2) It is important first of all because we want to understand God’s word!
 - (3) But it is also important because this is a passage which premillennialists misuse to teach their doctrine.
 - (4) Please remember we have already learned in our study of 2:47 that the doctrine of premillennialism is false and thus must be rejected.
 - (a) In that study we saw that Christ established His kingdom (church) in the first century.
 - (b) Therefore, He is *not* coming back to this earth to establish His kingdom.
 - (c) Instead, He is coming to meet His people in the *air* and to present the kingdom to the Father in *heaven*.
 - c. With that background information in mind it is amazing to learn that premillennialists teach this passage promises an *earthly* restoration of all things.
 - (1) And they say that restoration will be accomplished *after* the return of Christ to this earth to set up His kingdom.
4. Actually, neither this verse nor the context promises any such thing!
 - a. We know this because we have seen that Jesus is *not* coming back to earth to establish His kingdom! He already established His kingdom in the first century!
 - b. We will also see this verse does not contain any such promise through our detailed analysis of the meaning of this phrase.

5. One key to understanding this challenging phrase is to connect it with the words which follow it (i.e., the immediate context).
 - a. The first half of the verse ends with Peter speaking about the restoration of “all things.”
 - b. But, the first half of the verse is inseparably connected to the last half!
 - c. Thus, the “all things” in the *first* half of the verse is connected with what was said in the *last* half of the verse.
 - d. In the last half of the verse Peter referred to the things “which God has spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began.”
 - e. The “all things” refers to all things which God has spoken through His prophets.
 - f. Therefore, Jesus must remain in heaven until the restoration of all things which God has spoken through His prophets.
6. But another related key to the proper understanding of this challenging phrase is the meaning of the word translated “restoration” (ἀποκαταστάσεως).
 - a. This word *can* mean the restoration of a thing to its former state or condition.
 - b. But it can also mean the *completion* or filling up of something. (Barnes)
 - c. In fact, I believe *completion* is the meaning which God intended for the word translated “restoration” in this passage.
 - d. If “completion” is the proper meaning of the word translated “restoration,” then we should be able to substitute “completion” in the phrase and not change its meaning nor contradict any passage of scripture.
 - e. Let us read verse 21 with the word “completion” substituted for the word “restoration” and we will see there is no change in the meaning of the verse.
 - f. Thus, we conclude the meaning of verse 21 is that Jesus must remain in heaven until all things which God has spoken through His prophets have come to pass, have been *completed*, have been fulfilled.
 - g. But, is that conclusion consistent with the rest of the New Testament? To answer this question, please consider the following:
 - (1) 1 Corinthians 15:23-24.
 - (2) Matthew 25:31-46.
 - (3) 1 Corinthians 15:24.
 - (4) 1 Thessalonians 4:17.
 - h. From these passages of scripture it is clear our conclusion is a valid one - that is, God teaches in this verse that Jesus will remain in heaven until all things which God spoke through His prophets have been completed.
 - (1) At that time Jesus will return to take those in His kingdom to *heaven* where they will remain forever.
 - (2) Thus, the premillennial teaching that this verse promises an *earthly* restoration of all things *after* Jesus’ second coming is *absolutely false!*

3:22-23

1. At the end of the last verse, Peter referred to “all things which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets...”
2. Now, in these two verses Peter quoted from the great Old Testament prophet Moses, as found in Deuteronomy 18:15-20.

- a. Of course Peter's Jewish audience respected and believed Moses as one of God's greatest prophets.
 - b. They knew and readily accepted the fact that Moses spoke by the authority of almighty God.
 - c. So then, by quoting Moses, Peter was reminding his Jewish audience they were obligated to believe and obey what Moses said in Deuteronomy 18:15-20 if they wanted to please God.
3. But, what did Moses say in Deuteronomy 18:15-20?
 4. Peter summarized Moses' prophecy by making the following points:
 - a. First, God would "raise up" a prophet like Moses from Israel.
 - b. Second, the people would be obligated to hear and obey that prophet.
 - c. And third, whoever refused to hear and obey that prophet would be utterly destroyed.
 5. With those broad points in mind let us analyze them in more detail.
 - a. First, there was no question that Jesus came through the nation of Israel (i.e., He was from among "your brethren" as Moses prophesied to Israel). Compare Matthew 1:1-17 and Romans 1:3.
 - b. Second, how was Jesus the Christ like Moses? There were many similarities, but we would like to focus on two of the most important ones.
 - (1) First, Moses was an *original lawgiver* (i.e., God used him to deliver the Old Testament to the nation of Israel).
 - (a) Of course, Jesus was also an *original lawgiver*. He gave the law of Christ, which is the better covenant (Gal 6:2; Heb 8:6).
 - (2) Second, Moses *delivered* the nation of Israel from bondage (slavery) in the nation of Egypt (Acts 7:35-36).
 - (a) Of course, Jesus is a far better *deliverer*. He delivers all those who will obey Him from the bondage of sin and death (Rom 7:22-25; Heb 2:14-15; 1 Cor 15:54ff).
 6. When we consider those facts from the scriptures it is clear Peter was saying that Jesus the Christ was the fulfillment of Moses' prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:15-20.
 - a. Jesus was the Prophet who was like Moses.
 - b. He was the Prophet who came from the nation of Israel.
 - c. Thus, Jesus was the Prophet whom the people were obligated to hear and obey.
 - d. And, whoever refused to hear and obey Jesus would be utterly destroyed!
 - e. But, Peter had already convicted the people of Israel of *killing* that great Prophet, the "Prince of Life" (v. 15)!
 - f. Just think about the pain and guilt which the hearers were experiencing on that day!
 - g. Again, the preaching of the apostles cut the hearts of those who heard it!

3:24-25

1. In verse 24 Peter said that Moses was not the only prophet who predicted the days of the Messiah, the Christ.
2. Samuel and other prophets also predicted those days.

3. In verse 25 Peter addressed his Jewish audience from two standpoints:
 - a. First, from their relationship to the prophets.
 - (1) They were “sons” (descendants) of the prophets, therefore
 - (2) They were obligated to listen to and obey those prophets.
 - b. Second, from their relationship to the promise God made to Abraham.
 - (1) The Jews looked up to Abraham as the Father of the nation of Israel (v. 13).
 - (2) Indeed, God recognized Abraham as the Father of all those who are faithful to Him (Rom 4:11-12).
 - (3) Thus, by referring to God’s promise to Abraham Peter was again appealing to the highest possible authority in the mind of the Jews!
4. Peter identified that promise as the one where God said all families of the earth would be blessed through a descendant (“seed”) of Abraham.
 - a. This promise from God to Abraham is found in Genesis 12:3; 18:18; and 22:18.
 - b. We will have more to say about that promise in our study of the next verse.

3:26

1. In this verse Peter gave the inspired and stirring conclusion to his argument.
2. He did that by making the following points:
 - a. First, Jesus was the great Prophet who Moses predicted in Deuteronomy 18:15-20.
 - (1) We know that from this verse because Jesus was the One whom the Father “raised up” who was like Moses (cf. 22-23).
 - (2) Thus, Jesus was the One whom all were obligated to hear and obey.
 - (3) And, if anyone refused to hear and obey Jesus the Father promised to utterly destroy that person!
 - b. Second, Peter said Jesus was the One whom the Father sent to *bless* all people.
 - (1) Of course this meant Jesus was the “seed” who fulfilled God’s promise to Abraham to “bless” all families of the earth (v. 25).
 - (2) Galatians 3:16.
 - (3) But, how is it that Jesus blessed and blesses all families of the earth?
 - c. The answer to this question is Peter’s third point in this verse. He said Jesus would do that by “turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”
 - (1) Does that mean Jesus would and will turn every person away from their iniquities as if they had no freedom of choice in the matter?
 - (2) Of course, we must go to the New Testament of Jesus to determine the answer to this question!
 - (3) First, let us look at the context where this statement is found.
 - (a) 3:19.
 - (b) 3:22-23.
 - (4) Second, what is the teaching of the rest of the New Testament?
 - (a) Titus 2:11-14.
 - (b) Ephesians 1:3.
 - (c) 2 Corinthians 5:14-15.
 - (d) Revelation 22:14.

- d. As a fourth point Peter said the Father sent His Son Jesus to the nation of Israel “first” (“to you first”).
 - (1) This was *not* because God was showing partiality to the Jews (Rom 2:11; Acts 10:34-35).
 - (2) Rather, it was because the Jews should have been the most receptive to the gospel.
 - (3) That was true because God revealed the prophecies concerning Jesus the Christ in the Old Testament which the Jews had (Rom 3:1-2; Lk 24:44-46).
- 3. Summary of 3:18-26 - *Jesus*: Predicted by the prophets / Inspired conditions of pardon.
 - a. (18) Peter said the suffering which Jesus experienced as the Christ was predicted by God through His prophets.
 - b. (19) Peter told the audience they needed to repent (i.e., to have a change of mind) and to be converted (i.e., to have a change of behavior, beginning with baptism).
 - c. Also in verse 19 - Peter said there would be two results of their repenting and being converted:
 - (1) First, their sins would be completely washed away, and
 - (2) Second, times of refreshing would come from the presence of the Lord.
 - d. (20) Another reason given for repenting and being converted - so the Father could send Jesus again.
 - e. (21) Jesus must remain in heaven until all things predicted by the prophets are completed.
 - f. (22 and 23) Moses’ prophecy from Deuteronomy 18:15-20 was summarized into three major points:
 - (1) God would “*raise up*” a prophet like Moses from Israel.
 - (2) The people would be obligated to hear and obey that Prophet.
 - (3) Whoever refused to hear and obey that Prophet would be utterly destroyed.
 - g. (24) Not only Moses, but Samuel and other prophets, predicted the days of the Messiah, the Christ.
 - h. (25) The Israelites were descendants of those prophets and of a special promise which God made to the great patriarch Abraham.
 - (1) That promise was that all the families of the earth would be blessed through the seed of Abraham.
 - i. (26) Jesus the Christ was the fulfillment of those prophecies *and* of God’s promise to Abraham.
 - (1) He was the great Prophet like Moses who God raised up from Israel.
 - (2) And He was the seed of Abraham sent by the Father to bless all families of the earth.
 - (3) Jesus would be such a blessing by turning people away from their sins.
 - (a) He would do that through His selfless sacrifice of Himself, and
 - (b) Through His gospel which must be obeyed to receive this blessing.
 - (4) The Father sent His beloved Son to Israel first.
- 4. Brief review of chapter 3:
 - a. (1-11) Peter heals the lame man.

- b. (12-26) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicts another crowd.
 - (1) (12-17) *Jesus*: Killed by the Jews / Raised and glorified by the Father.
 - (2) (18-26) *Jesus*: Predicted by the prophets / Inspired conditions of pardon.

c. (4:1-4) PETER AND JOHN PUT INTO CUSTODY

4:1-3

1. Certain Jewish leaders interrupted Peter as he was speaking.
2. Among those leaders were some of the Sadducees.
 - a. The Sadducees were an elite religious party (sect) of Judaism.
 - b. They did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, or in angels, or in the human spirit or soul (Acts 23:8; Mt 22:23).
3. These religious leaders were greatly disturbed because of what the apostles were teaching.
 - a. They were teaching the resurrection of the dead.
 - b. Not only that, but they were proving their case by using the conclusive evidence of Jesus' being raised from the dead.
4. As a result, these religious leaders took the apostles into custody until the next day.

4:4

1. In spite of this interference by Jewish religious leaders the church continued to grow!
2. Many who heard the word of God believed that gospel message.
3. In fact, the church had grown from some 3,000 souls on the Day of Pentecost to 5,000 men this short time later!
4. As we noted in our study of background information this shows the power of God's word as it is preached, taught and lived by faithful Christians!

d. (4:5-12) PETER PREACHES TO THE SANHEDRIN - SALVATION ONLY IN CHRIST'S NAME

4:5-7

1. The next day the rulers, elders, scribes, high priest and those of the high priest's family gathered together in Jerusalem.
2. This was a meeting of the Sanhedrin (the ruling council of the Jews).
 - a. This was the highest court of justice for enforcing the law of Moses among the Jews.
 - b. There were 71 members, including the high priest (who served as president).
 - c. The Sanhedrin had the power of life and death (Mt 26:3-4).
 - d. However, they could not execute a death sentence. That responsibility was claimed by the Roman government (Jn 18:31).
 - e. Jesus was tried before the Sanhedrin (Mt 26:59).
 - f. So were Peter and John (this chapter).
 - g. Stephen was (Acts 6:12).
 - h. And so was Paul (Acts 22:30).

3. In verse 7 we learn the rulers of the Sanhedrin placed Peter and John in the middle of the council.
4. Then the rulers asked them by what power or name they had done “this.”
5. When the Sanhedrin asked Peter and John by what power or name they had done what they did it is clear that they were asking by what authority they had acted.
6. In other words they were asking if Peter and John acted upon their own authority or upon someone else’s.

4:8-10

1. Peter boldly said the lame man was healed by the name (authority) of Jesus Christ.
2. In 3:6 and 3:16 Peter had also said this miracle was performed by the authority of the Lord Jesus.
3. Notice, Peter pointed out several key facts to the rulers concerning Jesus.
 - a. First, that Jesus was the Christ. Thus, He was the Messiah, the Savior, the King.
 - b. Second, that He was from Nazareth. Thus, there could be no mistake in identifying Him.
 - c. Third, that these rulers had crucified Jesus. Peter had placed responsibility for this deed on the people of Israel in general earlier (2:23; 3:14-15).
 - d. And fourth, that the Father had raised Jesus from the dead.

4:11-12

1. In verse 11 Peter said this same Jesus whom these Jewish rulers rejected by crucifying Him was the chief cornerstone of the Lord’s building.
2. Peter was quoting from Psalm 118:22 and Isaiah 28:16.
3. Matthew 21:42.
 - a. Romans 9:33; Ephesians 2:20.
 - b. 1 Peter 2:4-7.
4. Thus, Jesus, Peter and Paul each claimed, by inspiration, Jesus is the builder and the foundation of the Lord’s church, the spiritual temple of God (1 Cor 3:11,16-17)!!
5. And yet, these Jewish leaders had rejected and crucified Jesus!
6. But, Peter went even further!
7. In verse 12 he claimed there is no way to be saved from sin except in Jesus.
 - a. Thus, in rejecting Jesus, the Christ, these rulers rejected the *only* way that God has provided for their (and our) salvation from sin!
 - b. This is entirely consistent with several other clear passages of scripture:
 - (1) Luke 19:10; Matthew 1:21.
 - (2) John 14:6.
8. Looking back on verses 8-12 we have seen the following dramatic developments:
 - a. (8-10) Peter began by saying he and John had provided *physical* healing to the lame man by the authority of Jesus.
 - b. (10) He pointed out that Jesus was the Christ.
 - c. (10) He accused those Jewish rulers of being responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus.
 - d. (10) Yet, God the Father raised Jesus victoriously from the dead.

- e. (11) And, Jesus was the prophesied chief cornerstone of the Lord's building.
 - f. (11) Yet, the Jewish leaders rejected Him.
 - g. (12) Even more importantly that Jesus is the only One in whom spiritual salvation from sin can be obtained!
9. Truly, apostolic preaching was bold and they exalted Jesus as the Christ!
- a. These men were in the midst of a crowd which was hostile to them and their cause.
 - b. Yet, they spoke the truth without fear!

e. (4:13-22) Sanhedrin commands Peter and John not to preach

4:13

1. The members of the Sanhedrin were absolutely astonished because of the boldness of Peter and John.
2. They were so amazed because they could see Peter and John were not highly educated and not trained in the art of public speaking.
3. Yet, in spite of their lack of formal education and training, they spoke God's word with great boldness and confidence.
4. Notice the conclusion which the Sanhedrin drew concerning the source of the boldness of Peter and John.
5. They realized that these apostles "had been with Jesus!"
 - a. That is, the members of the Sanhedrin could clearly see Jesus had a very powerful influence on these men.
 - b. Jesus had obviously influenced the way these apostles thought, spoke and acted!
6. By way of practical application:
 - a. We know we cannot be with Jesus personally as these men were.
 - b. However, we can be with Jesus by reading and meditating upon His words (Col 3:16).
 - c. And, by striving to follow the example which He left for us (1 Pet 2:21; 1 Jn 2:6).
 - d. As we do these things more and more we will develop the mind of Christ (Phil 2:5).

4:14

1. The absolutely undeniable evidence that Peter and John had worked a remarkable miracle by the authority of Jesus was standing there in the sight of the council.
2. They could see the man who was lame from birth standing there completely healed.
3. Again, we see the clarity and certainty of biblical miracles (see our study of 3:9-11, 16).

4:15-18

1. In verse 15 Peter and John were commanded to leave the council so the members of the Sanhedrin could discuss this situation privately.
2. In verse 16 we see they were discussing what to do with the apostles.

- a. The Sanhedrin recognized they had a serious problem!
 - b. They wanted to do something to the apostles.
 - c. Yet, they knew all of Jerusalem was aware of the remarkable miracle which the apostles had performed.
 - d. And, the Sanhedrin knew they could not deny the validity of that miracle.
3. In verse 17 the members of the council decided to severely threaten the apostles not to speak to anyone by the authority of Christ (“in His name”).
 - a. Their purpose in making this threat was to keep the influence and teaching of Christianity from spreading among the people.
 4. In verse 18 the Sanhedrin called the apostles back in and commanded them not to speak or teach by the authority of Christ any more.

4:19-20

1. Peter and John again responded with boldness, and with open opposition to the ungodly command which the Sanhedrin had just given to them.
2. More specifically, in verse 19, Peter and John asked the council whether it was right in God’s sight for the apostles to listen to the council more than to God.
 - a. In other words, the apostles were saying God had told them to go out and preach by the authority of His beloved Son, Jesus.
 - b. But, the Sanhedrin had just commanded them *not* to speak or teach any more by the authority of Jesus.
 - c. As a result, Peter and John clearly implied they would have to listen to God (more than the council) by continuing to speak and teach by the authority of Christ.
3. Then, in verse 20, Peter and John did more than imply!
 - a. They said they would speak only those things which they had seen and heard.
 - b. That is, they knew they were obligated to report the actions and the words of almighty God and His beloved Son, Jesus the Christ.
 - c. And no man could legitimately forbid them to do that!
4. Before we leave verses 19 and 20 let us make practical application.
 - a. How did Peter and John determine what course of action to take in this case?
 - (1) It is clear they had a choice to make in this matter!
 - (2) But, how did they make that choice?
 - (3) According to verse 19 the apostles wanted to choose what was “right in the sight of God!”
 - (4) What an attitude!
 - (5) Is that my attitude?
 - (6) Is that your attitude?
 - (7) Compare with 2 Corinthians 5:9-11.

4:21-22

1. In these two verses several key points were made:
 - a. The Sanhedrin threatened Peter and John again.
 - b. But, after that threat they let the apostles go.
 - c. The members of the Sanhedrin were afraid to punish the apostles because they knew it would anger the people.

- d. That was true because the people glorified God for the miracle of healing which had been performed on the lame man.
 - e. And, that miracle was even more amazing because the lame man had been in that condition forty years.
2. Brief summary of 4:13-22 - The Sanhedrin commands Peter and John not to preach.
- a. (13) The Sanhedrin was amazed because of the boldness of Peter and John.
 - (1) They were amazed because Peter and John lacked formal education and training in public speaking.
 - (2) The Sanhedrin's conclusion was that Peter and John "had been with Jesus!"
 - b. (14) The healed lame man was standing in the sight of the council and this was undeniable proof that Peter and John worked this miracle by the authority of Jesus.
 - c. (15) Peter and John were commanded to leave the council so they could discuss this situation privately.
 - d. (16) The Sanhedrin wanted to do something to the Apostles, but knew that all Jerusalem was aware of the miracle which they could not deny.
 - e. (17 and 18) The Sanhedrin commanded the apostles not to speak in Jesus' name so that Christianity would not spread.
 - f. (19) Peter and John asked the council to judge whether it was right for them to listen to the council more than God.
 - g. (20) Peter and John told the Council they could speak only the things which they had seen and heard.
 - h. (21 and 22) The Sanhedrin threatened the apostles again, but let them go.
 - (1) The council was afraid that if they did more to the apostles the people would become angry.
 - (2) That was because the people glorified God for the miracle.

f. (4:23-31) APOSTLES' PRAYER FOR BOLDNESS

4:23-24

1. After the Sanhedrin released Peter and John they returned to be with their fellow apostles.
2. When they returned they reported all the Sanhedrin had said to them.
3. In verse 24 we see they prayed to God.
4. Please notice several things about their prayer:
 - a. First, they prayed with "one accord."
 - (1) As we have seen earlier these men were united in thought, in action and in prayer!
 - b. Second, the apostles approached God with a respectful, reverent attitude.
 - (1) They addressed Him as "Lord."
 - (a) But, the original Greek word chosen by the Holy Spirit in this case was a different one (δεσπότης) than was normally used.
 - (b) This word refers to a ruler who has supreme power and authority.

- (c) Thus, they were respectfully recognizing God's almighty power and calling upon Him to support them with that power.
- (2) They also referred to God's supreme power when they recognized Him as the Creator of "heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them."

4:25-28

1. In verses 25 and 26 the apostles quoted God as He spoke through the mouth of David.
 - a. This is another indication of the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible!
 - b. This quotation was from Psalm 2:1-2.
 - c. In this Psalm David asked why rulers and people of the nations rebelled against God and His Christ, i.e., His Anointed.
2. In verse 27 Peter gave the inspired interpretation of this Psalm.
 - a. He said this Psalm was a prediction of the rejection of the Christ, the Messiah, by the rulers and people of the world.
 - b. Peter identified some of those who rebelled as Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel.
 - c. And he identified the One who they rebelled against as the Father's Holy servant Jesus whom the Father had "anointed" (i.e., installed as King).
3. In verse 28 Peter pointed out that, although these people rebelled against Jesus, they actually accomplished what God wanted done from the beginning.
 - a. The Father wanted His Son to suffer and die so that mankind could receive the benefits of the only sacrifice which could enable forgiveness of sins (Heb 10:1-18).
 - b. Therefore, these rebellious people had one thing in mind when they rejected and killed Jesus.
 - c. And, the Father allowed them to exercise their freedom of will.
 - d. But, the Father's will was accomplished in the death of His beloved Son to make redemption and forgiveness of sins possible!
 - e. Compare with our study of 2:33 and 3:18.

4:29-31

1. In these verses the apostles first referred to the "threats" of the Sanhedrin.
2. With those threats in mind it is interesting to notice what the apostles prayed for!
3. They *could* have prayed for their own health and safety, or for the destruction of their enemies.
4. But, they did not do that!
5. Instead, the apostles asked God to help them speak His word with all boldness.
 - a. To them, their work of preaching, teaching and living God's word was their highest priority.
 - b. Compare with Ephesians 6:18-20.
 - c. Compare with 2 Thessalonians 3:1.
6. In verse 30 the apostles referred to the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit such as healing, signs and wonders.

- a. As we have seen, these miraculous gifts were very closely connected with the word of God.
 - b. More specifically, they were used to reveal and confirm that word in the first century (cf. Heb 2:3-4; Mk 16:20).
 - c. These miracles were to be done by the authority of the Father's Holy servant, Jesus.
7. In verse 31 we see God's response to the fervent, reverent, effectual prayer of the apostles.
 8. God's response to the apostles' prayer is described in several ways.
 - a. First, the place where the apostles were assembled was shaken.
 - (1) The word translated "was shaken" meant violent shaking.
 - (2) This probably meant an earthquake of some kind occurred.
 - b. Second, the apostles were all filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Third, the apostles spoke the word of God with boldness, which is exactly what they prayed for!
 9. Although what happened here appears similar to what happened to the apostles on the day of Pentecost it does not appear this was another baptism with the Holy Spirit.
 10. Please allow me to give you two reasons why I hold this opinion:
 - a. First, the apostles had already been baptized with the Holy Spirit once in fulfillment of Jesus' promise to them (cf. Acts 1:5,8; 2:1-4).
 - (1) After that it is mentioned several times that the apostles were able to work miracles (2:4-13,14-36,43; 3:1-11).
 - (2) Thus, it was not necessary for the apostles to be baptized with the Holy Spirit again once they received that miraculous power.
 - (3) Not only that but it would appear to be a reflection upon the almighty power of God if the apostles had to be baptized with the Holy Spirit again after the day of Pentecost.
 - b. The second reason I have the opinion that this is not a second case of Holy Spirit baptism is found in Acts 11:15-17.
 11. Brief summary of 4:23-31, Apostles' prayer for boldness.
 - a. (23) Peter and John returned to be with their fellow apostles and reported all the Sanhedrin had said to them.
 - b. (24) The apostles prayed to the all-powerful God.
 - c. (25-26) The apostles quoted from Psalm 2:1-2, which was a prediction of the rejection of God's Christ (anointed) by the rulers and the people.
 - d. (27-28) The apostles gave the inspired interpretation of that Psalm.
 - (1) Herod, Pilate, the Gentiles and the people of Israel did rebel.
 - (2) They rebelled against the Father's Holy Servant Jesus whom the Father anointed as King.
 - (3) While exercising their freedom of will the Father's purpose was realized in allowing His Son to offer Himself as the sacrifice for sins.
 - e. (29) The apostles asked God to help them speak His word with boldness.

- f. (30) The apostles mentioned the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit which were closely connected with the revelation and confirmation of God's word in the first century.
 - g. (31) God responded to the apostles' prayer in several ways.
 - (1) The place where they were assembled was shaken.
 - (2) The apostles were all filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - (3) And the apostles spoke God's word boldly.
12. Brief review of 3:1-4:31 - Miracle of Peter and John / Opposition of Sadducees.
- a. (3:1-11) Peter healed the lame man.
 - b. (3:12-26) The Holy Spirit (through Peter) convicted another crowd.
 - (1) (3:12-17) *Jesus*: Killed by the Jews / Raised and glorified by the Father.
 - (2) (3:18-26) *Jesus*: Predicted by the prophets / Inspired conditions of pardon.
 - c. (4:1-4) Peter and John put into custody.
 - d. (4:5-12) Peter preached to Sanhedrin - Salvation only in Christ's name.
 - e. (4:13-22) Sanhedrin commanded Peter and John not to preach.
 - f. (4:23-31) Apostles' prayer for boldness.
13. Brief overview of 4:32-5:11 - Wrestling with a social problem / Ananias and Sapphira lie.
- a. (4:32-4:37) Early church shares unselfishly.
 - b. (5:1-11) Ananias and Sapphira lie and die.

2. (4:32-5:11) WRESTLING WITH A SOCIAL PROBLEM / ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA LIE

a. (4:32-37) EARLY CHURCH CONTINUES STEADFASTLY

4:32

1. Luke again described these early Christians as being united ("one heart and one soul").
2. And they were willing to share their earthly possessions with their brothers and sisters in Christ.
3. These brethren truly loved the Lord and each other and showed that love by being totally unselfish (Mt 16:24).
4. See our study of 2:44-45.

4:33

1. As we have seen, the apostles spoke persuasively and worked mighty miracles to confirm what they spoke.
2. As we have also noticed the major topic of their speaking was the resurrection of the Lord Jesus
 - a. Compare our study of 1:22 and 2:32 for the importance of the resurrection.
3. As a result of their loving and unselfish lives, and the powerful preaching and miracles of the apostles "great grace was upon them all."
 - a. The word translated "grace" can be translated "favor" or "good-will."
 - b. Apparently, this refers to the fact that many of the people in Jerusalem looked upon those early Christians with approval or favor.

- c. They were truly favorably impressed with the words and actions of the church.
 - (1) See our study of 2:47.

4:34-35

1. Again we see the loving, unselfish, generous actions of these early Christians!
2. Those who had land or houses sold them and gave the proceeds to the apostles.
3. In turn, the apostles distributed those proceeds “as anyone had need.”
4. The result was that none of the brethren lacked what they needed to live.
5. These early Christians were such a close-knit family that they knew who among them had needs.
6. Not only that, but those who had material possessions were willing to give them up so the needs of others could be met!
7. They truly cared about each other!
8. What an example for us to follow today!
9. Compare with Proverbs 28:27; James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17.
10. To see why this was not an example of communism please study our notes on 2:44-45.

4:36-37

1. In these verses, Barnabas was given as an example of the generous, loving spirit of the early Christians.
2. He sold his land and gave the money to the apostles.
3. Notice several other things said about this generous Christian:
 - a. First, the apostles gave him the name “Barnabas.”
 - (1) This name literally means “son of teaching or encouragement.”
 - (2) As we will see in our study of the book of Acts this was a very accurate description of this unselfish servant of the Lord (cf. Acts 9:27; 11:19-30; 13-15, etc.)!
 - b. Second, he was a Levite.
 - (1) He was a descendant of Levi, one of the sons of Jacob.
 - (2) The Levites were those who performed religious services for the Lord (Ex 32:26-29; Num 3:9,11-13; 8:16-18).
 - (3) Those Levites who were from Aaron’s family served as priests under the Law of Moses (Ex 28:1).
 - c. Third, Barnabas was from the Island of Cyprus.
4. Brief review of 4:32-37 - The church shares unselfishly.
 - a. (4:32) The early Christians were united and they shared their material goods.
 - b. (4:33) The apostles testified to Jesus’ resurrection with power and great favor was upon the church.
 - c. (4:34-35) Those who had land and houses sold them and gave the money to the apostles.
 - (1) The apostles distributed to those who had need.
 - (2) The result was that none of the Christians lacked what they needed to live.
 - d. (4:36 and 37) Barnabas sold his land and gave the money to the apostles.

b. (5:1-11) ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA LIE AND DIE

5:1-2

1. Ananias and Sapphira sold one of their possessions.
2. They kept a portion of the proceeds for themselves and gave part of it to the apostles.
3. As we study this incident it will become clear that Ananias and Sapphira secretly kept a portion of the proceeds while they pretended to give all of the proceeds to the apostles.

5:3-4

1. In verse 3 Peter told Ananias he had lied to the Holy Spirit and kept part of the price of the land for himself.
2. In verse 4 we learn several interesting things:
 - a. First, before Ananias sold the land it was his to do with whatever he thought was wise (“was it not your own?”).
 - (1) This tells us these Christians had the right to retain private property.
 - (2) And, it tells us that their selling of the property was entirely voluntary.
 - (3) That was even true in the first century when many Christians in Jerusalem “had all things common” and were selling their lands and houses to provide for the needs of other Christians (4:32-37; cf. 2:44-45).
 - (4) Thus, Christians today have the right to retain private property!
 - b. Second, after Ananias sold the land he was free to do what he wished with the proceeds (“was it not in your own control?”).
 - (1) Since the proceeds were under their control they could keep all or part of the proceeds.
 - (2) This tells us the sin of Ananias and Sapphira was *not* that they kept back part of the proceeds for themselves.
 - (3) The only conclusion which we can draw is that their sin was pretending to give *all* of the proceeds while they actually only gave *part* of them. This is a lie.
 - c. The third interesting thing in verse 4 is that Peter said Ananias was responsible for thinking up this deception (“Why have you conceived this thing in your heart?”).
 - (1) Yet, in verse 3, Peter had said Satan had filled Ananias’ heart to lie to the Holy Spirit.
 - (2) This merely tells us Satan had a part in this decision, and so did Ananias.
 - (3) Matthew 4:3-11; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 11:3,13-15; John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 2:11.
 - (4) 1 Peter 5:8.
 - (5) But, Satan cannot make anyone do anything. As we studied earlier man still has freedom of will!
 - (a) James 4:7-8.
 - (b) Ephesians 4:27.
 - (c) Ephesians 6:10-13.

- (6) Thus, Satan tempted Ananias through his agents.
 - (a) But, Ananias still had the final choice to obey Satan or God.
 - (b) And, he voluntarily chose to obey Satan and sin against God.
 - (c) Therefore, Ananias was responsible for his own sin!
- d. The fourth interesting thing in verse 4 is Peter accused Ananias of lying to God, not just to men.
 - (1) Thus, Ananias not only lied to men (i.e., the apostles), but he also lied to God.
 - (2) But, how did he lie to God?
 - (a) Ananias contributed this money to the Lord for the work of His church.
 - (b) In pretending to give all of the proceeds to the Lord when he actually only gave part, he lied to God!
 - (c) In effect then, he was guilty of trying to deceive God.
 - (3) Notice also in verse 3 Peter had accused Ananias of lying to the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) However, in verse 4 Peter accused Ananias of lying to God.
 - (b) Therefore, we conclude that the Holy Spirit is God, i.e., He is deity, divine.
 - (c) Compare with Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14.

5:5-6

1. When Ananias heard Peter's truthful accusation he died immediately!
 - a. There is no indication Peter had *anything* to do with this death.
 - b. Thus, it appears God used whatever means He chose to cause Ananias to die for his sin of lying to God.
 - c. Therefore, this was the first recorded case of church discipline.
 - d. And, it was administered by almighty God in a very remarkable and graphic way!
2. The result was that all who heard of this incident were filled with fear.
3. After Ananias died several young men buried him.

5:7-11

1. In verse 7 we learn Sapphira came to where the apostles were about three hours after her husband's death.
2. Also, the text says she was not aware of what happened to her husband.
3. In verse 8 Peter asked Sapphira if they sold the land for a certain amount.
 - a. Apparently, Peter asked her if they sold the land for the amount which Ananias had claimed they sold it for.
 - b. It appears Peter was giving Sapphira a chance to tell the truth by telling him the actual amount they sold the land for rather than the amount they pretended to sell it for.
 - c. Sapphira answered by saying the amount Peter asked her about was the right amount.
4. In verses 9 and 10 Peter responded to Sapphira's attempt to continue the deception.
 - a. He asked Sapphira why she and Ananias agreed to test the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) But how did Ananias and Sapphira test the Holy Spirit?

- (a) As we have seen they tried to deceive the apostles concerning the amount for which they sold the land.
- (b) And the apostles were revealing the word of God and working miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit (cf. 2:1-13; 3:1-11, etc.).
- (c) 1 Corinthians 12:10.
- (d) Thus, if Ananias and Sapphira would have been successful in deceiving the apostles they would have been successful in deceiving the Holy Spirit!
- (e) That is how they were guilty of testing the Spirit of the Lord!
- b. Peter also told Sapphira the men who buried her husband were there and that they were going to carry her out.
 - (1) This was a clear statement that Sapphira was going to die.
 - (2) And, in verse 10, Sapphira died immediately, was carried out and was buried close to her husband.
- 5. In verse 11 we see the result of the first recorded act of church discipline which had been administered by almighty God.
 - a. Those in the Lord's church were filled with great fear.
 - b. Not only all in the church, but all those outside the church who heard of these events were fearful.
 - c. They saw the miraculous ability of the apostles to look into a person's heart and detect hypocrisy and deceit.
 - d. And, they saw God's immediate and powerful reaction against sin which defiled the blood-bought church of His beloved Son.
 - e. This and other passages tell us of the healthy respect, honor and fear we should have for almighty God (cf. 10:34-35; Rom 3:18).
 - f. What does it tell us about the importance that God places on the purity of the church (cf. Eph 5:25-27)?
 - g. What does it tell us about the importance of church discipline (cf. 1 Cor 5; 2 Thess 3:6,14-15)?
- 6. Brief review of 5:1-11 - Ananias and Sapphira lie and die.
 - a. (1) Ananias and Sapphira sold a possession.
 - b. (2) They gave part of the proceeds to the apostles and kept part of it for themselves.
 - c. (3) Peter accused Ananias of lying to the Holy Spirit by deceptively keeping part of the proceeds to himself.
 - d. (4) Peter made four interesting points:
 - (a) Before Ananias sold the land it was his to do whatever he chose.
 - (b) After Ananias sold the land he was free to do what he wished with the proceeds.
 - (c) Ananias was responsible for thinking up this deception.
 - (d) And Ananias was guilty of lying to God, not just to men.
 - e. (5-6) Ananias died and was buried and those who heard of his death were filled with great fear.
 - f. (7) Sapphira came to the apostles three hours after her husband's death although she was not aware of what happened.

- g. (8) Peter asked Sapphira if they sold the land for a certain amount and Sapphira said yes they did.
 - h. (9) Peter accused Sapphira of agreeing with Ananias to test the Holy Spirit through their deception.
 - i. (10) Sapphira died immediately and was buried.
 - j. (11) Those in the church and outside the church who heard of these things were filled with great fear.
7. Brief review of our study of Acts and overview of the next three sections of our outline:
- I. (1-7) Part One: The church established in Jerusalem.
 - A. (1-2) The church began with power.
 - 1. (1) Waiting for the promise.
 - 2. (2) The promise fulfilled and the church established.
 - B. (3-7) The church grew in Jerusalem.
 - 1. (3:1-4:31) Miracle of Peter and John / Opposition of Sadducees.
 - 2. (4:32-5:11) Wrestling with a social problem / Ananias and Sapphira lie and die.
 - a. (4:32-37) Early church shares unselfishly.
 - b. (5:1-11) Ananias and Sapphira lie and die.
 - 3. (5:12-42) Prosperity and renewed opposition.
 - 4. (6:1-7) Appointment of the seven.
8. Overview of 5:12-42 - Prosperity and renewed opposition.
- a. (5:12-16) Apostles' miracles / Multitudes added.
 - b. (5:17-28) Apostles imprisoned / Miraculously released / Preach.
 - c. (5:29-32) Apostles preach exalted Jesus to the council.
 - d. (5:33-39) Gamaliel's advice to the council.
 - e. (5:40-42) Apostles beaten / Rejoice / Preach Jesus.

3. (5:12-42) PROSPERITY AND RENEWED OPPOSITION

a. (5:12-16) APOSTLES' MIRACLES / MULTITUDES ADDED

5:12-13

- 1. Again, it is said that the apostles worked many miracles among the people.
 - a. This statement is further proof that it was the apostles of Christ, and only the apostles of Christ, who were baptized with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.
 - b. They were the only ones who were able to work miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit up to this point of time.
 - c. Compare with our study of 2:4, 43; 3:1-11.
- 2. Luke also repeated the fact that the apostles were united ("with one accord").
 - a. This was one of the beautiful characteristics of the early church!
 - b. Compare with 2:1, 42, 44, 46; 4:32.
- 3. In verse 12 Luke pointed out that none of the rest of the Christians dared join the apostles.

- a. After seeing the apostles work mighty miracles, detect deceit and hypocrisy and preach the word of God with such great boldness people were in awe of the apostles of Christ.
- b. That is, they had a healthy respect for the apostles and they feared and honored them as men through whom almighty God was working mightily.
- c. Because of that healthy fear people showed their respect for the apostles by not being as familiar with them as they had been previously.

5:14

1. Again, we see the remarkable growth of the early church (“increasingly added,” “multitudes”).
2. As we have noticed previously this was the result of several factors:
 - a. The powerful preaching, teaching and living of the glorious gospel of Christ.
 - b. The mighty miracles of the apostles.
 - c. And now, the shocking death of Ananias and Sapphira for their terrible sin against God.

5:15-16

1. These two verses refer back to verse 12 where it was said the apostles worked many miracles among the people.
2. People from the city of Jerusalem and outside Jerusalem were brought to the apostles to be healed.
3. This included those who were sick and those who were tormented by unclean spirits (demons).
4. At the end of verse 16 please notice another major difference between genuine, biblical miracles and the counterfeit miracles of today.
 - a. That difference is that when the apostles worked miracles of healing on people “they were *all* healed.”
 - b. Please compare that record with those who claim to work miracles today when it is clear that all are *not* healed!
 - c. When we make that comparison we see these modern claims of miracles are absolutely *false*!
 - d. Please see our notes on 3:9-11 for further proof of this fact.
5. Brief review of 5:12-16 - Apostles’ miracles / Multitudes added.
 - a. (12) The apostles worked many miracles and the church was united.
 - b. (13) The other Christians had a healthy fear, honor and respect for the apostles.
 - c. (14) The church grew rapidly, with multitudes added.
 - d. (15-16) The apostles healed all who came to them from within and outside Jerusalem.

b. (5:17-28) APOSTLES IMPRISONED / MIRACULOUSLY RELEASED / PREACH

5:17-21

1. In verses 17 and 18 the high priest and the Sadducees, filled with jealous zeal, captured the apostles and placed them in prison.
 - a. Remember the threat of the Sanhedrin in 4:17-21.
2. In verses 19 and 20 an angel from heaven miraculously released the apostles.
 - a. The angel told the apostles to go to the temple and speak the words of life to the people.
3. In verse 21 two major points were made:
 - a. First, that the apostles entered the temple early in the morning and taught, just as the angel had told them to.
 - b. Second, in the meantime the high priest called a meeting of the Sanhedrin and sent to the prison to have the apostles brought before the council.
4. Before we leave these verses please notice how Luke described the message which the apostles were teaching in the temple - "the words of this life" (v. 20).
 - a. What a wonderful way to describe the soul-saving, life-giving, life-changing gospel of Christ!
 - b. Compare with John 6:68.

5:22-23

1. Those sent to get the apostles came back with the following report:
 - a. The prison was securely shut as if nothing unusual had happened.
 - b. The guards were standing in front of the doors just as they should have been.
 - c. But, when they opened the doors no one was inside.

5:24-28

1. In verse 24 we see the rulers of the Sanhedrin very confused by the report that the apostles were not in the prison where they were supposed to be.
 - a. They even wondered what the outcome of this situation would be.
 - b. To get an insight into what their thoughts might have been please consider the following points which show what had happened:
 - (1) The apostles had disregarded the authority of the Sanhedrin.
 - (2) Thus, the Sanhedrin placed the apostles in prison.
 - (3) But, God overturned the Sanhedrin's sentence by releasing the apostles through an astounding miracle.
 - (4) And, the teaching of the apostles was spreading throughout the city.
 - (5) Thus, the efforts of the powerful Sanhedrin had been in vain.
2. In verse 25 a person reported to the Sanhedrin that the apostles were openly teaching in the temple.
3. In verses 26 and 27 we learn that the captain of the guard and several of his officers went to arrest the apostles again.
 - a. Notice that they were very careful not to exert any violence against the apostles.
 - (1) Those officials were careful to avoid violence because they were afraid the people would stone them if they harmed the apostles.
 - (2) Obviously then the common people had observed the apostles' teaching and miracles and concluded that they were men of God.

- (3) They respected and honored the apostles (cf. 4:21).
- (4) Why did not these high Jewish leaders and officials draw the same conclusion?
- b. The Jewish officials brought the apostles before the Sanhedrin.
- 4. In verse 28 the high priest made the following points in speaking to the apostles before the council:
 - a. First, he asked the apostles if the Sanhedrin had strictly commanded the apostles not to teach in the name of (by the authority of) Christ.
 - (1) Obviously the council had commanded the apostles not to speak in Jesus' name (4:18).
 - b. Second, the high priest recognized that the apostles had filled Jerusalem with the doctrine (teaching) of Jesus.
 - (1) Thus, the apostles had disobeyed the command of the Sanhedrin!
 - (2) What a compliment the high priest paid to the apostles by saying that they had *filled Jerusalem* with Jesus' teaching!
 - c. Third, the high priest accused the apostles of trying to bring the blood of Jesus on the council.
 - (1) This was a way of saying that the apostles were saying that the Sanhedrin was guilty of convicting an innocent man.
 - (2) Actually, the apostles had not been telling the people that the Sanhedrin was guilty.
 - (3) But, the apostles had told the Sanhedrin that they were guilty (cf. 4:10)!
- 5. Brief review of 5:17-28 - Apostles imprisoned / Miraculously released / preach.
 - a. (17-18) The Sadducees, filled with jealous zeal, placed the apostles in prison.
 - b. (19-20) An angel miraculously released the apostles from prison. The angel told them to speak the words of life in the temple.
 - c. (21) The apostles taught the word just as the angel told them. The Sanhedrin met and sent men to the prison to get the apostles and bring them before the council.
 - d. (22-23) The officers who went to get the apostles found that they were not in the prison.
 - (1) This was in spite of the fact that the prison was shut securely.
 - (2) And, the guards were in front of the doors as they were supposed to be.
 - e. (24) The rulers of the Sanhedrin were confused by the report that the apostles were gone from the prison.
 - f. (25) A person reported to the Sanhedrin that the apostles were teaching in the temple.
 - g. (26-27) The captain and his officers went to arrest the apostles.
 - (1) They were careful to avoid any violence.
 - (2) That was because they were afraid the people would stone them if the apostles were harmed.
 - h. (28) The high priest said several things to the apostles:
 - (1) He asked them if they had been commanded not to speak in Jesus' name.
 - (2) He recognized that the apostles had filled Jerusalem with Christ's teaching.
 - (3) He accused them of saying the Sanhedrin was guilty of crucifying Jesus.

c. (5:29-32) APOSTLES PREACH EXALTED JESUS TO THE COUNCIL

5:29

1. In verse 28 the high priest had made two basic charges against the apostles:
 - a. First, they had disobeyed the Sanhedrin's command not to speak any more in Jesus' name.
 - b. Second, the apostles were trying to convince the people that the Sanhedrin was guilty of murdering an innocent man (Jesus).
2. In this verse Peter answered the first charge that the apostles had disobeyed the Sanhedrin.
 - a. Peter's response was they were obligated ("ought" = "must") to obey God rather than men.
 - b. Remember our study of 4:19-20 where we noticed the following two points:
 - (1) The Sanhedrin commanded the apostles not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus any more.
 - (2) But, God commanded the apostles to preach and teach in the name of Jesus.
 - c. Since there was a conflict between what God commanded and what men (the Sanhedrin) commanded the apostles were obligated to obey God rather than men.
 - d. And that is exactly what the apostles did! They kept preaching and teaching in Christ's name!
 - e. Thus, they did disobey the command of the Sanhedrin in order to obey the higher command of God!
 - f. This is a very important general principle which applies to each of us today.
 - g. That is, when there is a conflict between what men command and what God commands in His word, we are obligated to obey God rather than men.
 - h. We must put God, His Son, His kingdom and His word first in our lives (Mt 6: 33; 10:28-39).
 - i. This principle can and must be applied in all of our day-to-day relationships.
For example:
 - (1) At work (employer/employee).
 - (2) At home (husband/wife).
 - (3) With the civil government.
 - (4) In the church.

5:30-31

1. In these two verses Peter answered the second charge that the apostles were trying to convince the people the Sanhedrin was guilty of murdering Jesus (who was innocent).
2. Remember our study of verse 28 where we made the following two points:
 - a. First, the apostles were not guilty of trying to convince the people that the Sanhedrin was guilty of murdering Jesus.

- b. Second, the apostles had told the Sanhedrin directly that they were guilty (cf. 4:10)!
- 3. In these verses the apostles directly charged the Sanhedrin with guilt by making the following points:
 - a. First, the God of the fathers of Israel raised Jesus up from the dead.
 - (1) Again, the apostles preached the resurrection of Jesus from the dead as they so often did (cf. 2:24, 30-32; 3:15; 4:10).
 - (2) Jesus' resurrection was probably mentioned for several reasons:
 - (a) Because it was the fulfillment of prophecies which the Jews should have been aware of (cf. Lk 24:44-46; Acts 2:24-32).
 - (b) Because the resurrection of Jesus from the dead was a powerful indication of the Father's approval of His beloved Son (cf. Rom 1:4).
 - (c) And because that resurrection dramatically reversed the unjustified sentence of death imposed on Jesus by ungodly men including the Sanhedrin (cf. 2:22-24,36; 3:13-15; 4:10).
 - b. The second point the apostles made was that the Sanhedrin murdered Jesus by hanging Him on a tree.
 - (1) Again, rather than trying to convince the people the Sanhedrin was guilty the apostles directly convicted the Sanhedrin of their guilt.
 - (2) Truly, these inspired men spoke the word of God with boldness and love to convict people of sin!
 - (3) Incidentally, please remember that to be hanged on a tree was looked upon by the Jews as being accursed by God (Gal 3:13; Deut 21:23).
 - (4) Oh how the Father and His beloved Son love us!
 - c. The third point the apostles made was that the Father had exalted Jesus to His right hand.
 - (1) The Father would not allow His beloved Son to remain captured by death (2:24ff).
 - (2) Instead, He raised Him victorious over death and glorified Him by placing Him at His right hand in a position of power and authority (cf. 2:33; 3:13).
 - (3) Thus, the Jews (including the Sanhedrin) murdered Jesus, but the Father raised and glorified Him in a position of power and authority!
 - d. As the fourth point, please notice several reasons *why* the Father exalted Jesus to His right hand:
 - (1) First, to be a prince and a Savior.
 - (a) A prince is a ruler with power and authority.
 - 1. This is a clear reference to Jesus being raised from the dead to rule over His kingdom as the King, the Messiah, the Christ.
 - 2. Compare with 2:30-32.
 - (b) Also, Jesus was exalted to be the Savior of mankind.
 - 1. That is why He came into the world (Lk 19:10; Mt 1:21; 1 Tim 1:15).
 - 2. And, He could only complete His role as Savior after He presented Himself to the Father in heaven as the once-for-all time sacrifice for sins (Heb 9:11-14; Rom 4:25).
 - 3. Hebrews 5:9.

- (2) A second reason why Jesus was exalted to the right hand of the Father was to, “give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.”
- (a) But, *how* did Jesus “*give*” repentance and forgiveness to Israel?
 - (b) As we have studied each responsible person has freedom of will.
 - 1. That means that each of us can *choose* to repent or not to repent.
 - 2. God will not *force* any of us to do that!
 - 3. Compare with Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30-31.
 - (c) Then how did Jesus give them repentance and forgiveness by being exalted to the right hand of the Father?
 - 1. His overwhelming love gave them (and us) tremendous motivation to repent (2 Cor 5:14-15).
 - 2. His word, revealed by the Holy Spirit through the apostles and prophets, told them (and us) of the need for and result of repentance (2 Cor 7:9-10).
 - a. And the Holy Spirit was not sent until *after* Jesus was exalted to the right hand of the Father (2:33).
 - 3. And, His blood offered to the Father is the *only* thing which could make forgiveness of sins possible (Heb 9:12-14,22).
 - 4. But, to receive the benefits of that love, that word and that blood one must obey the gospel, including baptism in water, to obtain the forgiveness of sins as the gift of God (cf. 2:37-38; Rom 6:23).
 - 5. That is how Jesus gave repentance and forgiveness of sins, in harmony with man’s freedom of will!

5:32

1. The apostles referred to the fact that they were “witnesses” of the things the Father had done with and through His Son.
2. Of course, being a witness was a major qualification and function of an apostle of Christ (1:8,21-22; 2:32; 3:15).
3. In addition, the apostles said the Holy Spirit was also a witness of these things.
4. And finally, the apostles stated the Holy Spirit was given to those who obey Him.
5. Because of the teaching of several parallel passages, I believe this is a clear reference to the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. For example:
 - a. That normal indwelling occurs only *after* a person *obeys* the Lord by believing the gospel, repenting of sins and being immersed in water, thus obtaining the forgiveness of sins (2:37-38).
 - b. It only occurs *after* a person *obeys* the Lord by repenting and turning away from their sins and turning to the Lord, thus having their sins blotted out (3:19).
 - c. And, it only occurs *after* a person *obeys* the Lord by believing and being baptized into Christ (Gal 3:26-27; 4:6).
 - d. Please remember from our study of 2:38 that this normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit does not involve either of the following two things:
 - (1) The miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit which ended in the first century.
 - (2) Any direct leading, guidance or influence by the Holy Spirit upon our minds.
6. Brief review of 5:29-32 - Apostles preach exalted Jesus to the council.

- a. (29) Peter answered the high priest's first charge by boldly stating that we must obey God rather than men.
- b. (30-31) Peter answered the second charge by making several points:
 - (1) The Father raised Jesus from the dead.
 - (2) That was after the Sanhedrin murdered Jesus by hanging Him on a tree.
 - (3) The Father also exalted Jesus to His right hand in a position of power and authority.
 - (a) In that position, Jesus is a prince - one who rules as a king.
 - (b) He is the Savior of mankind.
 - (c) And, He provided motivation for Israel and all of mankind to repent and He made it possible for all to receive forgiveness of sins by obeying His gospel.
- c. (32) The apostles were witnesses of all these things as was the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) God gives that Holy Spirit to those who obey Him.

d. (5:33-39) GAMALIEL'S ADVICE TO THE COUNCIL

5:33

1. The Sanhedrin was cut to the heart by what the apostles said.
2. In fact, they were so furious they made up their minds to kill the apostles.

5:34-39

1. In verse 34 Gamaliel, who was one of the members of the Sanhedrin, stood up to speak to them.
2. Notice several interesting things about Gamaliel:
 - a. He was a Pharisee.
 - (1) This was the strictest sect of Judaism (Acts 26:5).
 - b. He was a teacher and interpreter of the Law of Moses who was respected by all of the people.
 - c. It is at least possible he is the same man who taught Paul the Law of Moses (22:3).
3. Gamaliel commanded the apostles be removed from the council area so the Sanhedrin could discuss this situation privately.
4. In verse 35 Gamaliel warned the council to be very careful what they did concerning the apostles.
5. In verses 36 and 37 Gamaliel mentioned two men who led revolts against Judaism in the past.
 - a. He pointed out that both of these men had died and their followers had scattered when the leaders died.
 - b. In other words these revolts against Judaism ended by themselves, without any significant damage to Judaism.
6. In verses 38 and 39 Gamaliel advised the council to leave the apostles alone for the following two reasons:
 - a. If their work was just a work of men (i.e., without God's approval) it would not be successful.

- (1) It would die out just like the two examples Gamaliel had just referred to.
- b. If the apostles' work was from God, the Sanhedrin could not defeat it anyway.
 - (1) And if they resisted a work approved by God they would be guilty of fighting against God.

e. (5:40-42) APOSTLES BEATEN / REJOICE / PREACH JESUS.

5:40

1. The Sanhedrin agreed with Gamaliel's advice, but still decided to beat the apostles and command them not to speak in the name of Jesus.
2. The word translated "beaten" (δέραντες) is a very expressive one!
 - a. It means to tear off the skin by whipping!
 - b. Thus, the apostles were severely beaten, similar to the scourging which Jesus received for us.
 - c. Jesus had predicted His apostles would be delivered up to the council and scourged (Mt 10:17).
 - d. On such occasions it was customary for the Jews to administer 39 lashes to avoid the limit of 40 imposed by the Law of Moses (Duet 25:3; 2 Cor 11:24).

5:41

1. In spite of having received such a horrible beating the apostles left the council rejoicing!
2. They rejoiced because they were considered worthy (by the Sanhedrin) to suffer shame for the cause of Christ.
3. What an attitude on the part of the apostles!
4. What a display of faith in and love for the Lord!
5. Would my faith and love respond this way after receiving such unjustified punishment? Would yours?
6. Please consider the following passages on the subject of the Christian and suffering:
 - a. 2 Timothy 3:12; Philippians 1:29.
 - b. James 1:2-4.
 - c. Romans 5:3-5.
 - d. 1 Peter 1:5-9.
 - e. 1 Peter 4:12-19.
 - f. Romans 8:17.
 - g. 2 Timothy 2:12.
 - h. That is how those early followers of the Lord could rejoice to be considered worthy to suffer shame for Jesus!

5:42

1. The apostles did not stop at rejoicing in suffering for Jesus!
2. They also kept on teaching about Jesus in open defiance of the command of the Sanhedrin.
3. Were these men convinced that Jesus was the Christ, the Savior of mankind?!

- a. Were they convinced that His gospel is God's power to save souls?!
 - b. Did they love Jesus more than anything or anyone, including their own lives?!
 - c. In answering these questions, please consider the obstacles which the Sanhedrin had placed in front of the apostles to try to stop them -
 - (1) (4:18) Commanded the apostles not to preach in Jesus' name.
 - (2) (4:17,21) Severely threatened the apostles.
 - (3) (5:18) Placed them in prison.
 - (4) (5:33) Determined to kill the apostles.
 - (5) (5:40) Beat the apostles and commanded them not to speak.
4. Please notice the beautiful description of their determination to teach and preach the gospel without fear of men:
- a. "Daily."
 - (1) They were busy doing the Lord's work every day of the week.
 - (2) They had a message of good news which could not wait and they could not wait to give others that blessed news of salvation!
 - b. "In the temple."
 - (1) In the place where they were used to worshipping God and studying His word.
 - c. "And in every house."
 - (1) The apostles and other early Christians were not content to preach and teach only in their place of worship.
 - (2) They did not wait for people to come to them at their place of worship.
 - (3) Instead, they went to the homes of people to make contact with them there.
 - (4) Truly, they loved the Lord, His word and the precious souls of men!
 - (5) They believed Mark 8:36!
 - d. "They did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ."
 - (1) They were constantly teaching people that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior.
 - (2) That message of salvation was in their hearts like a burning fire and they had to tell others about it (Jer 20:9).
 - (3) Threats, imprisonments and beatings could not keep them from preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:18-2:2)!
 - e. Is it any wonder the early church grew so rapidly?!
 - (1) What a pattern these men gave us to follow!
 - (2) When we return to their example of zeal, love, determination, boldness and coverage we will achieve similar results!
5. Brief review of 5:33-39 - Gamaliel's advice to the council; 5:40-42 Apostles beaten / Rejoice / Preach Jesus.
- a. (33) The Sanhedrin was so infuriated by the message of the apostles they wanted to kill them.
 - b. (34-35) Gamaliel warned the council to be careful what they did to the apostles.
 - c. (36-37) Gamaliel gave two examples of revolts against Judaism which had failed previously.
 - d. (38-39) Gamaliel advised the council to leave the apostles alone.

- (1) If this was a man's movement without God's approval it would not be successful.
- (2) If it was God's movement they could not defeat it.
- (3) If it was God's movement and they fought against it they would be guilty of fighting against God.
- e. (40) The council agreed with Gamaliel, but still chose to do two things:
 - (1) Severely beat the apostles.
 - (2) Commanded them not to speak in Jesus' name.
- f. (41) The apostles rejoiced that they were worthy to suffer shame for Jesus.
- g. (42) The apostles continued teaching Jesus as the Christ.
- 6. Brief review of 5:12-42 - Prosperity and renewed opposition.
 - a. (12-16) Apostles' miracles / Multitudes added.
 - b. (17-28) Apostles imprisoned / Miraculously released / Preach Jesus.
 - c. (29-32) Apostles preach exalted Jesus to the council.
 - d. (33-39) Gamaliel's advice to the council.
 - e. (40-42) Apostles beaten / Rejoice / Preach Jesus
- 7. Brief overview of next section of the outline - 6:1-7 - Appointment of the seven.
 - a. (1) The problem.
 - b. (2-4) The solution.
 - c. (5-6) Seven selected / Apostles lay hands on them.
 - d. (7) Word of God spread and obeyed.

4. (6:1-7) APPOINTMENT OF THE SEVEN

a. (6:1) THE PROBLEM

6:1

1. Again, the growth of the early church was pointed out ("number of disciples multiplying").
2. Frequently, when there is rapid growth, problems occur as they did in the Jerusalem church mentioned in this verse.
3. In this case the "Hellenists" murmured or complained against the "Hebrews" because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution of goods.
4. The daily distribution of goods was apparently to help those in need and came from the proceeds of the sale of land and possessions (2:44-45; 4:34-37).
5. "Hellenists" probably referred to those Christians of Jewish background who spoke Greek and had adopted Greek customs and habits.
6. "Hebrews" probably referred to those Christians of Jewish background who had not adopted Greek customs and habits although they may have spoken Greek.
7. This problem presented a serious challenge to the Lord's church in Jerusalem!

b. (6:2-4) THE SOLUTION

1. "The twelve" = the apostles of Christ (the original eleven plus Matthias).
2. Notice how promptly the apostles moved to solve this problem in the church!
3. They called the brethren together to discuss the situation.

4. At the end of verse 2 the apostles indicated it was not desirable for them to take time from their primary job of preaching God's word to "serve tables."
 - a. To "serve tables" meant to participate in the daily distribution of food and other goods to the needy.
 - b. Thus, the apostles were saying their most urgent mission was to preach God's word and they needed to spend full time on that job.
 - c. It is clear the apostles did *not* consider themselves too good to do manual labor. Neither did the apostle Paul (18:1-3; 20:34).
 - d. However, they were uniquely qualified to reveal and confirm God's word by the power of the Holy Spirit and needed to devote full-time to that job.
5. In verse 3 the apostles told the brethren to select seven men from among them to appoint to take charge of the daily distribution.
6. The apostles listed three major qualifications for these seven men:
 - a. First, these seven men were to be "of good reputation."
 - (1) These were to be men who were well known for their excellent character and integrity.
 - (2) Since the distribution of goods could involve temptations to take advantage of the situation only men of the highest principles and morals were to be appointed.
 - b. Second, these seven men had to be "full of the Holy Spirit."
 - (1) There is no doubt that, in the first century, this phrase could refer to miraculous abilities through the power of the Holy Spirit (cf. 2:4-5, 4:8).
 - (2) However, even in the first century when miracles were still being worked, this phrase was used to refer to cases where no miraculous abilities were involved.
 - (a) For several examples of this please see Appendix "F" of the notes for this course.
 - (3) Especially in this context it is clear to me that this phrase is a reference to something non-miraculous.
 - (4) Please notice the following reasons why I believe this phrase does not refer to something miraculous:
 - (a) The first reason is - this qualification is included with others that were non-miraculous, i.e., "of good reputation" and "full of wisdom."
 - (b) A second reason is - miraculous abilities were not required to perform the duties of these seven men.
 - (c) A third reason is - before this point in Acts there is no record that any persons except the apostles of Christ worked miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 1. In fact, it seems Luke made a special point of showing it was *only* the apostles who worked miracles before this time.
 2. For example, the apostles are mentioned as working miracles in 2:1-13; 2:14-36 (inspired interpretation of scripture); 2:43; 3:1-11; 4:14-16; 4:33; 5:12; 5:15-16.
 3. Outside of these eight references to miracles by the apostles, there is not one reference to anyone else working a miracle.

4. The conclusion which I draw on the basis of those facts is that no one but the apostles of Christ had miraculous ability and worked miracles before this time.
 5. Thus, the phrase “full of the Holy Spirit” does not refer to any miraculous powers or abilities in this verse.
 6. In any case, we are certain this phrase does not refer to miraculous abilities today since no man has those abilities.
 - a. See previous studies on cessation of miraculous gifts.
- (5) The natural question which arises is what does the phrase “full of the Holy Spirit” mean in this verse?
- (6) I believe there are several things involved in the meaning of this interesting phrase:
- (a) First, this is a reference to the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
 1. As we have seen in our studies this indwelling begins when a person obeys the gospel, thus becoming a child of God.
 2. This includes believing the gospel, repenting and being immersed for the forgiveness of sins (2:38; 3:19; 5:32; Gal 3:26-27; 4:6).
 3. When the Holy Spirit dwells or lives in a person the Holy Spirit *fills* that person!
 4. And as we have studied, today that filling or indwelling of the Holy Spirit does not enable a person to work miracles, receive direct guidance, etc.!
 5. So, the qualification “full of Holy Spirit” in this verse meant that these men had to be children of God, Christians!
 - (b) Second, this phrase is a reference to the extent to which a Christian allows the Holy Spirit to influence their life through His instrument, the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God (Eph 6:17).
 1. Ephesians 5:18.
 2. Galatians 5:22-23.
 3. 1 Thessalonians 2:13.
 4. Colossians 1:5-6.
 5. Putting these scriptures together we conclude that the qualification “full of the Holy Spirit” in this verse meant a Christian who lived a godly and exemplary life by living according to the Sword of the Spirit, the word of God!
- (7) The conclusion that this phrase “full of the Holy Spirit” in this verse did not refer to miraculous gifts will be reinforced when we study 6:6 and 8.
- c. The third qualification of these men was that they were to be “full of wisdom.”
 - (1) These men had to have the ability to use knowledge in the best possible way.
 - (2) They had to have good judgment.
7. In verse 4 the apostles indicated they would continually devote themselves to prayer and to the preaching and teaching of the word of God.
- a. Again, this was their primary and most urgent job.

c. (6:5-6) SEVEN SELECTED / APOSTLES LAY HANDS ON THEM

1. In verse 5 we learn the suggestion of the apostles was well received by the brethren.
2. The brethren chose seven men who met the qualifications specified by the apostles in verse 3.
3. Two of these men, Stephen and Philip, will play a prominent part in the next several chapters of Acts.
4. These seven men were brought before the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them.
5. It is frequently asked why the apostles laid hands on the seven men.
6. In the New Testament the laying on of hands was primarily associated with two things:
 - a. First, this was a way of sending people off on a journey, or setting them apart for a special work (cf. 13:1-3).
 - b. Second, as we will study in 8:12-19, when the apostles of Christ laid hands on a person, it was frequently for the purpose of enabling them to work miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. In this context, it appears the primary purpose of the apostles laying hands on these seven men was to enable them to work miracles.
 - d. The reason this belief is held will be made clearer in our study of verse 8.

d. (6:7) WORD OF GOD SPREAD AND OBEYED

1. Another beautiful description of the growth of the early church and why they grew!
2. Please notice the process described in this verse:
 - a. First, the word of God spread (again, it was preached, taught and lived among the people).
 - b. Second, the number of disciples increased rapidly.
 - c. And third, even a great many priests obeyed the gospel of Christ.
 - (1) The priests were among those who were the most violently opposed to Jesus and His cause (cf. 4:1f).
 - (2) Therefore, for a great number of them to be converted was quite an accomplishment.
 - (3) This shows the tremendous power of the gospel of Christ (cf. Rom 1:16; Jas 1:21)!
3. Before we leave 6:1-7 we need to address the question of whether these seven men were the first deacons.
 - a. Some claim these seven men were the first deacons.
 - (1) They point out that the word translated “distribution” or “ministration” in verse 1 is a form of the word translated “deacon.”
 - (2) They also state these men were functioning as servants which is a responsibility of deacons.
 - b. For the following reasons, I do not believe these men were deacons.

- (1) First, it is true the word translated “distribution” or “ministration” in verse 1 is a form of the word translated “deacon.”
 - (a) However, the word translated “ministry” in verse 4 is also a form of the word translated “deacon,” but it refers to the apostles in that verse, not to deacons.
 - (b) Thus, the use of a form of the word translated “deacon” to refer to the job of these seven men is not conclusive evidence that they were deacons.
 - (c) In fact, the word translated “deacon” can mean many different things, such as:
 1. Ministering (Mt 27:55).
 2. Serve (Lk 22:26).
 3. Administered (2 Cor 8:19-20).
 4. Relief (Acts 11:29).
 5. Ministry (Acts 1:17,25).
 6. Office (Rom 11:13).
 7. Service (Rev 2:19).
 8. Servant (Jn 12:26).
 9. Deacon (1 Tim 3:8,10,12-13; Phil 1:1).
 - (d) Actually, these seven men are never referred to as deacons in this context or anywhere else.
 - (e) Furthermore, in another reference to these men outside of this context, they are referred to as “the seven,” not as deacons!
 - (f) Therefore, we conclude that the use of a form of the word translated “deacon” to refer to the work of these seven men does not mean they were deacons.
 - (2) A second reason why I believe these men were not deacons is because the qualifications for them to serve were not the same as the qualifications for a deacon in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
 - (3) For these two reasons, I believe it is more accurate and safer to refer to these men as “the seven” rather than as deacons.
4. Brief review of 6:1-7 - Appointment of the seven.
- a. (1) The Hellenists complained because they thought their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.
 - b. (2) The apostles told the brethren that it was not best for them to take time from their preaching the word to take care of this daily distribution.
 - c. (3) The apostles told the brethren to choose seven men with good reputations who were full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom to take care of this job.
 - d. (4) The apostles indicated they would continually be in prayer and teaching God’s word.
 - e. (5) The brethren chose seven men who met the qualifications.
 - f. (6) These seven men were set before the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them.
 - g. (7) The word of God spread and the church grew.

5. Overview of next section of our outline - 6:8 - 7:60, Pharisees aroused by Stephen / Stephen's death.
 - a. (6:8) Stephen worked miracles.
 - b. (6:9-11) Accusations against Stephen.
 - c. (6:12-15) Stephen brought before the council.
 - d. (7:1-53) Stephen's defense before the council.
 - e. (7:54-60) The reaction of the council - Stephen's death.

5. (6:8-7:60) PHARISEES AROUSED BY STEPHEN / STEPHEN'S DEATH

a. (6:8) STEPHEN WORKED MIRACLES

1. Stephen is mentioned as being full of faith, power and working great miracles.
2. This is the first mention of anyone besides an apostle working a miracle.
3. It is clear that Stephen received this miraculous power from the apostles of Christ when they laid their hands on him (v. 6).
 - a. Before the apostles laid hands on him and the other six there is no record of anyone other than an apostle of Christ working miracles.
 - b. Then, the apostles laid hands on the seven (v. 6).
 - c. Then, right after that, we are told Stephen worked miracles.
 - d. Later, there is a record of Philip working miracles also (8:6-7).
 - e. The conclusion: Stephen and the other six men received the power to work miracles though the laying on of the apostles' hands.
 - f. The validity of this conclusion will be reinforced when we study the case of Simon the sorcerer in 8:14-19.

b. (6:9-11) ACCUSATIONS AGAINST STEPHEN

1. In verse 9 certain Jews began to dispute (literally argue, debate) with Stephen.
2. However, in verse 10 we learn Stephen's opponents could not disprove the things which he said.
3. Thus, in verse 11 the opposition secretly convinced men to lie about Stephen by saying he spoke evil, abusive words ("blasphemous") against God and Moses.

c. (6:12-15) STEPHEN BROUGHT BEFORE THE COUNCIL

1. In verse 12 these Jews stirred up the leaders and the people, captured Stephen, and brought him before the council (Sanhedrin).
2. In verses 13 and 14 the Jews obtained false witnesses to make two other charges against Stephen.
 - a. First, he spoke evil words against "this place" (the temple).
 - (1) According to Stephen's accusers he was guilty of this when he reported Jesus said He would destroy the temple.
 - b. The second charge against Stephen was that he spoke evil words against the Law.

- (1) According to Stephen's accusers he was guilty of this when he reported Jesus said He would change the customs which Moses delivered to Israel.
3. We know these claims against Stephen were false because Luke said they were false and he (Luke) was speaking by inspiration ("false witnesses") (v. 13).
 4. In verse 15 we learn the whole council stared at Stephen.
 - a. When they did that, they noticed Stephen's face looked like that of an angel.
 - b. Apparently, what is meant is that Stephen looked sincere, fearless, calm, dignified and confident in God.
 - c. What a moving example of courage and love for the Lord!
 - d. Stephen had been falsely accused of the following crimes:
 - (1) Blasphemy against Moses.
 - (2) " " God.
 - (3) " " the temple.
 - (4) " " the Law of Moses.
 - e. Yet, he was calm and confident in the presence of this powerful group of men!
 5. While there is one and only one Jesus please notice the following interesting parallels between Stephen and Jesus:
 - a. Stephen was standing where Jesus stood when He was condemned to die.
 - b. He was brought before the council on similar charges (cf. Mk 14:56-64).
 - c. He had the same judges (the Sanhedrin).
 - d. He knew they were gathered together to condemn him, not to give him a fair trial.
 - e. He knew that he had come to the most important time of his life.
 - f. He asked for mercy for his persecutors (cf. 7:60).

d. (7:1-53) STEPHEN'S DEFENSE BEFORE THE COUNCIL

(1) (7:1) THE HIGH PRIEST'S QUESTION

7:1

1. The high priest asked Stephen if the charges against him were true.

(2) (7:2-8) STEPHEN RECOUNTS HISTORY: ABRAHAM, ISAAC, JACOB AND HIS TWELVE SONS

7:2-8

1. Notice in verse 2 Stephen referred to God as "the God of glory."
 - a. Do those sound like the words of a man who was guilty of blasphemy against God as Stephen had been charged?!
 - b. Certainly not!
2. Next, Stephen reviewed some of the history of Israel by mentioning the following major characters:
 - a. Abraham.
 - b. Isaac.
 - c. Jacob.

- d. The twelve patriarchs (the twelve sons of Jacob or Israel, including Joseph).
- 3. Some have claimed there is a contradiction between the period of 400 years found in 7:6 and 430 years found in Exodus 12:40-41.
 - a. Actually, there is no contradiction at all!
 - b. For an explanation, please see Appendix "G."

(3) (9-10) JOSEPH REJECTED BY HIS BROTHERS

7:9-10

- 1. The following major points were made:
 - a. Because of envy Joseph's brothers sold him into Egypt. Thus, they rejected Joseph!
 - b. However, God was with Joseph and delivered him out of trouble.
 - c. Furthermore, God gave Joseph favor and wisdom with Pharaoh, King of Egypt.
 - d. In fact, Pharaoh made Joseph governor over Egypt and all his house.

(4) (11-16) JOSEPH SAVED HIS BROTHERS AND ISRAEL

7:11-16

- 1. In his position of authority in Egypt Joseph was able to save his brothers and the rest of Israel from a great famine.
- 2. It is important we notice a pattern in these verses which will be repeated several times in Stephen's speech.
 - a. First, because of envy Joseph's brothers rejected him.
 - b. But, God was with Joseph and he became a powerful man in Egypt.
 - c. Joseph saved his brothers and the rest of Israel from the famine.
- 3. In verse 14 some claim there is a contradiction between the number of people Stephen said went down into Egypt (75) and the number Moses said went down into Egypt (70) in passages like Genesis 46:26-27.
 - a. Actually, there is no contradiction at all!
 - b. For several possible explanations of this difference in numbers, please see Appendix "H" in the written notes.

(5) (7:17-26) MOSES CAME TO HELP ISRAEL IN CAPTIVITY

7:17-26

- 1. Moses was raised by Pharaoh's daughter and was wise and mighty in words and actions.
- 2. At the age of forty Moses decided to visit his own people, the Israelites.
- 3. His goal was to deliver Israel from their slavery in Egypt.

(6) (7:27-29) MOSES REJECTED BY ISRAEL

7:27-29

- 1. Israel rejected Moses just as Joseph's brothers had rejected him.

2. They asked Moses, “ Who made you a *ruler* and *judge* over us?”
3. Moses fled to the land of Midian.

(7) (7:30-37) GOD ESTABLISHED MOSES AS A RULER AND DELIVERER

7:30-37

1. In spite of Israel’s rejection of Moses God sent him to Egypt to rescue the Israelites from their slavery there (v. 34).
2. Not only that, but God made Moses a *ruler* and a *deliverer* (v. 35).
 - a. It is interesting to note the word translated “deliverer” (λυτρωτής) means “redeemer, one who releases.”
3. God enabled Moses to deliver the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage (v. 36).
4. Furthermore, God enabled Moses to work miracles in Egypt, the Red Sea and the wilderness (v. 36).
5. This Moses was the same one who prophesied the coming of the Great Prophet whom God would raise up from Moses’ brethren (v. 37).
 - a. And, as we saw in our study of 3:22-23, Jesus the Christ was that Great Prophet who fulfilled that prophecy!
 - b. He was the Redeemer who came to release people from their slavery to sin.
 - c. He worked mighty miracles to show that He spoke by the Father’s authority.
 - d. And yet the Israelites rejected and murdered Him!

(8) (7:38-40) MOSES REJECTED BY ISRAEL AGAIN

7:38-40

1. In these verses Stephen reviewed the further rejection of Moses by the people of Israel during their wanderings in the wilderness.
2. Israel rejected Moses in spite of several significant facts:
 - a. First, he had worked mighty miracles by the power of almighty God (v. 36).
 - b. And second, he had received the word of God from God Himself on Mt. Sinai (v. 38).
3. Notice how God described what Israel did in spite of God’s approval of Moses (vv. 39-40).
 - a. They would not obey.
 - b. They rejected Moses.
 - c. They turned back to Egypt in their hearts.
 - d. They asked Aaron to make false gods to lead them.
4. Please remember Stephen was accused of speaking evil things against Moses (cf. 6:11).
 - a. Yet, we can clearly see that in saying these things, Stephen certainly was not speaking evil things against Moses.
 - b. Rather, he was giving an accurate description of the evil things which Israel had done to Moses!

(9) (7:41-43) ISRAEL REJECTED GOD DIRECTLY

7:41-43

1. In these verses Stephen recalled how Israel rejected God directly.
2. They did that by making with their hands a golden calf and worshiping it as an idol, i.e., an image which represented a false god.
3. As a result God gave them up to their own desires and they worshiped other false gods.
4. Stephen documented his case by quoting from Amos 5:25-27 and Jeremiah 25:9-12.

(10) (7:44-50) GOD DOES NOT DWELL IN TEMPLES MADE WITH HANDS

7:44-50

1. In verse 44 Stephen reminded them of the tabernacle which God commanded Moses to build in the wilderness according to the pattern which God gave him.
2. In verses 45 and 46 Stephen noted that the tabernacle was brought into the land of Canaan and used through David's time.
3. In addition, David wanted to build a permanent dwelling place for God.
4. God did not allow David to build the temple, but allowed David's son Solomon to do so (v. 47; 1 Chr 22).
5. Again, we need to remember Stephen had been accused of speaking evil things against the temple.
 - a. However, in these verses we see Stephen was quite familiar with the history of the tabernacle and temple and spoke respectfully about them.
 - b. Therefore, he was not guilty of this or the other accusations against him.
6. In verse 48 Stephen pointed out that almighty God does not need temples built by men in which to live.
 - a. In fact, men could not build a temple large enough or magnificent enough to contain our Most High God!
 - b. But, Stephen was not content to just make this bold statement!
 - c. As he did in verses 42 and 43 he supported his statement with a quotation from the Old Testament scriptures which his audience claimed to love and defend.
 - d. He quoted from Isaiah 66:1-2 where God asked Israel what house they could build for Him since heaven was His throne and the earth was His footstool!
 - e. In his use of the scriptures throughout his speech, Stephen showed that the accusation that he spoke evil words against the Law was false, just as the other accusations against him were false.
7. Now that Stephen had effectively dealt with the false accusations against him by discussing the history of Israel he made some very strong and truthful charges against his accusers!

(11) (7:51-53) STEPHEN ACCUSES HIS JUDGES - THEY REJECTED THE HOLY SPIRIT; PERSECUTED THE PROPHETS; KILLED JESUS; AND REJECTED THE LAW!

7:51-53

1. In verse 51 Stephen described the Israelites as stubborn and unwilling to submit to the restraints of the law of God (“stiff-necked...”).
 - a. He said they continually resisted the Holy Spirit just as their ancestors did.
 - b. Obviously, they did that when they resisted the word of God revealed by the Holy Spirit.
2. In verse 52 Stephen pointed out that the ancestors of these Israelites persecuted and killed God’s prophets.
 - a. In doing so Israel resisted the ones who predicted the coming of the Messiah (“the Just One”).
 - b. That was bad enough, but the Sanhedrin and other Israelites living in Stephen’s time were guilty of something worse!
 - c. They actually rejected that prophesied Messiah by persecuting and *murdering* Him!
3. In verse 53 Stephen said this was true even though these people had the special privilege of having received the Law of Moses.
 - a. And despite that special privilege they also chose to reject that law by not keeping it!
4. Thus, Stephen had remarkably turned around the accusations which had been made against him.
 - a. Remember, Stephen had been falsely accused of speaking evil things against the following:
 - (1) Moses,
 - (2) God,
 - (3) The temple and
 - (4) The Law of Moses.
 - b. Stephen had clearly proved these accusations were false.
 - c. Not only that but he had accused Israel, including his accusers, of the following:
 - (1) Resisting the Holy Spirit,
 - (2) Persecuting and killing the prophets who predicted the coming of the Messiah,
 - (3) Betraying and murdering that Messiah, Jesus the Christ and
 - (4) Rejecting the Law of Moses.
5. You can imagine the effect which Stephen’s address had on the Sanhedrin!

e. (7:54-60) STEPHEN’S DEATH

7:54-60

1. The members of the Sanhedrin were so infuriated because of Stephen’s words of truth that they ground their teeth together in rage (“gnashed at him with their teeth...”).
2. In verses 55 and 56 we learn Stephen looked into heaven and saw two things:
 - a. The glory of God.
 - b. Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father.

3. Apparently God allowed Stephen to see this vision to encourage him and others who would die in the Lord's cause in the future.
4. Some have twisted the fact that Jesus was seen *standing* at the right hand of the Father rather than *sitting* to try to support the doctrine of premillennialism.
 - a. We have already seen how the doctrine of premillennialism is false.
 - b. In the same way this attempt to use the fact that Jesus was seen standing to support premillennialism is also false.
 - c. For a more detailed analysis of this fact, please see Appendix "I" in the written notes.
5. In verses 57-59 we see how the Sanhedrin responded to Stephen's heavenly vision. They did the following:
 - a. Cried out,
 - b. Stopped their ears,
 - c. Ran toward him as a mob,
 - d. Took him outside the city (cf. Lev 24:14) and
 - e. Stoned him (cf. Lev 24:16).
6. In verse 58 the young man Saul is introduced as the one who held the outer garments of those false witnesses who stoned Stephen.
7. As Stephen was being stoned he did two things:
 - a. He called on Jesus to receive his spirit.
(1) Luke 23:46
 - b. He asked the Lord not to charge these people with the sin of murdering him.
(1) Luke 23:34
8. After Stephen made these requests he died ("fell asleep").
9. Although some believe Stephen prayed to Jesus on this occasion I do not believe that is true.
 - a. Please see our study of 1:24-25.
 - b. Additional material on this subject is at Appendix "J" of the written notes.
10. When we look back on Stephen's amazing speech we see he convicted ancient Israel and the rebellious portion of the Israel of his day of rejecting the following:
 - a. Joseph,
 - b. Moses,
 - c. God,
 - d. The Holy Spirit,
 - e. The prophets,
 - f. Jesus, the Great Prophet, the Messiah and
 - g. God's word.
11. Tragically, each of these persons, beings, or things was connected with the salvation of Israel in either a physical or spiritual sense.
12. On a brighter note, what a stirring and inspirational example Stephen provided for us in his death!
 - a. What boldness in the face of a threatening crowd.
 - b. What faith in and love for the Lord.
 - c. What commitment and dedication to His cause.
 - d. What courage in speaking the truth at all cost.

- e. What love for his audience as demonstrated in his willingness to speak the truth to them.
 - f. What peace and tranquility while dying in the Lord (cf. Rev 14:13)!
 - g. Like Paul, Stephen believed it is profitable and “far better” for a faithful Christian to die and be with Christ (Phil 1:21-23)!
 - h. Truly, Christ was magnified in Stephen’s body with boldness by Stephen’s life and by his death (Phil 1:20)!
 - i. May the same be said of each of us!!
13. Brief review of 6:8-7:60 - Pharisees aroused by Stephen / Stephen’s death.
- a. (6:8) Stephen worked miracles.
 - b. (6:9-11) Accusations against Stephen.
 - c. (6:12-15) Stephen brought before the council.
 - d. (7:1-53) Stephen’s defense before the council.
 - (1) (7:1) The high priest’s question.
 - (2) (7:2-8) Stephen recounted history: Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his twelve sons.
 - (3) (7:9-10) Joseph rejected by his brothers, but God delivered him.
 - (4) (7:11-16) Joseph saved his brothers and Israel.
 - (5) (7:17-26) Moses came to help Israel in captivity.
 - (6) (7:27-29) Moses rejected by Israel.
 - (7) (7:30-37) God established Moses as a ruler and deliverer.
 - (8) (7:38-40) Moses rejected by Israel again.
 - (9) (7:41-43) Israel rejected God directly.
 - (10) (7:44-50) God does not dwell in temples made with hands.
 - (11) (7:51-53) Stephen accused his judges - they rejected the Holy Spirit, persecuted the prophets, killed Jesus and rejected the Law!
 - e. (7:54-60) The reaction of the council - Stephen’s death.
14. Overview of next section of our outline (chapters 8-12) - The church scattered to Judea and Samaria.
- A. (8 and 9) The church extended geographically.
 - B. (10-12) The church expanded racially.
- A. (8-9) The church extended geographically.
- 1. (8:1-40) Expansion of the church in Philip’s work.
 - a. (8:1-3) Saul persecuted the church.
 - b. (8:4) The result - the gospel was spread!
 - c. (8:5-13) Philip preached Christ and His kingdom in Samaria / Many baptized including Simon the sorcerer.
 - d. (8:14-17) Peter and John sent to lay hands on the Samaritans and impart the Holy Spirit.
 - e. (8:18-25) Simon tried to buy this power.
 - f. (8:26-34) Philip sent to the Ethiopian eunuch.
 - g. (8:35-40) Philip preached Christ and the eunuch obeyed.

II. PART TWO: (8-12) THE CHURCH SCATTERED TO JUDEA AND SAMARIA

A. (8-9) THE CHURCH EXTENDED GEOGRAPHICALLY

1. (8:1-40) EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH IN PHILLIP'S WORK

a. (8:1-3) SAUL PERSECUTED THE CHURCH

8:1-3

1. Saul “consented” to the death of Stephen.
 - a. “Consented” (συνενδοκέω) – “to take pleasure with others in anything; to approve of; to agree with.”
 - b. Later in life Saul (Paul) was very sorry for this and other actions (cf. 1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13-14,23).
 - c. Also later in life he would become a penitent, prayerful, powerful preacher of God’s word.
 - d. But first, we must see him as a persistent persecutor!
2. A great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem.
 - a. As a result, all except the apostles were scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria.
 - b. Remember Jesus’ charge in 1:8!
3. Faithful men buried Stephen and there was great sorrow and wailing over the loss of this good man.
 - a. This is another indication of the deep love which those early Christians had for each other!
4. In verse 3 we learn that Saul “made havoc” of the Lord’s church.
 - a. “made havoc” (ἐλυμαίνετο).
 - (1) This word was used to describe the destruction of victims committed by wild and savage beasts.
 - (2) In other words Paul viciously attacked the church with the intention of utterly destroying it.
 - b. Notice how God described Saul’s evil efforts:
 - (1) “Entering every house” - methodical, organized, massive effort to destroy!
 - (2) “Dragging off men and women” - forcing both men and women to leave their homes and places of worship.
 - (3) “Committing them to prison” - Remember 2 Timothy 3:12!
5. Thus, we see a serious, vicious persecution against the church of our Lord.

b. (8:4) THE RESULT - THE GOSPEL WAS SPREAD!

1. In spite of the vicious efforts to destroy the church the end result was quite the opposite!
2. As a result of the persecution against the church in Jerusalem individual Christians went everywhere preaching the word!
 - a. We must stress these were individual Christians. The apostles were still in Jerusalem!

- b. These fervent followers of Jesus could not be stopped by threats, beatings, imprisonment; not even by death!
 - c. How much they must have loved the Lord, His word and His church!
 - d. We need more people like them today! That includes me and it includes you!
3. As we have seen time and again in our study of Acts that persecution does not stop dedicated disciples of Jesus.
 4. Instead, it causes them to grow and be more zealous in teaching others, just as it did with these Christians!

c. (8:5-13) PHILIP PREACHED CHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM IN SAMARIA / MANY BAPTIZED, INCLUDING SIMON THE SORCERER

8:5-8

1. In verse 5 we see Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them.
 - a. Remember Philip was one of the seven chosen with Stephen in 6:5 to take care of the daily distribution.
 - b. Also, remember Jesus had commanded His apostles to begin preaching in Jerusalem, then in the region of Judea, then in the region of Samaria (1:8).
 - c. In addition, please recall that many of the Jews and Samaritans hated each other (cf. Jn 4:9).
 - d. The message which Philip preached was Jesus, the Christ and Him crucified!
 - e. We will talk more specifically about what is involved in preaching Christ when we study verse 12 and in another section of this chapter.
2. Great multitudes believed what Philip preached.
 - a. They believed on the basis of what they *heard* - the gospel of Christ.
 - b. And on the basis of what they *saw* - the miracles which Philip worked.
 - c. Concerning those miracles it is essential we remember that Peter and John had laid hands on the seven including Philip, thus giving them this miraculous power (6:6-8).
3. In verse 7 we learn several of the kinds of miracles which Philip worked.
 - a. First, he made unclean spirits (demons) come out of those possessed by them.
 - b. Second, he healed those who were paralyzed and lame.
 - c. Although we do not have time to discuss the subject of demons in great detail, we would like to make the following points concerning demons and invite your further study:
 - (1) Demons were spirit beings whom God allowed to live in men, women and children in the first century.
 - (2) They were intelligent and could carry on a conversation.
 - (3) Demons knew the Lord Jesus was the Messiah, respected Him and His power, and knew He would eventually commit them to eternal torment.
 - (4) Demons were evil spirits who were *not* diseases, but they were often connected with diseases and other afflictions.
 - (5) Apparently God allowed demons to live in people in the first century so His beloved Son could demonstrate His almighty power over the forces of evil.

- (6) These demons could only be removed from people through miraculous power from God.
- (7) God has not allowed demons to live in people since the end of the first century when the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased.
- (8) Thus, demon possession does *not* occur today!
- (9) However, evil spirits still exist today and try to influence us *indirectly*, without living in people (Eph 6:12).
- (10) Although these evil spirits are powerful the faithful child of God can be victorious over them with *God's* help.
- (11) God's help includes His whole armor which includes the sword of the Spirit, the word of God (Eph 6:10-18).
- d. Additional scriptures and information on this subject can be found in Appendix "K" of the written notes.
- 4. Finally, in verse 8 it is pointed out that there was great joy in Samaria as a result of the preaching of the glorious gospel of Christ.
 - a. Honest and good hearts always rejoice in the preaching of the good news of salvation available in and through Jesus, the Christ (cf. 2:41)!

8:9-11

- 1. Simon is introduced and is described as follows:
 - a. He previously practiced sorcery, pretending to have magical powers, the ability to predict the future or to cure diseases by saying magical words.
 - b. He astonished the people of Samaria with his sorcery.
 - c. He boasted he was someone great.
 - d. The people listened to him thinking he was "the great power of God," i.e., that he had some great and mysterious power from God.
- 2. People from Samaria had been under the influence of Simon for quite a long time.

8:12-13

- 1. In spite of Simon's influence the Samaritans believed Philip when they heard his persuasive gospel preaching.
 - a. This shows the remarkable power of Christ's gospel when it is preached properly!
 - (1) The Samaritans had previously believed the deceiver Simon and his sorcery.
 - (2) Then, when they heard the truth of the gospel they knew it was superior and that it came from God!
 - b. It is also interesting to notice that in verse 5 it was said Philip preached Christ.
 - (1) But, in verse 12, we see one of the things involved in preaching Christ is teaching concerning the kingdom, the church of God!
 - (2) Thus, in spite of what some say today you cannot separate Jesus from His church!
 - (3) He is the Head and Savior of His body which is the church (Eph 5:23).
 - (4) Therefore, if one wants to be saved he must be in Him and in His church. You cannot separate the two (cf. 2:47)!

- c. Finally, in verse 12 it is crucially important to recognize what these believers did after they believed the gospel.
 - (1) God says they were *baptized*!
 - (2) But, how did they know they needed to be baptized?
 - (3) All that was mentioned in verses 5 and 12 is that Philip preached Christ and things concerning the kingdom (church) of God.
 - (4) Clearly then, the necessity of baptism is involved in preaching Christ and things concerning the kingdom (church) of God.
- 2. In verse 13 we see an even greater indication of the power of the gospel.
 - a. That word was powerful enough to convince Simon the sorcerer to believe it.
 - b. And his faith motivated him to obey the gospel by being baptized, just as the other Samaritans had done!
 - c. Not only that, but he continued with Philip and was amazed at the miracles which Philip performed.
- 3. Thus, there is no doubt that Simon was converted to the Lord!

d. (8:14-17) PETER AND JOHN SENT TO LAY HANDS ON THE SAMARITANS TO IMPART THE HOLY SPIRIT

- 1. The apostles sent Peter and John to Samaria when they learned the Samaritans had obediently received the word of God.
 - a. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that the decision to send Peter and John was a joint decision made by all the apostles together.
 - b. As a group, they decided to send Peter and John.
 - c. That is important because it tells us that Peter did not make this decision on his own as the “pope” ruling over the other apostles.
 - d. Furthermore, he was not the one *sending* the apostles as their ruler and the chief apostle.
 - e. Instead, he was one of the ones *sent* by the other apostles.
 - f. This and many other facts from the scriptures should help us to see that the claims of the Roman Catholic Church that Peter was the first “pope” are false!
- 2. When Peter and John arrived they prayed that certain of the Samaritans would receive the Holy Spirit.
- 3. In the first part of verse 16 it is pointed out that the Holy Spirit had not “fallen upon” any of those Samaritan Christians.
 - a. This statement that the Holy Spirit had not “fallen upon” any of the Samaritan Christians is an important one!
 - b. I could only find this idea of the Holy Spirit falling upon someone in two other places in the New Testament.
 - c. Those two places are Acts 10:44 and 11:15.
 - d. And in both of those contexts, God used the words “fallen upon” to refer to those who received the Holy Spirit in such a way as to enable them to work miracles!

- e. Thus, I conclude that when God said in this verse the Holy Spirit had not “fallen upon” any of the Samaritan Christians, He was pointing out that none of them had miraculous powers at that time.
- f. That conclusion will be strengthened as we continue our study of these verses.
- 4. In the last part of verse 16 it is said these Samaritan Christians had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (i.e., by His authority).
 - a. This is a clear reference to their hearing the gospel, believing it and being baptized for the forgiveness of their sins (cf. 8:12-13).
 - b. But, God had promised through Peter that each believer who repents and is baptized in the name of Jesus will receive forgiveness of sins as well as the gift of the Holy Spirit (2:38).
 - c. And, we have seen that the gift of the Holy Spirit is a reference to the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Christian (2:38; 3:19; 5:32).
 - d. Furthermore, we have learned that this normal indwelling does not enable the Christian to work miracles or to receive direct guidance or influence from the Holy Spirit.
 - e. Thus, these Samaritan Christians had received the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit when they were baptized by the authority of Jesus.
 - f. However, they had *not* received the power to work miracles, i.e., the Holy Spirit had not “fallen upon” them to give them the power to work miracles!
- 5. In verse 17 we learn the apostles Peter and John laid their hands upon certain Samaritan Christians, and, as a result, those Christians “received the Holy Spirit.”
 - a. As we have just seen these Christians had already received the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit when they obeyed the Lord, including their baptism into Christ.
 - b. Therefore, when we read in this verse that they “received the Holy Spirit” as a result of the apostles laying hands upon them it is clear that something more than the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit is meant.
 - c. The only legitimate conclusion is that when the apostles laid their hands upon those Christians they received the power to work miracles through the Holy Spirit.
 - d. This conclusion is verified and strengthened when we recognize the exact same thing happened in Acts 6.
 - (1) In 6:5-6 you will remember the seven, including Stephen and Philip, were brought before the apostles who prayed and laid hands upon them.
 - (2) Then in verse 8 Stephen was the first person other than an apostle of Christ who worked a miracle by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - (3) Later, in 8:6,13 Philip also worked miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - (4) Where did these two men receive that miraculous power?
 - (5) Obviously, they received that miracle-working power when the apostles of Christ laid their hands upon them!
 - (6) And that is exactly what these Samaritan Christians received when Peter and John laid their hands upon them.
 - (7) That is, they received the Holy Spirit in such a way as to enable them to work miracles!

6. With these facts in mind I want us to consider an important question.
 - a. As we have just seen, the major purpose of the apostles coming to Samaria was to lay their hands on some of these Samaritan Christians.
 - b. And, their purpose in laying hands on the Samaritans was so that they could receive the Holy Spirit in such a way as to enable them to work miracles.
 - c. But, Philip had already received the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the apostles' hands (6:5-6).
 - d. And, the laying on of the apostles' hands enabled Philip to work miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit (8:6-7,13).
 - e. Then why did not Philip just lay his hands on these Samaritan Christians so that they could receive the Holy Spirit in a way that enabled them to work miracles?
 - f. Why was it necessary for the apostles Peter and John to come all the way from Jerusalem to Samaria to lay their hands on these Christians?
 - g. The only legitimate conclusion is that although Philip had the power to work miracles he did *not* have the ability to pass that power on to others!
 - h. Thus, it is clear that only the apostles of Christ had the ability to lay their hands on others enabling them to receive the Holy Spirit in a way that they could work miracles.
 - i. This conclusion will be verified and strengthened in the next several verses.
7. Finally, we must discuss one more very important thought before leaving these verses.
 - a. These Samaritans heard the gospel, believed it and were baptized (8:6,12-13).
 - b. Then, according to God, they received forgiveness of sins, were saved, received the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the Lord added them to His church (2:38,41,47; 3:19 ; Mk 16:16).
 - c. And, they received all of those wonderful blessings *before* the apostles laid their hands on them enabling them to work miracles through the power of the Holy Spirit (8:17).
 - d. This tells us that even during that time, when miracles were being worked, a person did not have to receive the ability to work miracles in order to be saved.
 - e. Instead, they were saved when they met God's conditions for salvation - hearing, believing, repenting, confessing Jesus and being immersed in water for forgiveness of sins.
 - f. Today, as we have studied, there are no miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 - g. However, people are still saved by hearing, believing, repenting, confessing Jesus and being immersed in water for the forgiveness of sins.
 - h. And, no one is saved by their claims to work miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit!
8. Brief review of what we have completed in 8:1-40 - Expansion of the church in Philip's work :
 - a. (1-3) Saul persecuted the church.
 - b. (4) The result - the gospel was spread!
 - c. (5-13) Philip preached Christ and His kingdom in Samaria / Many baptized, including Simon the sorcerer.

- d. (14-17) Peter and John sent to lay hands on the Samaritans to impart the Holy Spirit.

e. (8:18-25) SIMON TRIED TO BUY THIS POWER / PETER'S REPLY

8:18-19

1. Please notice, Simon saw something that convinced him that it was through the laying on of the apostles' hands that the Holy Spirit was given in a way that people could work miracles.
 - a. In other words, something obviously happened when the apostles laid their hands on those Christians.
 - b. Simon observed that after the apostles laid their hands on those Christians they could do something which they could not do before.
 - c. We conclude that those Christians were able to do something miraculous, such as speaking in a foreign language they never learned before.
 - d. This confirms our conclusion that the apostles laid hands on these Samaritan Christians for the purpose of enabling them to work miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Also, please notice Simon had properly concluded that it was *only the apostles* of Christ who could lay their hands on others to give them miracle-working power.
 - a. This confirms the same conclusion which we drew in our study of verses 14-17.
 - b. That is why Philip did not lay hands on the Samaritans to give them the power to work miracles even though he had the power to work miracles himself.
 - c. Philip was not an apostle of Christ so he did not have the ability to lay his hands on others so they could receive such miraculous power.
3. This brings us to another of those very interesting questions - What effect did the death of the last apostle of Christ have on certain Christians having miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit?
 - a. We have seen that it was *only the apostles* of Christ who could lay their hands on others to give them miracle-working power.
 - b. Therefore, when the last apostle of Christ died, the ability to transfer these miraculous gifts to others through the laying on of the apostles' hands was no longer in existence.
 - c. No doubt there were still some people alive upon whom the apostles had laid hands who could work miracles.
 - d. However, like Philip in this account, they did not have the ability to pass this power on to others.
 - e. Thus, once the last apostle died, and the last of those upon whom the apostles had laid hands died, the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased!
 - f. The only other way a person could receive the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit in the first century was through the baptism with the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) However, as we saw in our study of chapter 2 the baptism with the Holy Spirit only occurred twice.
 - (2) Thus, by the time Paul wrote Ephesians, he could say by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that there was *only one* baptism (Eph 4:5)!

- (3) And, as we studied that the one baptism is immersion in water for the forgiveness of sins, *not* baptism with the Holy Spirit.
- g. Thus, with the ability to work miracles not being available through the baptism with the Holy Spirit or the laying on of the apostles' hands, God eliminated those miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit near the end of the first century.
- h. Truly, at that time, God caused these gifts to "fail, cease, vanish away and be done away," just as He had prophesied would happen (1 Cor 13:8-10)!
- 4. Unfortunately, when Simon saw the apostles had this power he tried to buy that power with money.
 - a. He wanted to be able to lay hands on people so they could perform miracles.
 - b. Apparently, he wanted to be able to do this as a way of having power over others and making a profit.
 - c. Obviously, this was wrong and a sinful attitude on Simon's part!

8:20-23

- 1. Peter reacted to Simon's offer with horror and righteous anger.
- 2. In doing so Peter said the following things to Simon:
 - a. (20) He would perish with his money as long as he thought he could purchase the gift of God with money.
 - b. (21) His heart was not right in the sight of God. It was filled with the desire for power and money.
 - c. (23) He had allowed himself to become poisoned by bitterness of heart and bound of (or enslaved by) sin.
- 3. In verse 22 Peter gave the inspired terms of forgiveness for Simon and for all other Christians who fall into sin.
 - a. It is critically important for us to remember that Simon had already obeyed the gospel and thus had received initial forgiveness of sins and become a child of God.
 - b. Luke said by inspiration that Simon believed the gospel and was baptized (8:13).
 - c. Thus, the conditions for forgiveness of sins given in this verse *only* apply to those who have already obeyed the gospel which includes being baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins.
 - d. I realize some men claim Simon was not really a Christian because he fell away so soon.
 - e. But, those men contradict Luke who spoke by inspiration and said that Simon believed the gospel and was baptized.
 - f. When Simon did that he received forgiveness of sins and became a Christian, a child of God.
 - g. Obviously, like any of us, he was not perfect just because he became a Christian.
 - h. Just like you and me he still needed to work continually to eliminate bad habits and to add new good habits in their place (Col 3:1-17; Rom 6:6-13).

- i. Nevertheless, Simon was still a Christian, a child of God, and the things which Peter told him to do only apply to one who has become a Christian by obeying the gospel, including being immersed in water.
- 4. With those precautions in mind, what did Peter tell Simon to do to receive forgiveness of sins at this time?
 - a. First, Peter told him to repent of his wickedness.
 - (1) As we saw in our study of 2:38 repentance is a change of mind.
 - (2) That change of mind is based upon godly sorrow for sins, and it leads to a change in behavior.
 - b. Second, Peter told Simon to pray to God to receive forgiveness.
- 5. Thus, for a Christian to receive forgiveness of sins they do not have to be baptized again.
 - a. Rather, they must repent of their sins and confess those sins to God asking for His forgiveness.
 - b. The inspired apostle John added that a Christian must “walk in the light,” i.e., strive to live in accordance with God’s word, which is a lamp unto our feet and a light to our path (1 Jn 1:7-9; Psa 119:105).

8:24

- 1. Simon responded to Peter’s sharp rebuke by asking Peter to pray to God that the things which he spoke would not happen to Simon.
 - a. This is a good indication Peter’s inspired words had the desired effect on Simon.
 - b. We do not have any inspired or other reliable record of what Simon did the rest of his life.
- 2. A thought-provoking and sincere question needs to be asked at this point.
 - a. If Peter was the first “pope” as claimed by our Roman Catholic friends, then why did not he just “absolve” or forgive Simon’s sins directly?
 - (1) First, because Peter was not the first “pope!”
 - (2) Second, because the only way that Peter and the other apostles had of forgiving sins was *indirectly* through the preaching and teaching of God’s word which tells us what to do to receive forgiveness.
 - (3) And, that is exactly what Peter did - he preached *God’s* conditions of forgiveness.
 - b. Furthermore, Peter did not tell Simon to pray to him (Peter) for forgiveness.
 - c. Rather, Peter told Simon to pray to *God* for forgiveness!

8:25

- 1. The apostles preached the word of the Lord and returned to Jerusalem.
- 2. Notice they used their time wisely on their return trip to Jerusalem.
- 3. They used that time to preach the gospel in many Samaritan villages.

f. (8:26-34) PHILIP SENT TO THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH

8:26

1. With this verse we have the beginning of another one of those important accounts which are recorded in the book of Acts which tells us how people were saved from their sins.
2. The scene began with the direct involvement of an angel of the Lord.
 - a. However, it is crucially important to notice the angel did not speak to the one who needed to hear God's message of salvation!
 - b. Instead, the angel spoke to Philip who was a preacher of God's word.
 - c. Thus, even in the first century when miracles were being worked God did not use angels to bring the message of salvation directly to those in sin.
3. The angel told Philip to go to the road which went from Jerusalem to Gaza.
- 4, Incidentally, it is also crucially important we recognize that since the end of the first century when God did away with miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit He also chose not to communicate with preachers through angels like He did in this case.
 - a. In Philip's time they did not have the complete New Testament in written form.
 - b. Therefore, God chose to communicate with certain of His inspired spokesmen through angels or the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Today, we have the completed revelation of the New Testament through which God communicates to all who will listen (Heb 1:1-2; 2:1-4).

8:27-28

1. Philip went to the road and met the Ethiopian eunuch.
2. That nobleman from Ethiopia was described as follows:
 - a. He was a man of great authority under the Queen of the Ethiopians.
 - b. He was in charge of the queen's treasury - a position of trust and responsibility.
 - c. He had gone to Jerusalem to worship God and was returning home thus, he was apparently a Jew or a convert to the Jewish faith.
 - d. And, he was reading from the book of Isaiah.
3. From this description, we can see the Ethiopian was a religious man who was truly seeking the Lord's will.
4. And he was seeking the Lord's will in the right place, i.e., in His word, the Bible!

8:29

1. Now we see the direct involvement of the Holy Spirit in this exciting account of the conversion of one who was searching for the Lord's will.
2. According to what is taught in the religious world today we would expect the Holy Spirit to operate *directly*, *mysteriously* and *miraculously* on the heart of the Ethiopian man.
3. We say that only because many teach that the Holy Spirit must operate *directly* on a person's heart or mind before they can even believe in the Lord.
4. I do not believe that false teaching for one moment because it contradicts so many plain and clear passages of scripture as we saw in our study of chapter 2.
5. However, if this teaching were true, there was *never* a better occasion than this one for the Lord to show mankind that it was true.

- a. I cannot think of a better place than this chapter for the Lord to show that it is necessary for the Holy Spirit to operate directly and mysteriously on a person's mind to enable them to believe.
 - b. That is true because, as we have seen in this study of Acts, men were openly and clearly working miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - c. In addition, in this particular case, there was direct involvement by an angel of the Lord.
 - d. Not only that, but there was direct involvement by the Holy Spirit.
 - e. Thus, all the ingredients were present on that day on the road to Gaza.
 - f. All the Lord had to do was tell us in this account that the Holy Spirit operated directly and mysteriously on the mind of the Ethiopian to enable him to believe.
6. But, as you can clearly see, that is *not* what the Lord told us, either in verse 29, in this context or anywhere else in the Bible!
 7. Instead of working directly and mysteriously on the mind of the Ethiopian the Holy Spirit told Philip the evangelist to go to the Ethiopian's chariot, obviously with the purpose of teaching him the gospel.
 8. Now, with that extremely important fact in mind, let us see how the rest of this wonderful account of salvation unfolds.

8:30-34

1. Notice Philip's tremendous eagerness to teach the Ethiopian about Jesus. He *ran* to him!
 - a. What an inspiring example for you and me to follow today - great willingness and eagerness to teach others about our Lord and Savior!
2. Philip heard the Ethiopian reading from Isaiah and asked him if he understood what he was reading.
3. The Ethiopian asked Philip to help him understand the passage.
 - a. That tells us this man was truly hungering and thirsting after righteousness (Mt 5:6)!
4. In verses 32 and 33 we learn the Ethiopian was reading from what we know as Isaiah 53:7-8.
5. In verse 34 the Ethiopian asked Philip if Isaiah was talking about himself or someone else in these verses.
 - a. Of course, we know the section from Isaiah 52:13-53:12 was a prophecy concerning the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior.
 - b. In fact, it is one of the most remarkable and detailed prophecies where God predicted the coming of His beloved Son as the Suffering Servant, upon whom the Lord laid all of our iniquities.

g. (8:35-40) PHILIP PREACHED CHRIST AND THE EUNUCH OBEYED

8:35

1. In response to the Ethiopian's question, as to who Isaiah was talking about, Philip began at that scripture and preached Jesus to him.

2. In other words, Philip was saying, by inspiration, that the prophecy in Isaiah 53 was fulfilled by the Lord Jesus.
3. Although it just says in this verse that Philip “preached Jesus” this was much more than just saying the name of Jesus, as we saw earlier in this chapter, and as we will see in the next several verses.

8:36-39

1. As Philip and the Ethiopian went down the road they came to some water and the Ethiopian asked what prevented him from being baptized.
2. But, why did the Ethiopian ask about baptism? Where had he learned about the need for baptism?
 - a. In verse 35 all we were told was that Philip preached Jesus to the Ethiopian.
 - b. Then when the Ethiopian comes upon some water he asks what prevents him from being baptized.
 - c. Thus, we conclude that preaching Jesus includes preaching the need to be baptized in water in order to receive the forgiveness of sins!
 - d. Please see our study of 8:5 and verse 12.
3. In verse 37 Philip said to the Ethiopian that if he believed with all his heart he could be baptized.
4. The Ethiopian responded by confessing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
 - a. Incidentally, many scholars do not believe that verse 37 was in the original text of the New Testament.
 - b. This question is in the area called “textual criticism,” which is beyond the scope of this course.
 - c. However, even if this verse were not in the original text, the practice of confessing belief in Jesus as the Son of God before being baptized is well documented in the New Testament.
 - d. For example, please see Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Timothy 6:13.
5. After the Ethiopian made that great confession he commanded the chariot be stopped.
6. Then *both* he and Philip went *down into* the water and Philip baptized the Ethiopian.
7. And when Philip had baptized the Ethiopian, “they both came up out of the water.”
8. As we pointed out in our study of 2:38 this account of the Ethiopian’s baptism shows without a doubt that Bible baptism is an *immersion in water*, not pouring or sprinkling.
 - a. Please see our notes on 2:38 for further evidence that the one baptism authorized by God today is an immersion in water for the forgiveness of sins.
9. Also, please notice what the Ethiopian did after he was immersed. He went away *rejoicing!*
10. But, why was he rejoicing?
 - a. It is obvious he knew that through his faithful and loving obedience to the gospel he had received the wonderful blessing of God’s love, mercy and grace.
 - b. He knew he had been baptized into Christ where all spiritual blessings are located, including forgiveness, redemption, reconciliation, becoming a child of God, peace, hope, joy, etc., etc.!

11. After this baptism the Holy Spirit caught Philip away.
 - a. Later, he was at Azotus which was the city the Hebrews called Ashdod.
 - b. He then preached at many cities until he reached the city of Caesarea.
 - c. We will not read about Philip again until 21:8 where he will be found in that same city of Caesarea.
12. Looking back on chapter 8 we have studied three accounts of what people did to be saved in the days when the apostles and others were preaching by inspiration.
 - a. In verses 5-12 the Samaritans heard the gospel, believed it and were baptized.
 - b. In verse 13 Simon the Sorcerer heard the gospel, believed it and was baptized.
 - c. And in verses 30-39 the Ethiopian officer heard the gospel, believed it, confessed Jesus and was baptized.
13. Brief review of 8:1-40 - Expansion of the church in Philip's work.
 - a. (1-3) Saul persecuted the church.
 - b. (4) The result - the gospel was spread!
 - c. (5-13) Philip preached Christ and His kingdom in Samaria / Many baptized, including Simon the sorcerer.
 - d. (14-17) Peter and John sent to lay hands on the Samaritans and impart the Holy Spirit.
 - e. (18-25) Simon tried to buy this power.
 - f. (26-34) Philip sent to the Ethiopian eunuch.
 - g. (35-40) Philip preached Christ and the eunuch obeyed.
14. Brief overview of 9:1-43 - Conversion of Saul / Peter raises Dorcas.
 - a. (1-2) Saul continued to persecute the church.
 - b. (3-9) Jesus confronted Saul, who asked, "Lord, what do you want me to do?"
 - c. (10-19) Ananias sent to Saul / Saul baptized.
 - d. (20-23) Saul preached Christ in Damascus.
 - e. (24-31) Saul tried to join the disciples in Jerusalem / Barnabas helped him.
 - f. (32-35) Peter healed Aeneas at Lydda.
 - g. (36-43) Peter raised Dorcas at Joppa.

2. (9:1-43) CONVERSION OF SAUL / PETER RAISES DORCAS

a. (9:1-2) SAUL CONTINUED TO PERSECUTE THE CHURCH

1. Saul continued to express his wrath against Christians by making threats, including murder.
2. He even asked the high priest for written permission to capture Christians from Damascus in order to bring them to Jerusalem for trial.

b. (9:3-9) JESUS CONFRONTED SAUL, WHO ASKED, "LORD, WHAT DO YOU WANT ME TO DO?"

9:3-6

1. As Saul approached Damascus he was surrounded by a bright light from heaven.
2. Saul fell to the ground and Jesus asked him why he was persecuting Him.
 - a. Please notice that Saul was persecuting *Christians*.

- b. But Jesus said that Saul was persecuting *Him*!
 - c. Thus, when one persecutes Christians they persecute Jesus! But, why is that?
 - d. It is because Jesus is the head of His spiritual body, the church and individual Christians are members of that body (Eph 1:22-23; 5:30).
3. Saul, trembling with fear and astonishment, asked the Lord what He wanted him to do.
 4. Jesus told Saul to go into the city where he would be told what he *had* to do ("*must*" do).

9:7-9

1. Those who were with Saul were amazed because they heard a voice but did not see anyone.
2. When Saul arose he was blind and had to be led by the hand into Damascus.
3. In Damascus the blinded Saul went three days without food and water.
 - a. Thus, Saul obviously believed in the Lord and repented of his sins against the Lord and His church.
 - b. Yet, he still was not saved from his sins.
 - c. He still had not been told what he *must* do to receive forgiveness of his sins.
 - d. Thus, it is clear Saul was *not* saved on the road to Damascus as some claim today!

c. (9:10-19) ANANIAS SENT TO SAUL / SAUL BAPTIZED

9:10-12

1. Ananias is introduced as a disciple of Jesus who lived in Damascus.
2. The Lord appeared to Ananias in a vision and told him to go to Saul, who was praying.
 - a. Notice, Saul was praying.
 - b. Thus he was not only going without food and water for three days, indicating his belief and repentance -
 - c. He was also praying.
 - d. According to many in the religious world today, Saul was certainly saved from his sins.
 - e. Yet, according to God, this penitent believer who was praying was still not saved.
 - f. He was still in his sins and needed to be told what he must do to receive forgiveness.
 - g. Thus, those today who teach that all one must do to be saved is to believe in the Lord, repent of sins, and pray the "sinner's prayer" are teaching false doctrine!
3. The Lord informed Ananias that Saul also had a vision, where he saw Ananias putting his hand on him so that he could see again.

9:13-16

1. In verses 13 and 14 Ananias objected to going to Saul because of the harm he had been doing to Christians.
2. However, the Lord repeated His command for Ananias to go to Saul.
 - a. The Lord also assured Ananias that Saul was His choice to carry His message to Gentiles, kings and Israelites.
 - b. In verse 16 the Lord told Ananias that Saul was going to suffer for the His cause.

9:17-19

1. In verse 17 we learn Ananias went to Saul as the Lord commanded him.
2. He told Saul the Lord sent him there for two purposes:
 - a. So Saul could receive his sight again,
 - b. And so Saul could be filled with the Holy Spirit.
3. In verse 18 Saul did receive his sight.
4. After that he arose and was baptized.
5. After being baptized Saul finally ate some food and was strengthened.
6. Then he spent several days with the Christians in Damascus.
7. Before we go on we need to discuss in a little more detail several things found in these verses.
8. First, in verse 17 Ananias addressed Saul as “brother Saul” before Saul was baptized into the family of God.
 - a. On the basis of this fact, some have claimed that Saul was a Christian, a child of God, *before* he was baptized.
 - b. However, that claim is false!
 - c. That claim is false because, in addition to its use in Christianity, the word “brethren” was a term used by those of Jewish background to address each other, even if one was not a Christian yet.
 - (1) For example, earlier in this book, Peter did this in addressing those of Jewish background who had not obeyed the gospel (cf. 2:29; 3:17).
 - (2) Also, Paul referred to his “kinsmen according to the flesh,” i.e., his relatives with Jewish backgrounds as his “brethren,” even though they had not obeyed the gospel yet (Rom 9:1-5).
 - (3) In doing that these inspired men, as well as Ananias in this case, were referring to their common Jewish background or ancestry.
 - (4) They were *not* referring to their audience as brothers *in Christ* before they were even baptized into Christ!
 - (5) That is true because one does not become a child of God and thus a brother or sister in Christ until their faith motivates them to be *baptized into Christ* (Gal 3:26-27).
9. Second, some ask where Ananias received the ability to miraculously heal Saul’s blindness.
 - a. As we have seen, there were only two ways to receive miraculous powers in the first century.
 - b. Those two ways were through baptism with the Holy Spirit and through laying on of the apostles’ hands.

- c. There were only two cases of baptism with the Holy Spirit and Ananias was not included in either one.
 - d. Therefore, we conclude Ananias had received this miraculous power through the laying on of the hands of Christ's apostles.
10. Third, one of the reasons the Lord sent Ananias to Saul was so he could "be filled with the Holy Spirit" (v. 17).
- a. We need to determine whether, in this case, the phrase, "filled with the Holy Spirit" referred to Saul's reception of the power to work miracles, or to something else.
 - (1) First, in our study of 6:2-4 we saw clearly this phrase can refer to the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in a way that a person was not able to work miracles.
 - (a) In fact, you will remember we drew that conclusion concerning the use of that phrase to refer to the seven men in that chapter, including Stephen and Philip.
 - (b) You will also recall that this normal indwelling of, or being filled with the Holy Spirit, begins when a person obeys the gospel, including being immersed in water for the forgiveness of sins (2:38; 3:19; 5:32).
 - (c) Thus, it is at least possible that Ananias' coming to Saul so that he could "be filled with the Holy Spirit" was a reference to Saul's reception of the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit.
 - (d) And Saul's reception of the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit would have begun when he was baptized into Christ.
 - (2) Second, with that background information in mind, when we study the context it is clear this phrase did refer to Saul's reception of the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit which he received when he was baptized into Christ.
 - (a) (17) Ananias was sent to Saul so he could (1) receive his sight, and (2) be filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - (b) (18) When Ananias came to Saul, Saul (1) received his sight, and (2) was baptized.
 - (c) Combining these two verses then, we have the following facts:
 - 1. Ananias was sent so Saul could receive his sight (v. 17) and Saul received his sight (v. 18).
 - 2. Ananias was sent so Saul could be filled with the Holy Spirit (v. 17) and Saul was baptized (v. 18).
 - (d) The only legitimate conclusion is that when Saul was baptized, he was filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - (e) That is, he received the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit which is received by *all* believers who repent and are immersed for the forgiveness of sins (2:38; 3:19; 5:32).
 - (3) Third, the only alternative to this phrase referring to the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit in this case is that it referred to Saul's reception of miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit.

- (a) However, as we have seen, there were only two ways in which those miraculous powers could be received.
- (b) Those two ways were through the baptism with the Holy Spirit and through the laying on of the apostles' hands.
- (c) It is obvious Paul was not baptized with the Holy Spirit on this occasion.
- (d) It is also obvious Ananias was not an apostle of Christ.
- (e) Therefore, Ananias did not have the ability to lay hands on Saul in such a way that Saul received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- (f) Thus, what Saul received on that day was not the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- (g) This is just one more way of knowing that what Saul *did* receive on that day was the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit as a result of his baptism into Christ!

d. (9:20-23) SAUL PREACHED CHRIST IN DAMASCUS

1. After Saul was baptized, he began to preach that Jesus was the Christ and the Son of God.
2. People were amazed because they knew Saul had previously persecuted Christianity zealously.
3. Saul caused an uproar among the Jews at Damascus because he proved that Jesus was the Christ.
4. As a result the Jews made plans to kill Saul.

e. (9:24-31) SAUL TRIED TO JOIN THE DISCIPLES IN JERUSALEM / BARNABAS HELPED HIM

9:24-25

1. Saul found out about the plan of the Jews to kill him and his fellow-Christians helped him escape in a basket through the wall.

9:26-27

1. Saul came to Jerusalem and tried to join with those Christians, but they were afraid he was not truly a disciple of Jesus.
2. Barnabas verified to the apostles Saul's encounter with Jesus and his bold preaching about Jesus in Damascus.

9:28-30

1. Saul worked diligently in the Jerusalem church, preaching Jesus and disputing against the Hellenists.
2. As a result, the Hellenists tried to kill Saul.
3. Saul's fellow Christians found out about the intentions of the Hellenists, took Saul to Caesarea and then sent him to Tarsus.

9:31

1. After this period of persecution the church enjoyed peace and was edified (built up, strengthened).
2. The church is described as walking (living) in two things:
 - a. The fear of the Lord (honor, respect, reverence toward God and His commandments) (cf. 10:35),
 - b. And in the comfort of the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) The comfort provided by the word of God, as revealed by the Holy Spirit and recorded in the Bible (cf. Rom 15:4).
 - (2) The comfort provided in knowing the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian as the stamp of God's approval and His down payment on our eternal inheritance (cf. Eph 1:13-14).
3. Those early Christians were not only living in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit -
4. They were also growing in number ("multiplied").
5. In the next verse the key character changes from Saul to Peter.
6. But, before we leave Paul for a while we want to summarize what we have studied concerning his conversion to the Lord.
 - a. (4-5) The Lord appeared to Saul in a vision on the road to Damascus.
 - b. (6) Saul asked the Lord what He wanted him to do.
 - c. (6) The Lord told Saul to go into Damascus where he would be told what he "must" do.
 - d. (7) In Damascus Saul went three days without food and water.
 - (1). This indicated his belief in the Lord, sorrow for his sins and repentance.
 - e. (11) During this time he was praying.
 - (1) Yet, he still was not saved from his sins because he had not been told what he must do.
 - f. (17-18) The Lord sent Ananias to Saul and he was baptized.
 - (1) As a result of his belief, repentance and baptism Saul received the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit ("filled with the Holy Spirit").
 - (2) This normal indwelling only occurs *after* a penitent believer is immersed to receive the forgiveness of sins (2:38).
 - (3) It only occurs *after* a person repents and is converted (including baptism) to have their sins blotted out (3:19).
 - (4) It only occurs *after* a person obeys the Lord (5:32).
7. From those biblical facts we can draw the following legitimate conclusions:
 - a. Saul was *not* converted and saved from his sins on the road to Damascus when he received the heavenly vision.
 - b. Saul was *not* converted and saved when he believed in the Lord.
 - c. Saul was *not* converted and saved when he indicated sorrow and repentance by going without food and water for three days.
 - d. Saul was *not* converted and saved when he prayed after doing all of these other things.
 - e. Saul was converted and saved only *after* he did all of those things *and* was *baptized* into Christ for the forgiveness of sins!
8. Incidentally, there are two other accounts of Saul's conversion in this book.

- a. One is in chapter 22 and the other is in chapter 26.
- b. The account in 22:16 is particularly enlightening on this subject of when Saul was saved from his sins.
- c. That is true because of what the Lord sent Ananias to tell Saul he *must* do.
- d. Remember that this was *after* Saul had seen the vision, believed in the Lord, repented and prayed.
- e. Yet, after doing all of these things he was *still in his sins!*
- f. Please read the verse to determine what God's spokesman Ananias told Saul to do to "*wash away his sins!*"
- g. Thus, just as we studied earlier, this inspired verse confirms that *according to God it is necessary to be baptized in order to wash away sins!*

f. (9:32-35) PETER HEALED AENEAS AT LYDDA

1. Peter came down to the Christians who lived in Lydda.
 - a. In verse 32 notice what Luke called these individual Christians (by inspiration).
 - b. He called them "saints."
 - (1) This word means one who is separated from sin and dedicated, consecrated, devoted to God.
 - (2) Thus, in New Testament times this word was used to describe each Christian.
 - (3) Obviously then the present practice of religious groups reserving the word "saint" for especially holy persons approved or voted upon by religious bodies or leaders is clearly unscriptural!
2. In Lydda, Peter found a man who was paralyzed and had been confined to a bed for eight years.
3. Peter healed the man by the authority of Jesus the Christ.
 - a. Again, it is essential that we notice that the paralyzed man arose *immediately!*
4. Many in that area saw the paralyzed man was healed and they responded by turning to the Lord.

g. (9:36-43) PETER RAISED DORCAS AT JOPPA

9:36

1. In verse 36 the scene shifts to Joppa.
2. A Christian lady by the name of Tabitha lived in that city.
 - a. "Tabitha" is translated "Dorcas," which meant "gazelle" or "antelope."
3. Dorcas was obviously a wonderful Christian woman who served as a good example for us today.
 - a. She is described as being "full of good works and charitable deeds!"
 - b. Obviously, this fine Christian woman was one who was "zealous for good works" (Titus 2:14; 3:1,14)!

9:37-39

1. Dorcas became ill and died.

2. The Christians sent for Peter in Lydda pleading that he come quickly.
3. Peter came to the upper room where they had placed the body of Dorcas.
4. Notice some widows were weeping because they felt the loss of this wonderful Christian.
5. The widows were also showing Peter the clothes which Dorcas had made for them because of her love for them.
6. Compare with Revelation 14:13

9:40-44

1. Peter removed those people from the room, raised Dorcas from the dead and then presented her alive to them.
2. This is the first record of an apostle raising a person from the dead.
3. As a result of this remarkable miracle many believed in the Lord.
4. Peter stayed in Joppa in the home of Simon, who was a tanner.
5. Brief review of chapters 8 and 9 - The church extended geographically.
 1. (8:1-40) Expansion of the church in Philip's work.
 - a. (8:1-3) Saul persecuted the church.
 - b. (8:4) The result - the gospel was spread!
 - c. (8:5-13) Philip preached Christ and His kingdom in Samaria / Many baptized, including Simon the sorcerer.
 - d. (8:14-17) Peter and John sent to lay hands on the Samaritans to impart the Holy Spirit.
 - e. (8:18-25) Simon tried to buy this power.
 - f. (8:26-34) Philip sent to the Ethiopian eunuch.
 - g. (8:35-40) Philip preached Christ and the eunuch obeyed.
 2. (9:1-43) Conversion of Saul / Peter raised Dorcas.
 - a. (9:1-2) Saul continued to persecute the church.
 - b. (9:3-9) Jesus confronted Saul, who asked, "Lord, what do you want me to do?"
 - c. (9:10-19) Ananias sent to Saul / Saul baptized.
 - d. (9:20-23) Saul preached Christ in Damascus.
 - e. (9:24-31) Saul tried to join the disciples in Jerusalem / Barnabas helped him.
 - f. (9:32-35) Peter healed Aeneas at Lydda.
 - g. (9:36-43) Peter raised Dorcas at Joppa.
6. Brief overview of chapters 10-12 - The church expanded racially.
 1. (10:1-11:30) Door open to Gentiles.
 2. (12:1-25) Persecution from civil government.
 1. (10:1-11:30) Door open to Gentiles.
 - a. (10:1-8) Instructed by an angel, Cornelius sent for Peter.
 - b. (10:9-16) Peter saw a vision.
 - c. (10:17-22) Messengers from Cornelius summoned Peter.
 - d. (10:23-29) Peter and Cornelius met.
 - e. (10:30-33) Cornelius told why he sent for Peter.

- f. (10:34-43) Peter's message to Cornelius and his household.
 - (1) (10:34-35) God is not partial.
 - (2) (10:36-37) Peace through Jesus, Lord of all.
 - (3) (10:38) *Jesus*: Approved by the Father through miracles.
 - (4) (10:39) *Jesus*: Crucified by the Jews.
 - (5) (10:40-41) *Jesus*: Raised by the Father and showed openly.
 - (6) (10:42) *Jesus*: Judge of all.
 - (7) (10:43) *Jesus*: Predicted by the prophets - remission through Him.
- g. (10:44-46) Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his household.
- h. (10:47-48) Peter commanded water baptism.
- i. (11:1-3) Some in Jerusalem contended with Peter because he went to the Gentiles.
- j. (11:4-17) Peter's explanation.
 - (1) (11:4-10) The vision.
 - (2) (11:11-12) Messengers from Cornelius.
 - (3) (11:13-14) Cornelius told why he sent for Peter.
 - (4) (11:15-17) Descent of the Holy Spirit and its significance.
- k. (11:18) The response of those who contended.
- l. (11:19-21) Work of those scattered (8:4) in Antioch.
- m. (11:22-24) Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch.
- n. (11:25-26) Barnabas brought Saul from Tarsus to Antioch.
- o. (11:27-30) Famine predicted / Antioch sent relief to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Saul.

B. (10-12) THE CHURCH EXPANDS RACIALLY

1. (10:1-11:30) DOOR OPEN TO GENTILES

a. (10:1-8) INSTRUCTED BY AN ANGEL, CORNELIUS SENT FOR PETER

10:1-2

1. Cornelius is introduced as a Roman soldier living in Caesarea.
 - a. He was a "centurion" - a commander in the Roman army responsible for 100 soldiers.
2. It is obvious from the context that Cornelius was a Gentile, not a Jew (cf. 11:1-3).
3. The fact that Cornelius was a religious minded person is seen clearly in his description in verse 2.
4. Along those lines, please notice five points in God's description of this man:
 - a. "Devout" - having deep religious thoughts and feelings.
 - b. "Feared God" - he had a deep honor, respect and healthy fear of the one true and living God.
 - c. "With all his household" -
 - (1) The word translated "household" could include not only a person's family, but also his servants and employees.

- (2) Thus, Cornelius had influenced his family, servants, etc. to follow his lead in fearing God.
- (3) Obviously, this did not include infants and children who were not old enough to fear God!
- d. "Who gave alms generously" - he was generous in giving charity to those who were needy.
- e. "Prayed to God always" - he was a man of prayer.
- 5. When we study God's description of Cornelius it is clear he was a very good man who was seeking to learn and do God's will!
- 6. Yet, just like the example of Saul, Cornelius still needed to have someone come and speak, "words by which you and all your household will be saved" (11:14)!
- 7. Thus, Cornelius was not saved just because he was a good, religious man who feared God, was charitable and prayed to God regularly!
- 8. All of these things were good, but they were not enough!
- 9. Cornelius and his household still needed to hear words telling them what they had to do to be saved!

10:3-8

- 1. Cornelius had a vision in which he saw an angel of God coming to him.
- 2. The angel told Cornelius his prayers and charity came up for a memorial before God (i.e., God had heard his prayers - verse 31).
- 3. In verses 5 and 6 the angel told Cornelius to send for Peter who would tell him "what you must do."
 - a. Thus, the case of Cornelius is similar to that of the Ethiopian nobleman which we studied in chapter 8.
 - b. In both cases there was a good, God-fearing man who was searching for the Lord's will.
 - c. In both cases there was the involvement of an angel of God.
 - d. However, in both cases the angels did *not* tell the one who was searching what he needed to do to be saved.
 - e. Similarly, in Saul's case the Lord did *not* tell Saul what he needed to do to be saved.
 - f. Instead, in the Ethiopian's case the angel told Philip to go speak to the Ethiopian.
 - g. In Cornelius' case the angel told Cornelius to send for Peter who would tell him what he must do.
 - h. And in Saul's case the Lord told Saul to go into Damascus where he would be told what to do.
 - i. Thus, even in the age of miracles in the first century God did not tell men directly or through angels what men had to do to be saved.
 - j. Instead, the Lord used His human spokesmen to tell men what to do to be saved.
 - k. If that was the case during the age of miracles should we expect anything different when miracles are not being worked?!

4. Cornelius responded obediently to the angel by sending two servants and a soldier to Peter.

b. (10:9-16) PETER SAW A VISION

1. As Peter was praying he fell into a state of partial consciousness (“trance”) and had a vision.
2. In that vision he saw an object like a large sheet coming down from heaven.
3. On the sheet were all kinds of animals and birds.
4. The Lord spoke to Peter and told him to kill and eat the animals.
5. Peter refused to eat the animals saying he never ate anything “common or unclean.”
6. The Lord responded by saying what He had cleansed Peter must not call common or unclean.
7. This was done three times and then the large sheet was taken back into heaven.
8. To understand this vision properly it is necessary to remember some facts from the Old Testament.
 - a. In that Old Testament, God made a distinction between those things, including animals, which were holy (clean) and those things which were profane (common or unclean) (cf. Lev 11:2-27; Deut 4:3-20).
 - b. Those things which were holy or clean were acceptable for use or eating while those things which were profane, common or unclean were forbidden to be used or eaten.
 - c. Thus, when Peter was told to eat animals he knew were common or unclean he refused to do so.
 - d. In addition, the Jews considered the Gentiles like Cornelius and his household as profane, common or unclean.
 - e. Thus, they avoided close contact with the Gentiles (cf. v. 28).
 - f. But, Peter was told in this vision that whatever God cleansed Peter must not consider common or unclean.
9. As we will see in the next section Peter did not understand the meaning of this vision.
10. However, later, he understood that the vision meant that God wanted the gospel preached to Gentiles as well as to those of Jewish background (cf. 10:28).
11. With this vision God made it clear to Peter that He considered the Gentiles acceptable to receive the message of salvation.
12. This extraordinary vision was necessary because up until this time the apostles and others had not preached the gospel to the Gentiles.
13. This was in spite of the Lord’s command to go preach the gospel in all the world and to every creature (Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16; Acts 1:8).

c. (10:17-22) MESSENGERS FROM CORNELIUS SUMMONED PETER

1. While Peter was wondering what the meaning of the vision was the three messengers from Cornelius came to where Peter was living.

2. In verses 19 and 20 the Holy Spirit told Peter to go with those three men because He had sent them to Peter.
3. Then Peter went down and asked why the messengers had come to him.
4. They responded that Cornelius had been divinely instructed by an angel to call Peter to his house to “hear words” from Peter.

d. (10:23-29) PETER AND CORNELIUS MET

10:23-24

1. Peter left with the messengers and some of the brethren from Joppa.
2. When they arrived at Cornelius’ home he was waiting for them.
3. Not only that but Cornelius had called together his relatives and his close friends to hear God’s word with him!
4. This man was truly eager to hear the message of salvation and he wanted his relatives and friends to do so also!
5. What an example for us today!

10:25-26

1. When Cornelius met Peter he fell down and worshiped him.
2. But Peter refused to accept that worship saying that he was just a man like Cornelius.
3. Question - If Peter was the first “pope” as claimed by our Roman Catholic friends, then why did he refuse to accept Cornelius’ worship?!
 - a. Most of us have probably seen pictures of the “pope” accepting the worship of others as God’s representative on earth.
 - b. However, God makes it absolutely clear that we are not to worship men. Instead, we are to worship God and *only Him* as the one true and living God (cf. Rev 4:10; 14:7; 19:9-10).
 - c. Verses like these show very clearly how anti-scriptural and ungodly it is for a mortal man to demand and accept worship!
 - d. Along those lines please remember our study of 8:24.
 - (1) In that verse we saw another major difference between Roman Catholicism and pure, true New Testament Christianity.
 - (2) In that context Peter refused to forgive Simon’s sin.
 - (a) Instead, he told Simon *God’s* conditions for forgiveness of a Christian’s sins.
 - (b) Those conditions are repentance and confessing those sins to God.
 - (3) In addition, rather than telling Simon to pray to or through Peter as the “pope” for forgiveness Peter told Simon to pray to God!
 - e. Now, in these verses in chapter 10 we see another major difference between Roman Catholicism and pure, New Testament Christianity.
 - f. It truly breaks our heart that men have departed from the New Testament church in such ways (1 Tim 4:1-3; 2 Thess 2:1-10).
 - g. With all sincerity and love we call for all to forsake such man-made, anti-scriptural religious bodies.

- h. We make that plea because our Lord Jesus said that all such denominations and those people who are in them are destined for eternal separation from God (Mt 15:8-13)!!

10:27-29

1. Peter made four major points in speaking to those who were gathered with Cornelius.
 - a. It was unlawful for a Jewish man to associate himself closely with people of other nations such as Cornelius and his household (cf. Lev 18:24-30; Deut 7:3-12; Jn 4:9).
 - b. However, God had shown him not to call any man common or unclean. God did this in the vision.
 - c. With that assurance from God Peter came to Cornelius immediately and without objection.
 - d. Next, Peter asked Cornelius why he had sent for Peter.

e. (10:30-33) CORNELIUS TOLD WHY HE SENT FOR PETER

1. Cornelius told Peter he had sent for him because an angel appeared to him and instructed him to do so (cf. 10:1-8).
2. Cornelius concluded by saying he, his relatives and his friends were gathered together to hear from Peter what God “commanded.”

f. (10:34-43) PETER’S MESSAGE TO CORNELIUS AND HIS HOUSEHOLD

(1) (10:34-35) GOD IS NOT PARTIAL

10:34-35

1. Peter proclaimed God does not show partiality.
2. In fact, God is so impartial He will accept each person in every nation who meets His conditions.
3. Peter stated those conditions in a general way by mentioning the following:
 - a. “Whoever fears Him” - those who have a healthy fear, honor and respect for God.
 - b. “And works righteousness.”
 - (1) Those who do those things which *God* says are righteous.
 - (2) But, all of God’s commandments are righteousness (Psa 119:172).
 - (3) Therefore, to work righteousness is to do God’s commandments.
 - (4) In other words a person must strive to obey God with all of their might in order to be accepted with God (cf. Heb 5:9).
 - (5) And, that obedience must flow from a heart filled with faith in, and love for, the Lord (Gal 5:6; Jn 14:15).

4. Thus, any person in any nation who fears God and continually strives to obey Him is acceptable to God! Cornelius was saved when he obeyed Peter's command to be baptized in water.
5. Therefore, by inspiration, Peter opened the door to Cornelius, his household, all other Gentiles and any others who would fear and obey almighty God.
6. Surely, at this point Peter fully understood the vision which God had revealed to him earlier!

(2) (10:36-37) PEACE THROUGH JESUS - LORD OF ALL
(3) (10:38) JESUS: APPROVED BY THE FATHER THROUGH
MIRACLES

10:36-38

1. In these verses Peter talked about the message which God had sent to the nation of Israel.
2. Please note the various parts of that message mentioned by Peter:
 - a. "Preaching peace through Jesus Christ."
 - (1) This refers to the peace between man and God, and the resulting inner peace that man can enjoy.
 - (2) That peace was predicted in the Old Testament, and it was connected with the coming of the Messiah (Isa 9:6; 53:5).
 - (3) And that peace was only made possible through the precious blood of the cross of Christ (Col 1:20; Rom 5:1-11).
 - b. "He is Lord of all."
 - (1) Jesus rules over all angelic and human beings as King (cf. Jn 17:2; Mt 28:18; Eph 1:20-23).
 - (2) Compare with 2:36.
 - c. "The word ... proclaimed throughout all Judea ..."
 - (1) That saving message was preached widely (cf. Rom 10:15-18).
 - (2) Thus, there was no excuse for not knowing the message!
 - d. "How God anointed Jesus...with the Holy Spirit and power."
 - (1) The Father set His beloved Son apart to do His work, including miracle-working power through the Holy Spirit.
 - (2) The Father showed His approval of Jesus by the miracles which He was able to work (cf. 2:22).
 - e. "Who went about doing good."
 - (1) What a wonderful commentary on, and summary of, the life of our Lord!
 - (2) He was a man who dedicated His entire life to doing that which the Father called good (cf. Jn 4:34; 6:38).
 - (3) Will not it be wonderful if the same can be said of each of us!
 - f. "And healing all who were oppressed by the devil."
 - (1) Included among the miracles which Jesus worked were the removing of demons from those in whom they lived.
 - (2) As we studied earlier this demonstrated Jesus' power over the devil and his evil forces.

- g. "For God was with Him."
(1) Again, the Father showed His approval of Jesus by the miracles which He was able to work.

(4) (10:39) JESUS CRUCIFIED BY THE JEWS

(5) (10:40-41) JESUS: RAISED BY THE FATHER AND SHOWED OPENLY

10:39-41

1. Peter referred to the fact that the apostles were eyewitnesses of the things which Jesus did openly among the Jews (cf. 1:8; 3:15; 4:33).
2. Yet, in spite of the Father's obvious approval of His Son the Jews killed Jesus in a cruel and cursed way by hanging Him on a tree (crucifying Him).
3. But, the Father reversed that unjustified death sentence by raising Jesus from the dead on the third day.
4. Not only that, but after His resurrection, He showed Jesus openly in front of witnesses including the apostles who ate and drank with Him after that resurrection.
5. Therefore, there was no deception in His glorious resurrection from the dead!

(6) (10:42) JESUS: JUDGE OF ALL

(7) (10:43) JESUS: PREDICTED BY THE PROPHETS - REMISSION THROUGH HIM

10:42-43

1. After His resurrection Jesus commanded the apostles to preach the gospel, including the fact that He was going to be the judge of all of mankind (cf. 17:30-31; 2 Cor 5:10).
2. It was not only the apostles who testified of Jesus.
3. God's prophets in Old Testament times also predicted the coming of Jesus and the forgiveness of sins which He would make possible.
4. To summarize Peter's message to Cornelius please notice the following points:
 - a. (34-35) God is not partial - He accepts all those who fear Him and work righteousness.
 - b. (36-37) Peace through Jesus who is Lord of all.
 - c. (38) *Jesus*: Approved by the Father through miracles.
 - d. (39) *Jesus*: Crucified by the Jews.
 - e. (40-41) *Jesus*: Raised by the Father and shown openly.
 - f. (42) *Jesus*: Judge of all.
 - g. (43) *Jesus*: Predicted by the prophets as bringing forgiveness of sins.

g. (10:44-46) THE HOLY SPIRIT FELL ON CORNELIUS AND HIS HOUSEHOLD

1. In verse 44 the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his household.

- a. Please notice in this verse Luke said the Holy Spirit fell “while Peter was speaking.”
 - b. In 11:15 Luke was more specific in that he quoted Peter as saying, “And as I began to speak the Holy Spirit fell upon them...”
 - c. The Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius at the *very beginning* of Peter’s words to Cornelius and his household.
 - d. Please remember, faith is created in an honest and good heart when a person hears the evidence as presented in God’s word (Rom 10:17; Heb 11:1).
 - e. Since the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his household *before* Peter had a chance to speak words about Jesus Cornelius could not have believed in Jesus at that time.
 - f. Therefore, the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his household *before* they believed in Jesus.
 - g. So, those who claim that Cornelius and his household were saved by this outpouring of the Holy Spirit would have them saved *before* they *believed* in Jesus!
 - h. Surely, no one can accept that as being true!
 - i. When we get to verses 47 and 48 we will see another way we know Cornelius and his household were *not* saved by this outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
2. In verse 45 those Christians with a Jewish background who came with Peter were amazed.
 - a. They were amazed because the Holy Spirit had fallen upon “the Gentiles *also*.”
 - b. That is, the Holy Spirit had fallen upon Cornelius and his household who were Gentiles just like He had fallen earlier upon Peter and the other apostles who had a Jewish background.
 - c. They were amazed because they did not expect such a blessing to be given to the Gentiles.
 - d. Also please notice in this verse Luke referred to the Holy Spirit falling upon Cornelius and his household as their receiving “the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
 - e. It will be important to remember this fact when we study verse 47.
 3. In verse 46 we learn the brethren knew Cornelius and his household had received the Holy Spirit in such a way which enabled them to speak in foreign languages which they had never learned before (“tongues”).

h. (10:47-48) PETER COMMANDED WATER BAPTISM

1. Peter asked those who were with him if any of them could forbid baptism in water for Cornelius and his household.
 - a. Furthermore, Peter made a connection between two facts.
 - (1) The first fact was that Cornelius and his household had received the Holy Spirit just like Peter and the apostles.
 - (2) The second fact was that Cornelius and his household should be considered as candidates for baptism in water.
 - b. But what was the connection between these two facts?

- c. To answer this question please consider the following sequence of events in this chapter:
- (1) Cornelius and his household were Gentiles (10:45; 11:1-4).
 - (2) The gospel had not been preached to the Gentiles before this time.
 - (3) That was because those who had a Jewish background considered it unlawful for a Jew to go to people of other nations (10:28).
 - (4) They considered those of other nations, i.e., Gentiles, as common, unclean or profane and thus unsuitable to receive God's message of salvation.
 - (5) To remove this concept from Peter's mind God revealed a vision to him and told him not to consider any man as common or unclean (10:28,34,35).
 - (6) And, to remove that false concept from the minds of those in the audience that day, and in all future generations, God poured out the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles just as he did on Peter and the other apostles on the day of Pentecost.
 - (7) This outpouring of the Holy Spirit was done in this unique way just this one time to show God's approval of the Gentiles to receive the message of salvation.
 - (8) That is why Peter referred to this outpouring of the Holy Spirit when he asked if anyone could forbid Cornelius and his household being baptized in water.
 - (9) He knew this outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles was God's sign to all men that the Gentiles were eligible to receive His message of salvation, just as the Jews were.
 - (10) And, he knew that those in the audience with a Jewish background that day would make that connection, or draw that conclusion, when he asked that question.
- d. But, is that explanation just my explanation or that of some other man?
- (1) Fortunately, the answer is no - this is not just some man's explanation!
 - (2) It is also *God's* answer given by the inspired apostle Peter in 11:17-18!
- e. On the basis of Peter's question those in the audience that day were convinced that Cornelius and his household should be allowed to be baptized in water.
2. And, in verse 48 Peter *commanded* Cornelius and his household to be baptized in water in the name of the Lord, i.e., by the authority of the Lord.
 3. But why did Peter command them to be baptized in water?
 4. The answer to this question can be obtained by remembering *why* Peter was sent to Cornelius in the first place.
 5. Please recall that Peter was sent to Cornelius to do the following:
 - a. (10:6) To tell him what he *must do!*
 - b. (10:22) To speak words to him.
 - c. (10:32-33) To tell him "all the things *commanded* you by God!"
 - d. (11:14) To tell him "words by which you and all your household will be *saved.*"
 6. Putting all these passages together we conclude that Peter was sent to Cornelius to tell him what he *must do*, i.e., what *God commanded* him to do to be saved from his sins.
 7. But, what did Peter *command* Cornelius and his household to do?

8. He *commanded* them to be baptized in water!
9. Therefore, it was necessary for Cornelius and his household to be *baptized* in water *for the purpose of* being saved from their sins!
10. Obviously then, they were *not* saved *before* they were baptized in water.
11. This was true even though the Holy Spirit fell on them *before* they were baptized in water. They were still not saved.
 - a. Therefore, it is clear the Holy Spirit did *not* fall on them to save them from their sins.
 - (1) Instead, God had a different purpose in pouring the Holy Spirit out on them.
 - (2) Rather than doing that to save them from their sins God did it to show Peter and all of mankind that the Gentiles were eligible to receive the message of salvation.
 - (3) Then, *after* the Holy Spirit was poured out on Cornelius and his household, they *heard* and *obeyed* the message of salvation.
 - (4) And, that message of salvation included the command to be immersed in water to be saved from their sins.
 - b. Thus, the claim of some in the religious world that Cornelius and his household were saved by this outpouring of the Holy Spirit is seen to be absolutely false!
12. When we study this context, the rest of the book of Acts, and the rest of the New Testament it is clear that one major thing about the case of Cornelius was unique and was *never* repeated again.
 - a. We have seen that the Holy Spirit was poured out upon Cornelius and his household.
 - b. And this was done *before* they heard and obeyed the message of salvation.
 - c. However, God had a special purpose in pouring out the Holy Spirit on this Gentile and his household before they were saved.
 - d. That special purpose was to show all people that the Gentiles should receive the message of salvation just as the Israelites did.
 - e. Once God accomplished that purpose He never repeated this event.
 - f. Thus, from that time until this present day, God does *not* pour out His Spirit on people to show they are eligible to receive the message of salvation.
 - g. Once Peter, the other apostles and other Christians, understood the gospel is for *all people* it was no longer necessary for God to show His approval of a group of people as He did in the case of Cornelius.
 - h. Then, they understood and we should understand that it is our *privilege* and *obligation* to preach and teach the gospel to *all nations* and to *every creature* under heaven (Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16)!
13. Next, please notice the following facts which Luke recorded by inspiration concerning this outpouring of the Holy Spirit in this section.
 - a. (44) The *Holy Spirit* fell on those who heard the word of God.
 - b. (45) Luke referred to the Gentiles' reception of this outpouring of the Holy Spirit as their receiving "the *gift* of the Holy Spirit."
 - c. (47) Peter referred to *this* same outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the Gentiles receiving "the Holy Spirit."

- d. From these facts we conclude the “gift of the Holy Spirit” in this context was the Holy Spirit as a gift.
 - e. Thus, when the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his household they received the gift of the Holy Spirit, i.e., the Holy Spirit as a gift from God.
 - f. Additional information on this subject is found in our notes for 2:38 and the related special studies.
14. It is also important to point out before we leave these verses that Peter did not lay his hands on Cornelius and his household to impart miraculous powers to them.
- a. Thus, what happened to Cornelius and his household was different from what happened in chapter 8.
 - b. That is true because in that chapter Peter and John laid their hands on those Samaritan Christians to enable them to work miracles.
 - c. Therefore, since Cornelius and his household did not receive miraculous powers by the laying on of the apostles’ hands this must have been a baptism with the Holy Spirit which they received.
 - d. It was administered from heaven by the Lord Jesus Christ, who was the *only* one who ever administered baptism with the Holy Spirit (Mt 3:11).
 - e. In fact Peter, by the inspiration of God, referred to this as a baptism with the Holy Spirit in 11:15-17.
 - f. As we will study in more detail in that context this was only the second occurrence of baptism with the Holy Spirit, and it was the *last!*
15. Next, please recall in our study of 2:16ff. we pointed out that God promised to pour out of His Spirit on “all flesh.”
- a. We studied how the phrase “all flesh” meant all categories of God’s people.
 - b. Of course, among those categories of God’s people were the Jews and the Gentiles.
 - c. As we saw in chapter 2 God poured out of His Spirit on the apostles, who were of Jewish background.
 - d. Now, in chapter 10, we see God pour out of His Spirit on Cornelius and his household, who were Gentiles.
 - e. Thus, God was dramatically fulfilling His prophecy recorded in Joel chapter 2!
 - f. And, by the end of the first century he had completely fulfilled this prophecy and caused miraculous gifts to cease, vanish, be done away!
16. Finally, before we leave this section of scripture we want to stress a very important point one more time.
- a. There is no doubt that Cornelius and his household were baptized with the Holy Spirit.
 - b. However, even after they were baptized with the Holy Spirit they were still not saved from their sins!
 - c. That is true because they still needed Peter to tell them words whereby they could be saved.
 - d. Peter spoke those words of salvation *after* Cornelius and his household were baptized with the Holy Spirit.
 - e. And when Peter spoke those words of salvation he commanded another baptism, not the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

- f. For Cornelius and his household to be saved from their sins Peter commanded them to be baptized in water!
 - g. As we have seen that is true because baptism in water for the forgiveness of sins is the one baptism which Jesus commanded His followers to perform until the end of time as we know it!
17. Brief review of chapter 10.
- a. (1-8) Instructed by an angel, Cornelius sent for Peter.
 - b. (9-16) Peter saw a vision.
 - c. (17-22) Messengers from Cornelius summoned Peter.
 - d. (23-29) Peter and Cornelius met.
 - e. (30-33) Cornelius told why he sent for Peter.
 - f. (34-43) Peter's message to Cornelius and his household.
 - h. (47-48) Peter commanded water baptism.

i. (11:1-3) SOME IN JERUSALEM CONTENDED WITH PETER BECAUSE HE WENT TO THE GENTILES

1. When Peter returned to Jerusalem those with a Jewish background ("the circumcision") opposed him.
2. They opposed him because he went to Cornelius and his household who were Gentiles ("the uncircumcision").

j. (11:4-17) PETER'S EXPLANATION

- (1) (11:4-10) THE VISION**
- (2) (11:11-12) MESSENGERS FROM CORNELIUS**
- (3) (11:13-14) CORNELIUS TELLS WHY HE SENT FOR PETER**
- (4) 11:15-17) DESCENT OF HOLY SPIRIT AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE**

11:4-17

1. Peter began to explain why he went to Cornelius and his household with the message of salvation.
2. Notice, particularly in this chapter, that Peter explained what happened "*in order from the beginning.*"
3. In other words, Peter was going to give a very precise *sequence* of events beginning with what happened *first*.
4. Since much of what Peter said in his explanation was a repetition of what we studied in chapter 10 we will summarize his explanation by sections of scripture unless there is a new significant fact found in a particular section.
5. In verses 5-10 Peter described the vision which God allowed him to see.
6. In verses 11 and 12 Peter related how Cornelius sent the messengers to Peter to ask him to come to him.
7. In verses 13 and 14 Peter told how Cornelius explained why he had sent for Peter.
 - a. In verse 14 please notice that Cornelius said the angel told him Peter would speak words by which Cornelius and his household would be saved!

8. In verses 15-17 Peter gave the most important part of his explanation. We want to study that part in a little more detail.
 - a. Please notice in verse 15 Peter said that the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles as Peter *began* to speak!
 - (1) Thus, as we noticed earlier, the Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his household *before* he had a chance to develop faith in Christ on the basis of the evidence in God's word.
 - (2) Please see our notes on 10:44-46 for further information on this important fact.
 - b. But, there is another critically important fact revealed in verses 15 and 16!
 - (1) That fact is that Peter said the Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his household "as upon us *at the beginning*."
 - (2) And when that happened Peter remembered Jesus' promise that the apostles would be baptized with the Holy Spirit (cf. Mt 3:11).
 - (3) Clearly then Peter was saying that Cornelius and his household were baptized with the Holy Spirit just like Peter and the other apostles were at the *beginning* of the Lord's church as recorded in chapter 2.
 - (4) But, a great deal of time had passed since the apostles were baptized with the Holy Spirit.
 - (5) If the baptism with the Holy Spirit was occurring as often as some today claim, then why was it necessary for Peter to refer all the way back to the beginning of the church for something with which to compare Cornelius' case?
 - (6) The answer is obvious! Baptism with the Holy Spirit was not occurring frequently!
 - (7) That is why Peter had to go all the way back to the day of Pentecost of chapter two to refer to another case of baptism with the Holy Spirit.
 - (8) Obviously then, there were only two cases of baptism with the Holy Spirit recorded in the New Testament until this time.
 - (9) Those two cases were the apostles in chapter two and Cornelius and his household in chapter ten.
 - (10) And in each of those two cases, God had a very unique purpose for allowing baptism with the Holy Spirit.
 - (a) In the case of the apostles it was to show the world that this new system of faith was from God and to empower the apostles with the ability to reveal and confirm the word of God without error (Jn 14-16).
 - (b) In the case of Cornelius and his household, it was to show the world the Gentiles were also acceptable candidates to receive God's message of salvation (cf. vv. 17-18).
 - (11) Furthermore, we can search the New Testament from one end to the other and never find another case of baptism with the Holy Spirit.
 - (12) That is entirely consistent with a very important fact which we have already seen in our study of Acts.

- (a) The fact is that the one baptism which Jesus commanded His followers to perform until the end of time is baptism in water for the forgiveness of sins!
 - (b) That one baptism is *not* baptism with the Holy Spirit!
 - (c) In fact, baptism with the Holy Spirit was eliminated by almighty God by the time He revealed Ephesians 4:5 in the first century!
- c. In verse 17 Peter asked his brethren with Jewish backgrounds how he could withstand God since God poured out the Holy Spirit on Cornelius and his household just like He had done for the apostles.
- (1) In other words, Peter was saying God had a special purpose in allowing Cornelius and his household to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.
 - (2) That special purpose was to convince Peter and others that God wanted the Gentiles to receive the message of salvation.
 - (3) Remember, those in Jerusalem had accused Peter of doing wrong by visiting Cornelius and his household because they were Gentiles (vv. 1-3).
 - (4) By giving the evidence he did in this chapter Peter had shown very clearly that what he did in going to Cornelius was absolutely right!
 - (5) It was right because God had directed Peter's actions and because He had poured out the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles just as He had on the apostles.
 - (6) Thus, Peter could not have avoided going to Cornelius without withstanding (disobeying, fighting against) almighty God!
 - (7) That is why Peter asked his audience how he could withstand God in the face of all of this evidence.
 - (8) He knew that his audience had honest and good hearts they would have to agree that Peter did what was right by preaching the gospel to the Gentiles!

k. (11:18) THE RESPONSE OF THOSE WHO CONTENDED

1. In this verse we see Peter was successful in convincing his audience that what he did was right because it was God's will!
2. Please notice the response of the audience to his evidence and question:
 - a. "they became silent" - they knew they could not deny that Peter was absolutely right in what he did.
 - b. "they glorified God."
 - (1) They did so because they realized the significance of what had happened.
 - (2) They realized that in this special incident God had shown to all of mankind He wanted the Gentiles to receive the message of salvation, including "repentance to life."
 - (3) And, as we have seen, included in that gospel message is the need for man to repent of past sins (2:38; 3:19).
 - (4) And that repentance is "to life," i.e., it leads to life.
 - (a) That is true because biblical repentance leads to immersion in water to receive the forgiveness of sins (2:38; 3:19).

- (b) And that immersion in water allows one to rise up and walk in newness of life because he is a new creature, born again through his obedience to the word of God (Rom 6:3-4; 2 Cor 5:17; 1 Pet 1:22-23).
 - (c) And if one remains faithful unto death, he will receive eternal life (Rev 2:10).
3. At the risk of being overly repetitious I must stress one very important point again before we leave verses 15-18.
 - a. That point is, it is abundantly clear God had a special purpose in allowing Cornelius and his household to be baptized with the Holy Spirit.
 - b. That purpose was to show His desire for the Gentiles to receive the message of salvation.
 - (1) Peter recognized that special purpose (10:28).
 - (2) Those with Peter on that day recognized that special purpose (10:45-48).
 - (3) Those who contended with Peter in Jerusalem recognized it (11:15-18).
 - (4) And all today should recognize it!
 - c. Remember, it was necessary for God to show His desire in this extraordinary way, never to be repeated again, because the apostles and others had failed to take the gospel to the Gentiles.
 - d. Once God accomplished His purpose of showing that the Gentiles should receive the gospel He never repeated baptism with the Holy Spirit again!
 - e. Furthermore, as we have seen, God has chosen to never repeat that baptism with the Holy Spirit again since it is not the one baptism which He commands!

I. (11:19-21) WORK OF THOSE SCATTERED IN ANTIOCH

1. Those who were scattered out from Jerusalem just after Stephen's death traveled to Phoenecia, Cyprus and Antioch.
 - a. Remember it was said of these people that they went everywhere preaching the word of God (8:4).
 - b. In verse 19 we are told they preached the word to the Jews only.
2. However, in verse 20 we learn that some of those men came to Antioch and preached the Lord Jesus to Greeks (ASV), (i.e., to the Gentiles).
3. The Lord blessed the work of these men.
4. In addition, many people believed the gospel and turned to the Lord.
5. As we have seen in our earlier studies this turning to the Lord after belief includes repentance and obeying the Lord including being immersed in water for the forgiveness of sins (2:38; 3:19).

m. (11:22-24) JERUSALEM SENT BARNABAS TO ANTIOCH

1. When Barnabas came to Antioch he was pleased with what he saw among those new Christians.
2. Furthermore, he encouraged them to purpose in their hearts to continue with the Lord, i.e., to remain faithful to Him no matter what happened.
3. Notice the beautiful description of Barnabas in verse 24:

- a. "He was a good man."
 - (1) What a compliment!
 - (2) It is obvious Barnabas was like Jesus in that he went about doing good (10:38)!
- b. "Full of the Holy Spirit."
 - (1) Please see our notes on 6:2-4 for a detailed explanation of the meaning of this phrase.
 - (2) In our study of those verses we learned this phrase was often used to refer to a Christian who allowed the Holy Spirit to exert great influence upon them through the sword of the Spirit, the word of God.
- c. "Full of faith."
 - (1) Barnabas had a tremendous amount of faith in the Lord!
- 4. As a result of the preaching, teaching and living of people like Barnabas the church grew ("a great many people were added to the Lord").
- 5. Incidentally, it is obvious that those who were "added to the Lord" did the same thing to be added to the Lord as those in chapter 2 who were saved and whom the Lord "added to the church." They obviously did the following:
 - a. Heard the gospel and gladly received that message of salvation (2:14-36,41).
 - b. Believed that gospel and were sorry for their sins (2:37).
 - c. Repented of their sins and were immersed for the forgiveness of those sins (2:38).

n. (11:25-26) BARNABAS BROUGHT SAUL FROM TARSUS TO ANTIOCH)

- 1. Notice that during the entire year that Barnabas and Saul were in Antioch, they assembled with the church (Barnabas had introduced Paul to this church).
 - a. They loved to gather together with fellow Christians to worship God and to spend time with each other!
- 2. Not only that, they also taught the gospel to many people. They were evangelistic!
- 3. In verse 26 we see two ways followers of the Lord were described then and should be described now.
 - a. First, they were described as "disciples."
 - (1) A disciple is a learner, a pupil, a follower of another person.
 - (2) Not only does a disciple learn about another person, but he also strives to imitate and obey that other person.
 - (3) Obviously then, the disciples of Jesus are those who diligently study His teachings and life and strive to imitate and obey Him!
 - b. Second, these disciples at Antioch were the first ones to be called "Christians."
 - (1) Of course this beautiful name indicates one who is a believer in and a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (2) It is clear from the scriptures that this special, beautiful name was one given by God.
 - (a) Compare with Isaiah 62:2.
- 4. Also, notice that these early disciples did *not* have a name before or after Christian.

- a. That is, they were not denomination “X” or “Y” Christians!
- b. They were just Christians!
- c. That is what the Lord wants each of us to be today!

**o. (11:27-30) FAMINE PREDICTED / ANTIOCH SENT RELIEF TO
JERUSALEM BY BARNABAS AND SAUL**

1. Agabus the prophet came from Jerusalem to Antioch. He prophesied a great famine.
2. When the Christians at Antioch heard about the famine they made up their minds to send relief to the brethren in Judea.
 - a. Please notice each of those sending relief sent it “according to his ability.”
 - b. As we noticed in chapter 2 this tells us each individual Christian had (and has) the right to retain private property!
 - c. Obviously, some had enough private property to be able to send relief and some others did not.
 - d. In any case, this is another outpouring of love from one group of Christians to another group in the early church.
 - e. It is also significant to keep in mind that those sending the relief were of Gentile background (those of Antioch) while those receiving it were of Jewish background (those of Judea).
 - f. Thus, the love of true Christians goes across barriers such as national origin, races, language, color of skin, etc!
3. Those in Antioch sent Barnabas and Saul with the relief to the elders in Jerusalem.
4. Incidentally, this is the first mention of the office of elders in the book of Acts.
5. We will have more to say about that when we study chapter 14.
6. Brief review of 10:1-11:30 - Door open to Gentiles.
 - a. (10:1-8) Instructed by an angel, Cornelius sent for Peter.
 - b. (10:9-16) Peter saw a vision.
 - c. (10:17-22) Messengers from Cornelius summoned Peter.
 - d. (10:23-29) Peter and Cornelius met.
 - e. (10:30-33) Cornelius told why he sent for Peter.
 - f. (10:34-43) Peter’s message to Cornelius and his household.
 - g. (10:44-46) Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his household.
 - h. (10:47-48) Peter commanded water baptism.
 - i. (11:1-3) Some in Jerusalem contended with Peter because he went to the Gentiles.
 - j. (11:4-17) Peter’s explanation.
 - k. (11:18) The response of those who contended.
 - l. (11:19-21) Work of those scattered (8:4) in Antioch.
 - m. (11:22-24) Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch.
 - n. (11:25-26) Barnabas brought Saul from Tarsus to Antioch.
 - o. (11:27-30) Famine predicted / Antioch sent relief to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Saul.
7. Brief overview of 12:1-25 - Persecution from civil government.

- a. (1-2) Herod killed James.
- b. (3-5) Herod imprisoned Peter / The church prayed constantly for Peter.
- c. (6-11) God miraculously (by means of an angel) released Peter from prison.
- d. (12-17) Peter came to the house of Mary where they were praying.
- e. (18-19) Peter's escape discovered.
- f. (20-23) Herod failed to give God the glory and he died.
- g. (24-25) The word grew / Saul and Barnabas returned to Antioch.

2. (12) PERSECUTION FROM CIVIL GOVERNMENT

a. (12:1-2) HEROD KILLED JAMES

- 1. King Herod harassed the church including beheading the apostle James with a sword.
- 2. This is the first recorded death of an apostle.
- 3. Previously, persecution of Christians had come primarily from Jewish religious officials (Pharisees, Sadducees, Scribes, etc.).
- 4. With the death of James we see the beginning of persecution from civil government officials.

b. (12:3-5) HEROD IMPRISONED PETER / THE CHURCH PRAYED CONSTANTLY FOR PETER

- 1. When Herod saw that his killing James pleased the Jews he also captured Peter and put him in prison.
- 2. It is obvious that he also intended to kill Peter, but he delayed his plan until after the Jewish religious holy days of Unleavened Bread and Passover.
- 3. Incidentally, the older version of the King James Bible translated the word "Passover" in verse 4 as "Easter."
 - a. That is an unfortunate mistranslation of the word!
 - b. This word is found 28 other times in the New Testament and is translated accurately as "Passover" in every one of those places!
 - c. Thus, there is overwhelming evidence that versions like the ASV and NKJV are more accurate in this verse by translating the word as "Passover" rather than "Easter!"
- 4. Also, in the older KJV and the ASV, it is said Peter was delivered to four "quaternions" of soldiers.
 - a. A quaternion was a squad of four soldiers.
 - b. Thus, Peter was delivered to the custody of four squads of four soldiers each, for a total of sixteen soldiers.
- 5. In the midst of these difficult conditions we are provided with a beautiful look at these early Christians in verse 5.
 - a. The entire church was in constant prayer to God on the behalf of their beloved brother Peter!
 - (1) Please think about the danger that Peter, these Christians and the church were in.

- (2) James had been killed and Peter was in prison apparently awaiting execution.
- (3) They could have tried to use violence to rescue Peter and to protect themselves.
- (4) However, they did not!
- (5) Instead, they turned to almighty God in prayer!
- b. As we have seen several times already in our study of the book of Acts these people believed in prayer (1 Thess 5:17 and Jas 5:16)!

c. (12:6-11) GOD MIRACULOUSLY RELEASED PETER FROM PRISON

12:6-8

- 1. Just before Herod was planning to execute Peter the Lord sent an angel to deliver him.
 - a. This is one of many places which show us that God answers prayer when we meet His conditions and it is in accordance with His will (1 Pet 3:11-12; 1 Jn 3:22; 5:14)!
- 2. Notice in verse 6 how securely they had Peter bound!
- 3. Yet, the angel of the Lord released Peter and told him to come with him.

12:9-11

- 1. Peter followed the angel, but did not know whether what was happening was real or a vision.
- 2. In verse 10 the outer gate opened by itself and Peter and the angel were free!
- 3. As they went down a street the angel departed from Peter.
- 4. Then Peter realized this was real and that God (by the angel) had delivered him from Herod and the Jews.

d. (12:12-17) PETER CAME TO THE HOUSE OF MARY WHERE THEY WERE PRAYING

- 1. Peter came to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark.
 - a. We will meet with John Mark again in this chapter.
 - b. However, notice there were many Christians gathered together in Mary's house and that they were praying to God!
- 2. When Peter knocked at the gate the young lady who answered was so glad to see him she ran to tell the others and forgot to open the gate.
- 3. In verse 15 the occupants of the house were so shocked they thought the young lady was surely mistaken.
 - a. In fact, they were so sure Peter was dead that they thought the one at the gate was Peter's angel, not Peter!
- 4. In the meantime Peter kept knocking until they opened the gate.
- 5. When they did open the gate they were astonished to see Peter was there.
- 6. Then, in verse 17 Peter told them how the Lord had released him from prison.

7. He also told those Christians to go tell James and the brethren what had happened.
 - a. Since Herod had killed James the apostle earlier the James mentioned in this verse was another James.
 - b. It appears he was James, the Lord's brother, who was a leader in the Jerusalem church (cf. 15:13; Gal 1:19).
8. After giving those instructions Peter went to another place!

e. (12:18-19) PETER'S ESCAPE DISCOVERED

1. In the morning there was quite a disturbance when the soldiers discovered Peter was gone.
2. When Herod was unsuccessful in locating Peter he commanded the guards be killed.
3. After that Herod moved from Judea to Caesarea.

f. (12:20-23) HEROD FAILED TO GIVE GOD THE GLORY AND DIED

1. For some reason Herod was upset with the people of Tyre and Sidon, and those people came to Herod to plead for peace.
2. In response, Herod, dressed in his luxurious, royal clothing, spoke to the people of Tyre and Sidon.
3. The people spoke out saying that Herod was a god, and not man.
4. It is obvious Herod knew these people were wrong in saying he was a god, yet he did not do anything to correct them.
5. In that failure Herod failed to glorify God and was guilty of false pride.
6. And, since Herod did not glorify the one true and living God the Lord sent an angel to strike Herod.
7. As a result Herod was eaten by worms and died a horrible death.
8. Surely, each of us can learn a good lesson from the remarkably graphic death of Herod.
 - a. The lesson is that those who are guilty of false pride and failing to give God glory will eventually be destroyed by God, if they do not repent (cf. Prov 16:18; 1 Pet 5:5-6).
 - b. May each one of us strive to be humble and to give God the glory which He so richly deserves!

g. (12:24-25) THE WORD GREW / SAUL AND BARNABAS RETURNED TO ANTIOCH

1. In spite of the death of James and the imprisonment of Peter the church still grew as the wonderful word of God was spread!
 - a. As we have seen this is a recurring theme in the book of Acts.
 - b. That is, the church is persecuted, yet it grows as the persecuted Christians stay busy preaching, teaching and living God's word as well as praying to the Father.

2. In verse 25 the scene is suddenly shifted back to Barnabas and Saul.
 - a. After they had taken the relief from Antioch to Jerusalem they returned to Antioch.
 - b. When they returned they took John Mark with them.
 3. Brief review of 12:1-25 - Persecution from civil government.
 - a. (1-2) Herod killed James.
 - b. (3-5) Herod imprisoned Peter / The church prayed constantly for Peter.
 - c. (6-11) God miraculously released Peter from prison.
 - d. (12-17) Peter came to the house of Mary where they were praying.
 - e. (18-19) Peter's escape discovered.
 - f. (20-23) Herod failed to give God the glory and he died.
 - g. (24-25) The word grew / Saul and Barnabas returned to Antioch.
 4. This completes the second major portion of our outline:
 - I. (1-7) The church established in Jerusalem.
 - II. (8-12) The church scattered to Judea and Samaria.
 - III. (13-28) The church spread to the uttermost parts.
 - A. (13-14) First evangelistic journey (Saul and Barnabas).
 - B. (15-18:22) Second evangelistic journey (Paul and Silas).
 - C. (18:23-21:14) Third evangelistic journey (Paul).
 - D. (21:15-28:21) Paul in the hands of enemies.
- A. (13,14) First evangelistic journey (Saul and Barnabas).
 1. (13:1-3) Call of Barnabas and Saul.
 2. (13:4-14:28) First evangelistic journey (Saul and Barnabas).
 - a. (13:4-13) At Cyprus.
 - b. (13:14-50) At Antioch in Pisidia.
 - c. (13:51-14:5) At Iconium.
 - d. (14:6-20) At Lystra.
 - e. (14:21-25) Preaching on the return trip.
 - f. (14:26-28) Paul and Barnabas report to the brethren at Antioch.

III. (13-18) THE CHURCH SPREAD TO THE UTTERMOST PARTS

A. (13-14) FIRST EVANGELISTIC JOURNEY / SAUL AND BARNABAS

1. (13:1-3) CALL OF BARNABAS AND SAUL

1. In these verses the scene shifts back to the church in Antioch. This is the starting point of each of Paul's missionary journeys.
2. Please recall the following facts about this group of Christians:
 - a. (11:19) Those who were scattered after Stephen's death came to Antioch and preached the word to the Jews.
 - b. (11:20) Some of those men also preached Jesus to the Gentiles.
 - c. (11:21) The result was that many believed in and obeyed the Lord.
 - d. (11:22-24) Jerusalem sent Barnabas to encourage and work in the church.

- e. (11:25) Barnabas brought Saul from Tarsus to Antioch.
 - f. (11:26) Barnabas and Saul worked together for a year and taught many people.
 - g. (11:26) The disciples were called “Christians” first at Antioch.
 - h. (11:27-30) These fine Christians sent relief to their brethren in Judea who were suffering from a famine.
3. With that background we learn in verses 1 and 2 that Barnabas and Saul were among several Christians who were serving the Lord as prophets and teachers.
 4. The Holy Spirit made it known He wanted Barnabas and Saul set apart for a special work.
 5. They fasted and prayed, laid hands on Barnabas and Saul and sent them on their way.
 - a. As we studied previously this laying on of hands was to set Barnabas and Saul apart and send them on their way for their new work.
 - b. It was not to impart the ability to work miracles.
 - c. That kind of laying on of hands could only be done by the apostles (cf. 8:14-19; 19:6; 2 Tim 1:6).
 6. Before we leave these verses several other points need to be made.
 - a. First, notice in verses 2 and 3 that these early Christians “fasted.”
 - (1) To fast is to voluntarily deny oneself of food for a period of time.
 - (2) Jesus said His disciples would fast after He left this earth (Mt 9:15).
 - (3) Fasting is a way of humbling ourselves before almighty God (Ezra 8:21).
 - (4) It is also a way of showing repentance, as we saw in Saul’s case (9:9).
 - (5) Praying and fasting were closely associated with each other (cf. 1 Cor 7:5).
 - (6) The early Christians seemed to fast and pray during very important times, such as this one of sending fellow Christians off on new works and the appointing of elders (cf. 14:23).
 - (7) Although we are not *commanded* to fast we invite you to study these scriptures to determine whether we should *voluntarily* fast more!
 - (8) Those who choose to voluntarily fast should remember our Lord’s *warning* and His *promise* found in Matthew 6:16-18!
 - b. Second, it is essential we recognize the difference between the way in which Saul and Barnabas were called and set apart in the first century and the way we are today.
 - (1) As we see in verse 2 Saul and Barnabas were called and set apart for their special work directly by the Holy Spirit.
 - (2) However, we must remember this was during the age of miracles in the first century.
 - (3) In contrast, God calls people today by the gospel which was revealed by the Holy Spirit in the first century (2 Thess 2:14).
 - (4) After we obey that gospel fellow Christians *teach us* that we should go and *teach others* that glorious gospel (Mt 28:19-20).
 - (5) The Holy Spirit does not call and set people apart for special works directly anymore!
 - (6) Instead, He does it through the sword of the Spirit, the word of God!

2. (13:4-14:28) FIRST EVANGELISTIC JOURNEY

a. (13:4-13) AT CYPRUS

(1) (13:4-5) PREACHING IN THE SYNAGOGUES / JOHN MARK ASSISTS

13:4-5

1. As directed by the Holy Spirit Barnabas and Saul sailed to Cyprus which you will remember was the home of Barnabas (cf. 4:36).
2. They preached God's word in the synagogues where the people would have been familiar with the Old Testament scriptures.
3. In addition, Barnabas and Saul had John Mark with them to provide assistance.

(2) (13:6-8) ELYMAS (BAR-JESUS) CONTRADICTS SAUL AND BARNABUS

13:6-8

1. As they traveled on the island of Cyprus they found a Jewish false prophet whose name was Bar-Jesus or Elymas.
2. Elymas was teaching a Roman government official by the name of Sergius Paulus, who is described as an intelligent man.
3. Sergius Paulus also sent for Barnabas and Saul so he could hear the word of God.
4. However, Elymas opposed Barnabas and Saul and tried to turn Sergius Paulus away from the gospel of Christ.
5. Incidentally, it is interesting to notice the different ways the gospel is described in this context.
6. For example, in verses 5-12 the gospel is designated in the following four ways:
 - a. Verse 5 – "the word of God."
 - b. Verse 8 – "the faith."
 - c. Verse 10 – "the straight ways of the Lord."
 - d. Verse 12 – "the teaching of the Lord."

(3) (13:9-12) SAUL (PAUL) STRIKES ELYMAS BLIND / SERGIUS PAULUS BELIEVES

13-12

1. In verse 9 we learn for the first time that Saul was also called Paul.
2. Paul looked at Elymas very intently and began to speak to him.
3. We get a good indication of God's attitude toward false teachers when we analyze four things in Paul's description of Elymas.
 - a. "Full of all deceit and all fraud."
 - (1) Deceit and fraud are characteristics and tactics of false teachers.
 - (2) Compare with 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Ephesians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 2:11.
 - b. "You son of the devil."

- (1) It ought to be a sobering thought for us to realize almighty God describes false teachers as children of the devil!
- (2) Compare with John 8:44.
- c. "You enemy of all righteousness."
 - (1) Satan and his false teachers are violently opposed to all that is righteous, including God's commandments, which are righteousness (Psa 119:172).
 - (2) Indeed, Satan is our mortal enemy (1 Pet 5:8)!
- d. "Perverting the straight ways of the Lord."
 - (1) To pervert is to distort, twist or change into something of a different character.
 - (2) False teachers distort and twist the scriptures and change their meaning to something different from what God intended (2 Pet 3:16).
 - (3) And, according to that verse, when they do so they do it to their own destruction as well as those who hear and believe them (2 Pet 3:17)!
- e. When we consider these things about false teachers it is no wonder that God promises a horrible, eternal punishment for them (cf. Gal 1:8-9; 2 Pet 2:1-18).
- 4. In verse 11 Paul told Elymas that God ("the hand of the Lord") was going to strike him blind temporarily ("for a time").
 - a. This is the only miracle worked by an apostle which caused an injury to a person.
 - b. Why did God allow this miracle to be worked in a way that Elymas was blinded? Please consider the following facts:
 - (1) Sergius Paulus was listening to the false teaching of Elymas.
 - (2) Sergius Paulus also wanted to hear the truth of God's word from Paul and Barnabas.
 - (3) But, Elymas opposed Paul and Barnabas and tried to turn Sergius Paulus away from the faith.
 - (4) Thus, Sergius Paulus was hearing two different messages from two persuasive sources.
 - (5) The most convincing way God could show the truth of the words spoken by His messengers and the error of Elymas was to allow Paul to work this miracle.
 - (6) When Sergius Paulus saw Elymas struck blind and helpless, just as Paul was saying he would be blind, he knew God was against Elymas and for Paul and Barnabas.
- 5. In verse 12 we learn Sergius Paulus believed the gospel on the basis of the following two things:
 - a. The miracle which had been worked in blinding Elymas, and
 - b. The astonishing teaching of the Lord.

(4) (13:13) PAUL TO PERGA / JOHN MARK RETURNS TO JERUSALEM

13:13

1. Paul and those with him left from Paphos on the island of Cyprus and went to Perga in the region of Pamphylia.
2. Luke also tells us that John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem.
3. Although Luke does not tell us why John Mark left we will learn later that Paul felt John Mark did wrong because he had deserted the work he originally volunteered to do with him and Barnabas (15:38).

b. (13:14-50) AT ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA

(1) (13:14-43) PAUL'S MESSAGE ON THE FIRST SABBATH

(a) (13:14-22) ISRAEL FROM EGYPT TO DAVID

13:14-15

1. Next, they left Perga and went to Antioch in the region of Pisidia.
2. In Antioch they went into the synagogue first, and the rulers of the synagogue offered them an opportunity to speak to the people.
3. It is clear that Paul and Barnabas did not go into the synagogue because they were practicing Jews - they were now Christians, not Jews!
4. Then why did they go into the synagogue? Several reasons can be given:
 - a. (16) There were many Jews who feared God there.
 - b. (43) There were many religious-minded proselytes there.
 - c. (15) These people read and were familiar with the Old Testament scriptures, which contained many prophecies of the Messiah.

13:16-22

1. Paul began speaking by addressing his audience in a favorable way as, "Men of Israel and you who fear God" (v. 16).
2. Then he exhorted them to *listen* to what he had to say as he briefly reviewed the history of Israel.
3. In doing this Paul was gaining their attention and affection by appealing to something of which they were proud - their history, including the fact that God took care of them.
4. Although we do not have time to study this history in detail we refer you to the courses on the Pentateuch and Old Testament History offered by the World Video Bible School.
5. In verse 22 Paul introduced king David as a man after God's heart (as seen in the fact that he obeyed God).
6. Of course, the people of Israel respected David as God's prophet and king and one through whom the Messiah would come.

(b) (13:23) JESUS: SAVIOR FROM DAVID'S SEED

(c) (13:24-25) JESUS: JOHN PREACHED HIS COMING

13:23-25

1. In verse 23 Paul boldly claimed, by inspiration, that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah, David's descendant, whom the Father raised up to be the Savior!
2. In doing this Paul was referring to Old Testament prophecies such as Isaiah 11:1 and Psalm 132:11.
 - a. He knew that the Jews accepted such prophecies as authority because they knew they were God's inspired predictions of the Messiah.
 - b. As we saw in our detailed study of similar prophecies in chapters 2 and 3, Peter showed by inspiration that Jesus was the Christ because He fulfilled every detail of these amazing predictions precisely and accurately.
 - c. Now, in this chapter, Paul was using the same technique to prove that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the long-awaited Savior!
3. And in verses 24 and 25 Paul added the testimony of John the Immerser that Jesus was the Savior for whom Israel was looking.
 - a. The people of Israel also looked up to John as a great prophet and man of God.
 - b. Thus, in showing John said that he was not the Messiah, but Jesus was, Paul was adding more evidence and authority to his claim that Jesus was the Savior!
 - c. And this evidence and authority was so powerful that every person with an honest and good heart would accept it - both then and now!

(d) (13:26-29) JESUS: ISRAEL KILLED HIM AS PREDICTED BY THE PROPHETS

13:26-29

1. Notice in verse 26 the beautiful way in which Paul described the message he was preaching to his audience - "the word of this salvation!"
2. In these verses Paul also briefly described Israel's rejection of Jesus, His death and His burial.
3. Paul pointed out the guilt of Israel in the following ways:
 - a. They did not know Jesus as the Christ even though He had been predicted so clearly by their own prophets whose words were read every Sabbath day.
 - b. They fulfilled those prophecies by condemning Jesus.
 - c. Even though they could not find any guilt in Jesus they asked Pilate to put Him to death.

(e) (13:30-37) JESUS: RAISED BY THE FATHER AS PREDICTED BY THE PROPHETS

13:30-33

1. In these verses Paul talked about Jesus' glorious resurrection from the dead.
2. Like Peter in chapters 2 and 3 Paul pointed out that the Father reversed the unjustified sentence of death against Jesus by raising Him from the dead.
3. Furthermore, in verse 31, Paul said Jesus was seen for many days after His resurrection by many witnesses thereby proving that His resurrection was not a deception.
4. In verses 32 and 33 Paul declared some good news ("glad tidings"), i.e., the gospel!

5. That good news was connected with the “promise” which God made to the fathers of the nation of Israel.
 - a. That promise was that God would bless all families of the earth through the seed of Abraham (Gen 12:1-3; 22:18).
 - b. We know from our earlier studies that Jesus the Christ was the seed who fulfilled that promise (Gal 3:16,19).
 - c. And, we learned that the blessing would come to those who would allow the love of the Father, and His Son Jesus, to motivate them to turn away from their sins (cf. our study of 3:25-26).
6. In verse 33 Paul stated God had fulfilled that promise by raising up Jesus the Christ from the dead.
7. Then, at the end of verse 33, Paul quoted from Psalm 2:7 to prove his point. “You are My Son, today I have begotten you.”
 - a. In other words, Paul said, by inspiration, that Psalm 2:7 was a prediction of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead as the Messiah, the Christ.
 - b. In that Psalm the Father referred to a day when He would complete His open approval of Jesus as His only begotten Son.
 - c. That day was the day when He raised Jesus from the dead to eternal life.
 - d. Compare with Romans 1:4.
 - e. Compare with our study of 2:30-36.
 - f. But, what connection did Jesus’ resurrection have with the good news, the blessing of all families of the earth, the salvation of mankind? Consider the following scriptures which we studied before:
 - (1) Romans 4:25.
 - (2) Hebrews 2:17-18.
 - (3) 1 Corinthians 15:54-57.

13:34-37

1. In verses 34 and 35 Paul continued to quote scripture to prove God predicted He would raise Jesus, the Messiah from the dead and not allow His body to decay (“no more to return to corruption”).
 - a. In verse 34 he referred to Isaiah 55:3 and 2 Samuel 7:15-16 concerning “the sure mercies of David.”
 - b. By inspiration he connected that phrase to Jesus’ resurrection.
 - c. And in verse 35 Paul quoted Psalm 16:10 which was a clear reference to Jesus’ resurrection from the dead as the Messiah (cf. our study of chapter 2).
2. In verse 36 Paul showed that Psalm 16:8-11 could not have applied to David because his body had decayed in the grave.
 - a. You will remember that Peter made this same point by inspiration in 2:29-31.
3. Then, in verse 37, Paul made a sharp contrast between David and Jesus.
 - a. That contrast was that David’s body *did* decay in the grave, but the Father raised Jesus from the dead and His body *did not* decay.
4. Of course, his point in making that contrast was to show that Psalm 16:10 was not a prediction about David.

5. Instead, it was a remarkable prophecy of Jesus' resurrection from the dead as proof that He was the Messiah!
6. Thus, beginning with verse 23, Paul had briefly, but conclusively, proved that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior.
7. Notice the overwhelming power of Paul's argument that Jesus was the Messiah. That power is shown by his referring to the following as authority:
 - a. (23) Jesus was the prophesied seed of David.
 - b. (24-25) The prophet and great man of God, John the Immerser, acknowledged Jesus as the Christ.
 - c. (27-29) The prophets predicted Jesus as the Messiah - even His rejection and death at the hand of the Israelites.
 - d. (30) The Father reversed this unjustified sentence of death.
 - e. (31) After His glorious resurrection, Jesus was seen by many witnesses.
 - f. (32-33) Jesus was the fulfillment of the Father's promise to the fathers of Israel.
 - g. (33) That promise was fulfilled in Jesus' resurrection from the dead.
 - h. (33) That resurrection was predicted in Psalm 2:7.
 - i. (34) It was prophesied by the great prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 55:3.
 - j. (35) It was predicted by David in Psalm 16:10.
8. Can you imagine the impact of this incredible collection of evidence on the hearts of those in the audience that day?!
 - a. Surely, those with honest and good hearts that day were convinced that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior!
 - b. Just as surely, you and I should use this kind of overwhelming evidence from God's word to convince others to obey and follow the Lord Jesus Christ!

(f) (13:38-43) FORGIVENESS AND JUSTIFICATION THROUGH HIM

13:38-39

1. Now that Paul had proved conclusively that Jesus was the Messiah and thus was the One who must be obeyed he gave some other good news to his audience.
2. That good news was the message that they could receive forgiveness of sins through this Man Jesus!
3. Indeed, he said all who believed in Him could be justified from all things which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses.
 - a. To be justified means to be declared innocent; acquitted of the guilt of sin; to be seen as righteous in God's sight.
 - b. In other words, through belief in Jesus as the Christ, it was possible then, and it is possible today, for all men to be forgiven of sins and declared innocent of past guilt.
4. What a wonderful message for those people to hear that day!
 - a. What a wonderful thought for us who are Christians to rejoice in every day (cf. Psa 51:12)!
 - b. What a thrill to be able to teach those wonderful words of salvation to others!

5. Of course, we must keep in mind our previous studies on the kind of faith which saves or justifies.
 - a. That faith is *not* “faith only” or “faith alone!”
 - b. Instead, it is the faith which obeys God out of a heart filled with love for Him and His beloved Son who died for us!

13:40-41

1. Apparently, Paul detected that some in the audience were beginning to rebel against his message of forgiveness of sins through Jesus.
2. Therefore, he warned them by quoting from the prophet Habakkuk (Hab 1:5).
 - a. He warned them not to despise and disbelieve the mighty work which the Father had done (i.e., making salvation available through His beloved Son, Jesus).
 - b. That work of salvation through Christ had been openly declared to them by Paul and other inspired spokesmen.
 - c. And, God said if they chose to despise and disbelieve that message of salvation they would “perish!”

13:42-43

1. When Paul had finished speaking the Jews went outside of the synagogue.
2. In addition, the Gentiles begged Paul and Barnabas to preach to them again on the next Sabbath.
3. Furthermore, many of the Jews and religious-minded proselytes followed after Paul and Barnabas who persuaded them to continue in God’s grace.

(2) (13:44-50) PAUL’S MESSAGE ON THE SECOND SABBATH

(a) (13:44-45) ALMOST THE WHOLE CITY GATHERS / JEWS BLASPHEME

(b) (13:48-50) PAUL AND BARNABAS TURN TO THE GENTILES

13:44-47

1. The preaching of Paul and Barnabas was so powerful that almost the entire city gathered together to hear God’s word on the next Sabbath.
2. However, the Jews were filled with envy and opposed God’s spokesmen.
3. With great boldness, Paul and Barnabas rebuked the jealous Jews by making the following five points:
 - a. It was necessary to preach the gospel to the Jews first (cf. our study of 3:26).
 - b. However, they rejected Jesus and His gospel.
 - c. In doing that, they judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life!
 - d. As a result Paul and Barnabas were going to preach to the Gentiles.
 - e. In doing so Paul and Barnabas were obeying God’s command.
 - (1) To support this claim, Paul and Barnabas referred to Isaiah 42:6 and 49:6.

- (2) In those passages God predicted a time when His people would be a light to the Gentiles and when salvation would be available to the ends of the earth.

13:48-50

1. The Gentiles were so glad to hear this message of salvation that they believed it and glorified the word of the Lord.
2. In verse 49 we see the beautiful statement that the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region.
3. However, the envious Jews stirred up persecution against Paul and Barnabas and had them removed from that region.
4. Before we leave these verses we must discuss an interesting phrase in verse 48.
5. In that verse, it was said “as many as were appointed (ordained/KJV) to eternal life believed.”
6. Many in the religious world use this verse to teach that before the world began, God arbitrarily and unconditionally chose or appointed some people to receive eternal life and others to receive eternal damnation.
7. This is part of the system of doctrine known as “Calvinism.”
8. While we do not have time to study this doctrine we do want to refer you to the World Video Bible School course on denominational doctrines where it is studied in more detail.
9. However, even without a detailed study of Calvinism we can know that this verse does not teach that God arbitrarily and unconditionally chose those Gentiles that day, or any other people any other time, to receive eternal life!
10. We can know that from a study of the context!
11. First, let us notice the immediate context.
 - a. In verse 46 Paul rebuked the Jews and said that they were guilty of rejecting the word of God.
 - (1) In other words the Jews were responsible for their own guilt in rejecting the word of God.
 - (2) That is true because the Jews had a choice to accept or to reject the word of the Lord (cf. 1 Kgs 18:21; Josh 24:15).
 - (3) When they chose on their own to reject the word of God *they* “judged themselves unworthy of eternal life.”
 - (4) Thus, we can see clearly that God did not arbitrarily and unconditionally choose those Jews for eternal punishment.
 - (5) Instead, *they* made the choice themselves and God, through Paul, held them responsible for their choice.
 - b. In just the same manner the Gentiles in verse 48 had a choice to make when they heard the word of God.
 - (1) They also could have chosen to reject it.
 - (2) Fortunately, they were glad to hear that word and chose to believe it, and glorify it.
 - (3) They even begged to hear more of the word of God!

- (4) Thus, in contrast with the Jews in verse 46, these Gentiles accepted God's word rather than rejecting it!
 - (5) And, as we have seen in earlier studies accepting God's word includes obeying it (cf. Heb 5:9).
 - (6) When the Gentiles made that choice they were appointed to eternal life as long as they remained faithful to the Lord unto death (Rev 2:10)!
 - c. From these two verses in this context it can be seen clearly that God did not arbitrarily and unconditionally choose the Gentiles to receive eternal life.
 - (1) Rather, the Gentiles freely chose to accept God's word.
 - (2) The result of their obedience was eternal life with the condition that they remained faithful unto death.
 - d. On the other hand, the Jews described in verse 46 freely chose to reject God's word.
 - (1) The result of their disobedience was eternal damnation unless they repented and obeyed the Lord before they died.
12. If this understanding of verses 46 and 48 is correct then it must be consistent with the context of the rest of the Bible.
- a. We have already seen extensively in our study of the context of the book of Acts that God has given man the freedom to choose whether to accept or reject His word (cf. 2:40-41).
 - b. That same truth is also found in the context of the rest of the New Testament in such passages as Philippians 2:12; 1 Timothy 4:16; Matthew 11:28-30; and Revelation 22:17.
 - c. Therefore, the fact that in verses 46 and 48 God teaches man's freedom of choice and not Calvinism is entirely consistent with the rest of the Bible.
 - d. Consequently, the Calvinist position that verse 48 teaches God's arbitrary and unconditional choosing of some for everlasting life is absolutely false!

c. (13:51-14:5) AT ICONIUM

(1) (13:51-14:1) SPEAKING IN THE SYNAGOGUE

13:51-52

1. In response to being expelled from the region around Antioch Paul and Barnabas "shook off the dust from their feet against them" and came to Iconium.
 - a. According to Mark 6:11 the Lord had told His disciples to shake the dust off their feet against those who would not hear or receive them.
 - b. This was a testimony against those who would not hear God's word and a severe warning of the judgment to come!
 - c. According to Luke 10:16 those who rejected the Lord Jesus' messengers rejected Jesus and the Father who sent Him.
 - d. Obviously then, to reject God's messengers who faithfully speak His word is a serious mistake with eternal consequences!
2. In spite of the persecution and the removal of the apostles the Christians at Antioch were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

- a. This tells us the Christian's joy does not depend upon external circumstances or environment.
- b. The faithful Christian can rejoice in the Lord always and in all places and all circumstances (Phil 4:4)!
- c. Part of the Christian's joy comes from the fact he has the Holy Spirit living in him (in such a way that we are *not* able to work miracles today).

(2) (14:2-5) SPEAKING BOLDLY IN THE LORD, DESPITE OPPOSITION

14:1-5

1. In Iconium Paul and Barnabas spoke so boldly that a great multitude of Jews and Greeks (Gentiles) believed the gospel (v. 1).
 - a. It is critically important we emphasize the way in which belief was created in the hearts of those Jews and Greeks.
 - b. Although the Holy Spirit was working miraculously in those days He did *not* create faith in those people by miraculously working on their hearts!
 - c. Rather, He did it through the sword of the Spirit, the word of God!
 - d. That is, He did it *through the words* which Paul and Barnabas spoke - ("so spoke that a great multitude... believed")!
 - e. Compare with our study of 2:37.
 - f. Compare with Romans 10:17 and John 20:30-31.
 - g. Just as certainly the Holy Spirit does not create faith in people's hearts today by some mysterious, miraculous operation on their heart!
 - h. He still uses the sword of the Spirit, the word of God to accomplish this!
2. In the midst of this success the unbelieving Jews stayed busy poisoning the minds of the Gentiles against the brethren!
3. Despite that opposition Paul and Barnabas stayed there a long time and spoke boldly in the Lord.
4. In addition, the Lord confirmed that they were speaking by His authority by allowing them to work miracles.
5. As a result of the preaching of the apostles and the opposition of the Jews the city was divided between those who favored the apostles and those who favored the Jews.
 - a. The preaching of the gospel, even when it is done with the right spirit and attitude, often divides even friends and families (cf. Mt 10:34-42).
 - b. Also, it is interesting to notice that both Paul and Barnabas were referred to as apostles.
 - c. We know Paul was one of those few men chosen directly by the Lord Jesus to serve Him as an apostle.
 - d. But, what about Barnabas?
 - e. We certainly do not have any record of Barnabas being chosen by the Lord like the original twelve, Matthias and Paul.
 - f. Then how could Barnabas legitimately be called an apostle?

- g. The key to answering this question is to recognize that the word translated “apostle” (ἀποστόλοις) in the New Testament was used in several different ways.
- h. The word literally means “one who is sent forth, one who is sent out.”
 - (1) This usually includes the idea that one is sent out with a special purpose or meaning.
- i. With this meaning in mind, let us notice several ways in which the word is used in the New Testament.
 - (1) (Lk 6:13) To refer to those specially chosen by the Lord to do the special work of apostles (including the twelve and Matthias).
 - (2) (1 Cor 9:1; 15:8-11) To refer to Paul as one born out of due time, but who saw the Lord Jesus.
 - (3) The word was also used in a general sense to refer to those who were sent out by a church on a special mission of some kind. Consider the following examples:
 - (a) (2 Cor 8:23) The word translated “messengers” in the phrase, “messengers of the churches” is the same word translated “apostles” in other places.
 - (b) (Phil 2:25) Epaphroditus, as the messenger of the Philippians (again, same word as translated “apostle” elsewhere).
 - (c) (Rom 16:6-7) Andronicus and Junias.
 - (d) (2 Cor 11:13) Even used of false apostles.
 - (4) I believe it is in this general sense the word “apostle” is used to refer to Paul and Barnabas in this verse.
 - (a) That is, they were special messengers sent out by the church in Antioch to preach the gospel of Christ (cf. 13:2-3).
- 6. Finally, in verse 5, a violent attempt was made by some Gentiles and Jews to abuse and stone Paul and Barnabas.

d. (14:6-20) AT LYSTRA

(1) (14:6-7) PAUL AND BARNABAS LEAVE ICONIUM FOR LYSTRA AND DERBE

14:6-7

- 1. When they learned of the attempt to stone them Paul and Barnabas went to Lystra and Derbe which were cities in the province of Lycaonia.
- 2. Naturally, when they went there they preached the glorious gospel of Christ!

(2) (14:8-10) PAUL HEALS A LAME MAN

14:8-10

- 1. In Lystra Paul healed a crippled man who had never been able to walk.
- 2. Notice again that this miraculous healing was effective immediately (“leaped and walked”).

3. Before we study the next verses we need to look a little more closely at verses 9 and 10.
4. In those verses it was said Paul saw that this man had faith to be healed and then Paul healed him.
 - a. Some in the religious world who claim to work miracles today abuse this statement.
 - b. They abuse it by saying a person must have faith in order to be healed.
 - c. When no miracle is worked, the alleged miracle-worker claims the miracle was not worked because the person did not have faith, or his faith was too weak.
 - d. As we saw in our study of 3:9-11 it was not necessary for a person to have faith in order to be healed!
 - (1) Clearly, the lame man in that chapter did not believe in Jesus, Peter, or John.
 - (2) In fact, he was expecting some material gift from the apostles.
 - (3) Yet, in spite of his lack of faith, Peter and John healed him by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - e. In our study of these verses, we also referred to Jesus' raising of Lazarus from the dead (Jn 11).
 - (1) Since Lazarus was dead, he obviously did not have faith to be raised from the dead!
 - (2) Yet, the Lord Jesus raised him from the dead.
 - f. From these two examples, it is abundantly clear that people did not have to have faith in order to be healed when miracles were being worked in the first century.
5. A natural question which arises is, "Then why is it mentioned that this crippled man had faith to be healed?"
 - a. One possible answer is that this man's faith was mentioned to show that Paul's healing of him was a reward for the man's great faith!
 - b. The reason that answer is given is it appears that was one of Jesus' motives in healing the centurion's paralyzed servant (cf. Mt 8:5-13).

(3) (14:11-13) PEOPLE THINK PAUL AND BARNABAS ARE GODS

14:11-13

1. When the people of Lystra saw the miracle they thought Barnabas and Paul were the Greek gods Zeus and Mercury respectively.
2. In fact, they even wanted to offer sacrifices to Barnabas and Paul!

(4) (14:14-18) PAUL AND BARNABAS RESTRAIN THE PEOPLE

14:14-18

1. When Paul and Barnabas saw the people wanted to worship them they were horrified and tried to convince them not to do that.
2. Paul and Barnabas said the following things to try to persuade the people not to worship them:

- a. (15) Paul and Barnabas were just men who had the same nature as those in Lystra, i.e., they were not gods.
 - b. (15) Their message to the people of Lystra was that they should turn from the worship of such vain things (as idols and men) and turn to the one true and living God (cf. 1 Thess 1:9).
 - c. (15) They described that one true and living God as the creator of heaven, earth, the sea and all things in them (cf. Rom 1:18-25).
 - d. (16) God allowed men the freedom to choose how they lived and whom they worshiped.
 - e. (17) However, God left plenty of evidence that He was the one true and living God whom men were (and are) obligated to worship!
 - f. (17) That evidence included the following:
 - (1) He did good.
 - (2) He gave men rain from heaven and fruitful seasons.
 - (3) With such wonderful blessings He filled men's hearts with food and gladness!
3. Even with these powerful arguments Paul and Barnabas were just barely able to keep the multitudes from sacrificing to them!

(5) (14:19-20) PAUL STONED

14:19-20

1. Unfortunately Jews from Iconium and Antioch persuaded the multitudes to stone Paul.
2. They dragged him out of the city and left him there believing he was dead.
3. However, when his fellow Christians came around, Paul miraculously rose up.
4. And the next day he and Barnabas left for Derbe, obviously determined to serve the Lord and preach His soul-saving word no matter what happened to them!
5. Please pause a moment to think about what had been done to Paul and Barnabas on this trip.
 - a. (13:45-50) The Jews bitterly opposed them, persecuted them and had them removed from Antioch in Pisidia.
 - b. (14:2-5) In Iconium the Jews poisoned the minds of the Gentiles against them and made a violent attempt to abuse and stone them.
 - c. (14:19) In Lystra the Jews persuaded the multitudes to stone Paul and kill him.
6. From such accounts we can see Paul and Barnabas loved the Lord dearly, were totally dedicated to Him and His glorious cause, and had counted the cost of being one of His followers (cf. Lk 14:25-35)!
 - a. Compare with 2 Corinthians 11:23-33.
 - b. Compare with Galatians 6:14,17.
 - c. Remember the Lord's promise to Paul in 9:15-16!

e. (14:21-25) PREACHING ON THE RETURN TRIP

1. Paul and Barnabas preached the gospel in Derbe and many were converted as a result.
2. Then Paul and Barnabas decided to revisit the cities they visited earlier, including Lystra, Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia.
3. As they did this it is mentioned they did three things as follows:
 - a. Strengthened the souls of the disciples (i.e, the Christians).
 - b. Exhorted them to continue in the faith, the gospel of Christ, Christianity.
 - (1) Would this exhortation be necessary if one could never fall from grace?
 - c. Told them (and us) it is only through many tribulations that one can enter God's kingdom.
4. This concept of entering the kingdom through many tribulations is an interesting one!
 - a. We saw in our study of chapter 2 that the terms "kingdom" and "church" are often used to refer to the same institution (e.g., Mt 16:18-19).
 - b. Thus, to enter the kingdom is to enter the church.
 - c. And, we have learned that one enters the kingdom (church) when he hears the gospel, believes it, repents of his sins, confesses Jesus with his mouth and is immersed into Christ thus receiving the forgiveness of sins.
 - d. But, those to whom Paul and Barnabas were speaking had already entered the kingdom (church).
 - (1) They did that when they obeyed the gospel thus becoming Christians (cf. 2:38,41,47).
 - e. How do we know they were Christians?
 - (1) (22) Luke, by the inspiration of God, referred to them as "the disciples" which we have seen is a term that refers to Christians.
 - (2) (22) Paul and Barnabas exhorted these people to "continue in the faith" which we have seen means the system of faith, the gospel, representing Christianity.
 - f. But, if these people had already entered the kingdom (church) through their faithful obedience to the gospel why did Paul and Barnabas tell them that it was only through many tribulations that one could enter the kingdom?
 - g. I believe the answer is found in recognizing that in the New Testament the word "kingdom" is used to refer to the church in two senses, as follows:
 - (1) The Lord's church *before* the judgment day.
 - (a) We studied that use of the word in chapter 2.
 - (b) Colossians 1:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; Hebrews 12:28; Revelation 1:9.
 - (2) The second sense in which the word "kingdom" is used is to refer to the Lord's church *after* the judgment day.
 - (a) 1 Corinthians 15:23-24.
 - (b) It is that sense of the kingdom (church) which will only be entered after a person has experienced many tribulations during a life of loving, diligent service to the Lord.
 - (c) Compare with 2 Peter 1:8-12.
5. In verse 23 we learn Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in every church.

6. Notice there was a plurality (i.e., more than one) of elders appointed in every church.
 - a. This fact is also clear in passages such as Philippians 1:1 and 1 Peter 5:1, where a plurality of elders is specified.
 - b. Thus, the denominational practice of having one man preside over a local congregation, or several congregations, is clearly unscriptural and, therefore, sinful in God's sight!
 - c. For additional information about the eldership please investigate the World Video Bible School courses on *Fundamentals of the Faith*, and *The New Testament Church*.
7. After they appointed elders Paul and Barnabas traveled to the province of Pamphylia.
8. In that region they preached the word in the cities of Perga and Attalia.

f. (14:26-28) PAUL AND BARNABAS REPORTED TO THE BRETHREN AT ANTIOCH

1. Remember the church at Antioch had sent Paul and Barnabas on this evangelistic journey (cf. 13:2-3).
2. Now they return to report to their brethren in Antioch.
3. Two special things are noted here about their report to the brethren:
 - a. They gave God the credit and glory for what was done ("all that *God* had done").
 - b. They recognized that through their work God had opened a great door of faith to the Gentiles.
4. After their report Paul and Barnabas stayed with their fellow brethren in Antioch for a long time.
5. Brief review of 13 and 14 - First evangelistic journey.
 1. (13:1-3) Call of Barnabas and Saul.
 2. (13:4-14:28) First evangelistic journey.
 - a. (13:4-13) At Cyprus.
 - (1) (13:4-5) Preaching in the synagogues / John Mark assisted.
 - (2) (13:6-8) Elymas (Bar-Jesus) contradicted Saul and Barnabas.
 - (3) (13:9-12) Saul (Paul) struck Elymas blind / Sergius Paulus believed.
 - (4) (13:13) Paul to Perga / John Mark returned to Jerusalem.
 - b. (13:14-50) At Antioch.
 - (1) (13:14-43) Paul's message on the first Sabbath.
 - (a) (13:14-22) Israel from Egypt to David.
 - (b) (13:23) *Jesus*: Savior from David's seed.
 - (c) (13:24-25) *Jesus*: John preached His coming.
 - (d) (13:26-29) *Jesus*: Israel killed Him, as predicted by the prophets.
 - (e) (13:30-37) *Jesus*: Raised by the Father, as predicted by the prophets.
 - (f) (13:38-43) *Jesus*: Forgiveness and justification through Him.
 - (2) (13:44-50) Paul's message on the second Sabbath.

- (a) 13:44-45) Almost the whole city gathered / Jews blasphemed Paul.
 - (b) 13:48-50) Paul and Barnabas turned to the Gentiles.
 - c. (13:51-14:5) At Iconium.
 - (1) (13:51-14:1) Speaking in the synagogue.
 - (2) (14:2-5) Speaking boldly in the Lord, despite opposition.
 - d. (14:6-20) At Lystra.
 - (1) (14:6-7) Paul and Barnabas left Iconium for Lystra and Derbe.
 - (2) (14:8-10) Paul healed a lame man.
 - (3) (14:11-13) People thought Paul and Barnabas were gods.
 - (4) (14:14-18) Paul and Barnabas restrained the people.
 - (5) (14:19-20) Paul stoned.
 - e. (14:21-25) Preaching on the return trip.
 - f. (14:26-28) Paul and Barnabas reported to the brethren at Antioch.
6. Brief overview of 15-18:22 - Second evangelistic journey.
- 1. (15:1-35) The meeting in Jerusalem.
 - 2. (15:36-18:22) Second evangelistic journey.
 - a. (15:36-38) Contention over John Mark.
 - b. (15:39-41) Paul/Silas and Barnabas/John Mark go separately.
 - c. (16:1-5) At Derbe/Lystra - Timothy circumcised.
 - d. (16:6-10) At Troas - Macedonian call.
 - e. (16:11-40) At Philippi.
 - f. (17:1-9) At Thessalonica.
 - g. (17:10-15) At Berea.
 - h. (17:16-34) At Athens.
 - i. (18:1-17) At Corinth.
 - j. (18:18-22) Paul returned to Antioch.

B. (15-18:22) SECOND EVANGELISTIC JOURNEY (PAUL AND SILAS)

1. (15:1-35) THE MEETING IN JERUSALEM

a. (15:1-5) PAUL AND BARNABAS TAKE THE CIRCUMCISION / LAW OF MOSES / SALVATION QUESTION TO JERUSALEM

1. In these verses a serious problem arose from within the church.
2. Certain men came down from Judea to Antioch and stirred up trouble among the Christians there.
3. More specifically, they were teaching it was necessary for those Christians with Gentile backgrounds to be circumcised according to the Law of Moses.
4. And, they were teaching it was necessary for them to do that in order to be saved!
5. Furthermore, we will learn in verses 5 and 24 these false teachers were also teaching it was necessary for these Christians to keep the Law of Moses!
6. In verse 2 we see Paul and Barnabas confronted these false teachers and the decision was made to go to Jerusalem to discuss this matter with the apostles and elders.

7. On their way to Jerusalem Paul and Barnabas reported the conversion of the Gentiles.
 - a. This report of the salvation of precious souls caused joy in the hearts of those who heard it!
8. Upon their arrival in Jerusalem Paul and Barnabas were well-received by the church, including the apostles and elders.
9. However, some Christians who had been Pharisees before their conversion (“the Pharisees *who believed*”) stated that it was necessary for those Gentile Christians to do two things:
 - a. Be circumcised, and
 - b. Keep the Law of Moses.
10. Apparently, this opposition by those who had previously been Pharisees caused this meeting to be adjourned for a period of time.
11. Along those lines God, through Paul, revealed additional information on this incident in Galatians 2:1-10.
12. In that passage the following interesting details are provided which shed light on what happened.
 - a. (2:4) Paul said, by inspiration, that those who were teaching the need to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses were “false brethren!”
 - (1) They came into the church in a deceitful way.
 - (2) They did that to act as spies to investigate the liberty which Christians have.
 - (3) And they did it to bring Christians into “bondage,” i.e., back into the slavery of the old Law of Moses (cf. Gal 5:1-4).
 - b. (2:2) Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem because of a revelation from God.
 - c. (2:1) They took Titus with them.
 - d. (2:2,9) Apparently after the first meeting of the church, Paul and Barnabas met privately with James, Peter and John who were leaders among the apostles.
 - e. (2:6-9) After their private discussion, James, Peter and John gave the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas (i.e., agreed with their teaching and work).

b. (15:6-11) PETER SPEAKS

1. After the private meeting the apostles and elders came back together to discuss this urgent matter.
2. After a great deal of disputing Peter rose up to speak to the church.
3. Peter made the following points:
 - a. (7) God chose Peter to speak the gospel to the Gentiles so they could believe. Notice where the Gentiles’ faith came from:
 - (1) *Not* from a miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit on their heart!
 - (2) But, rather, by the *hearing of the word* of the gospel preached by Peter (cf. Rom 10:17)!

- b. (8) God showed that the Gentiles should receive the gospel when He poured out the Holy Spirit upon them just like He did on the apostles (cf. 11:17-18).
- c. (9) God did not make any distinction between those with Jewish backgrounds and those with Gentile backgrounds.
- d. (9) He showed there was no distinction by allowing the hearts of individuals in both groups to be purified by faith (cf. 1 Pet 1:22).
 - (1) Please notice their hearts were *not* purified by their baptism with the Holy Spirit, but by a living, active, obedient faith!
- e. (10) He asked why place such a burden (“yoke on the neck”) on the Gentile Christians (i.e., the burden of circumcision and their trying to keep the Law of Moses perfectly in order to be saved).
 - (1) Peter pointed out that neither the ancestors of those with Jewish backgrounds, nor his generation, were able to bear that burden.
 - (2) Furthermore, he said if they forced that burden on the Gentiles when God had not done so they would “test” God, that is, they would provoke God to wrath.
- f. (11) He concluded those people with Jewish backgrounds *and* those with Gentile backgrounds would be saved by the grace of Jesus the Christ (cf. Eph 2:4-10) -
 - (1) *Not* by keeping the Law of Moses!

c. (15:12) PAUL AND BARNABAS SPEAK

1. The multitude listened as Paul and Barnabas explained how God allowed them to work many miracles among the Gentiles.
2. As we have studied this was a confirmation that they were speaking by God’s authority (cf. Mk 16:20).

d. (15:13-14) JAMES AGREED WITH PETER

1. James confirmed Peter’s statement that God visited the Gentiles (i.e., through Peter’s preaching of the word of God).
2. And, the purpose was for God to “take out of them a people for His name.”
 - a. This is a clear reference to God making some of them members of His spiritual family through His mercy and grace and their faithful obedience including their baptism into Christ (Gal 3:26-27).

e. (15:15-17) JAMES QUOTED A PROPHET AS SUPPORT

1. To this audience with a Jewish background there would be no better proof for James’ statement in verses 13 and 14 than to give support from the Old Testament scriptures.
2. And that is exactly what James did. He quoted from Amos 9:11-12!
3. And, James said the prophets predicted what Peter had just said, i.e., that God would bring the Gentiles into His spiritual family.

4. More specifically, in that Old Testament prophecy, God predicted a time when He would rebuild the ruins of David's tabernacle.
 - a. That would be done so the rest of mankind, i.e., the Gentiles could seek the Lord.
 - b. That would include each one of the Gentiles who would be called by God's name.
 - c. And, it was God who predicted these remarkable things, not men ("says the Lord")!
5. Now, James was saying, by inspiration, that Amos' prophecy was fulfilled in Peter's going to preach the gospel to the Gentiles so they could believe and become God's children!
6. Once again we ask you to notice how accurately and precisely God fulfilled this prophecy in His Son Jesus the Christ, and in His church!
 - a. (13:23-24) Jesus was the descendant of David (whom God promised to raise up as the Savior).
 - b. (2:30-36) Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior Whom the Father:
 - (1) Raised up from the dead, as prophesied by David.
 - (2) Exalted to His own right hand, as predicted by David.
 - (3) Placed on *David's throne* in heaven to rule as the King over His kingdom, the church.
 - (4) Made both Lord and Christ.
 - c. (10:1-4) Cornelius was a religious-minded Gentile who was truly seeking the Lord, but still needed to hear *words* from God to be commanded what to do to be saved.
 - d. (10:9-16) God showed Peter a vision to teach him that the Gentiles should receive the message of salvation.
 - e. (10:44-46) God poured out His Spirit on the Gentiles just like the Jews, as a sign that He wanted them to receive the message of salvation.
 - f. (10:47-48) After that Peter commanded Cornelius and his household to be baptized in water to be saved.
 - g. (11:17-18) Thus, the Gentiles had been allowed to repent and receive new spiritual life.
 - h. (Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:26-27) Indeed, they were baptized to walk in newness of life, as children of God, members of His spiritual family!
 - i. (11:26) As a result, those Gentile disciples were called by God's name, Christian (first time in Antioch)!
 - j. (Eph 2:11-22) Indeed, those of Gentile background were made one with those of Jewish background through the blood of Jesus on the cross!
 - (1) And this took place in the one body, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ!
 - k. (1 Cor 3:16-17) That church is the temple of God!
7. With all of these amazing scriptures in mind can there be any doubt that Amos' prophecy was fulfilled in the first century in Jesus and His precious bride, the church!
 - a. What amazing, faith-producing, soul-strengthening power there is in His word!

f. (15:18-21) JAMES DREW A CONCLUSION

1. In verse 18 James pointed out that from eternity God knew everything He would do (even amazing prophecies like Amos 9:11-12)!
 - a. His point in saying that was to show that what happened concerning God's acceptance of the Gentiles was no accident!
 - b. Instead, it was planned by almighty God and could not successfully be denied or resisted by feeble men!
2. James' final conclusion concerning those Gentiles who were turning to God was not to trouble them except to inform them to avoid the following four things:
 - a. Things polluted by idols, i.e., things associated with the worship of idols, like various kinds of meats.
 - (1) Paul made it clear that there was nothing sinful in eating meat which had been offered to idols (1 Cor 8).
 - (2) However, some Christians with Jewish backgrounds at the time thought it was sinful to eat such meat (1 Cor 8:7).
 - (3) Thus, this was a barrier endangering fellowship between these two groups in this infant stage of the church.
 - (4) Therefore, the Christian thing to do was to avoid eating such meat if it would cause a brother to stumble (1 Cor 8:9-13).
 - (5) Thus, James was saying that Christian love on the part of those Gentile converts should motivate them to avoid such things associated with the worship of idols.
 - (6) Indeed, it was "necessary" to do that (v. 28)!
 - b. The second thing which they were to avoid was fornication.
 - c. The third was the eating of things strangled (because the blood had not been drained from the animal).
 - d. And, the fourth was the eating of blood.
3. Clearly, other things were sinful and forbidden by God, whether one was of Gentile or Jewish background.
4. This is true because sin is defined by God as violation of His law, not just these four things (1 Jn 3:4)!
5. Then why were these four things specified by James?
6. It appears these four things were specified because they were sins which were very common among the Gentiles.
 - a. In fact, these were things which most Gentiles did not think were sinful, thus, this special emphasis was needed.
7. In addition, they were a very large barrier to social and religious unity among the Christians with Jewish and Gentile backgrounds.
8. Also, according to verse 21, these things were among those which people with Jewish backgrounds heard every Sabbath.
9. However, these things were not just forbidden by the Law of Moses.
 - a. For example, even Noah was told about the sinfulness of eating blood and that was *before* God gave the Law through Moses (Gen 9:3-4).

- b. Also, before the Law of Moses was given, God created the institution of marriage as the only place for legitimate physical intimacy between a man and a woman, thus making fornication sinful (Gen 2).
- 10. Finally, we need to discuss one final point concerning those four restrictions and that is to determine whether these restrictions still apply today.
- 11. Let us look at those four restrictions:
 - a. First, things polluted by idols.
 - (1) There is no doubt that any form of idolatry is forbidden by God (cf. Gal 5:20).
 - (2) However, the eating of meats offered to idols is acceptable as long as it does not wound the conscience of a beloved brother or sister in Christ (see our earlier discussion on 1 Cor 8).
 - b. Second, fornication.
 - (1) Fornication is another work of the flesh which is sinful and will keep us from heaven if we do not repent of it (Gal 5:19-21)!
 - c. Third, eating things strangled and blood.
 - (1) As we pointed out earlier this restriction was imposed by God from the beginning, even before the Law of Moses (cf. Gen 9:3-4).
 - (2) Thus, it is apparent this is one of those *eternal* principles, such as the forbidding of murder, which God has always had in effect (cf. Gen 4:8-15).
 - (3) In addition, there is nothing in the New Testament which takes away this restriction imposed in these verses.
 - (4) Therefore, we conclude that God's restriction against eating things strangled and blood is still in effect today!

g. (15:22-29) PAUL, BARNABAS, JUDAS AND SILAS SENT WITH A LETTER TO GENTILE CHRISTIANS

1. The apostles, elders and the whole church decided to send two leading men, Judas and Silas with Paul and Barnabas.
2. Their purpose was to send a letter to Gentile Christians in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia.
3. In that letter they made the following major points:
 - a. They had heard about those who came from Jerusalem and troubled the souls of those Gentile Christians by saying they had to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses.
 - b. The apostles had *not* given these men any commandment to teach these things.
 - c. They praised Paul and Barnabas as those whom they loved and as those who risked their lives for Jesus.
 - d. They said Judas and Silas were being sent to speak and personally verify the things which were written in the letter.
 - e. It was the united decision of the apostles, elders, church *and* the Holy Spirit that only the four restrictions be emphasized.
 - f. Please notice that in their reference to the Holy Spirit the apostles and elders were saying they were speaking by the inspiration of God!

h. (15:30-35) THEY REPORT TO THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH

1. When the letter was read to those Gentile Christians in Antioch it brought rejoicing and encouragement.
2. In addition, Judas and Silas exhorted and strengthened the brethren with *words!*
3. Judas went back to the apostles bringing greetings from the brethren in Antioch.
4. However, Silas stayed with Paul and Barnabas to teach and preach God's word along with many others.
5. Before we go on to study the second evangelistic journey we need to briefly discuss the way some in the religious world have abused this meeting in Jerusalem.
6. Many religious groups go to this chapter, and the meeting in Jerusalem, for authority to establish centralized, religious governmental bodies which have power over all congregations of a denomination.
 - a. Examples would include such organizations as councils, synods, conventions, etc.
7. However, such organizations above the level of the local congregation are *not* authorized in this chapter or *anywhere else* in the New Testament!
8. Please notice the following reasons why this is true:
 - a. First, this was an appeal by *one* congregation to the leaders of another congregation concerning a question or dispute.
 - (1) Thus, this was *not* a gathering of "bishops" or delegates from all, or even most of the churches in a region as is done in the religious world today.
 - (2) In addition, there was no election of delegates or voting on the question which was discussed as is done today!
 - b. Second, this was an appeal to inspired men not to uninspired men as are found in centralized religious bodies today.
 - (1) (Lk 22:30) Christ had authorized His apostles to sit on thrones ruling spiritual Israel, the church.
 - (2) (Jn 14-16) He had promised and given them the Holy Spirit in a miraculous measure to guide them into all of the word of God.
 - (3) (2 Pet 1:21) They spoke as the Holy Spirit moved them.
 - (4) (Acts 15:28) They specifically referred to the guidance of the Holy Spirit in making and announcing their decision in the letter.
 - c. As we have seen in our earlier studies *no person* living today has this miraculous ability from God.
 - d. Instead, through those apostles and other inspired men He has recorded His guidance and wisdom in the New Testament of His beloved Son Jesus.
 - e. That is the divine source to which we turn to answer all questions and settle all disputes!
 - f. And nowhere in that divine volume can we find authority for any religious organization above the level of the local congregation!
 - g. Thus, all councils, synods, conventions, conferences, college of cardinals and all similar religious governmental bodies above the level of the local congregation are sinful additions to God's word!

2. (15:36-18:22) SECOND EVANGELISTIC JOURNEY

a. (15:36-38) CONTENTION OVER JOHN MARK

1. Paul proposed to Barnabas that they revisit their beloved brethren who were converted during the first journey to see how they were doing.
 - a. By way of practical application this shows us the importance of loving and continuing to work with new Christians after their conversion.
 - b. Compare with Matthew 28:20.
2. Barnabas was determined to take John Mark with them as they had on the first journey.
 - a. Please recall on that journey John Mark had left Paul and Barnabas at Perga and returned to Jerusalem (cf. 13:13).
3. Paul was just as determined to not take John Mark because he left them earlier and did not go to the work with them.

b. (15:39-41) PAUL/SILAS AND BARNABAS/MARK GO SEPARATELY

1. The serious disagreement between Paul and Barnabas was so sharp that they decided to separate and go in different directions.
 - a. Barnabas took John Mark and sailed to the island of Cyprus.
 - b. And Paul chose Silas.
 - (1) You will recall Silas had previously been sent to Antioch by the apostles to deliver the letter to the Gentile Christians with Paul, Barnabas and Judas (cf. vv. 22,32,34).
 - c. Paul and Silas went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia and strengthened the churches.
2. There are several other important points which need to be stressed in our study of this interesting incident in the history of the early church.
 - a. First, it is essential to notice that Paul and Barnabas did not disagree about matters of doctrine.
 - (1) Instead, they disagreed over a matter of judgment or expediency, i.e., whether to take John Mark with them.
 - (2) This is important to recognize because when brethren disagree about matters of doctrine, and those who are doctrinally wrong refuse to repent after being patiently worked with, the Lord commands very specific actions (cf. Rom 16:17-18; 2 Jn 9-11; Titus 3:10-11; 1 Tim 6:3-5).
 - b. Second, if brethren have the right love for the Lord, His work, and lost souls it is possible for good to come from sharp disagreements over matters of judgment or expediency.
 - (1) For example, in this case, four men went in two different directions spreading the gospel.
 - (2) Obviously, they could contact more people quicker this way than three men going to the same place.

- c. Third, even though there are disagreements over matters of judgment brethren should still love each other and be willing to work together for the Lord in the future.
 - (1) In this case Paul later referred to Barnabas in an approving way (1 Cor 9:6).
 - (2) And he did the same in referring to John Mark as a fellow worker, a comfort to Paul and useful for ministry (Col 4:10-11; 2 Tim 4:11; Phile 24).

c. (16:1-5) AT DERBE / LYSTRA - TIMOTHY CIRCUMCISED

1. Paul and Silas went back to Derbe, then to Lystra where Paul and Barnabas preached on the first journey.
2. In Lystra they found a young Christian by the name of Timothy.
3. It is apparent Paul had taught Timothy the gospel during his first trip to this area and that Timothy had obeyed the gospel (cf. 1 Tim 1:2).
4. Luke gives us the following facts about Timothy in these verses:
 - a. He was a “disciple,” i.e., a Christian, a child of God.
 - b. His mother was a Christian who was of Jewish background (“Jewish woman who believed”).
 - c. His father was a Gentile (“Greek”).
 - d. Timothy had a good reputation among the brethren in that area (“well spoken of”).
 - e. Paul wanted to take Timothy with him on the journey.
 - f. Paul circumcised him.
 - g. He did that because of the Jews in the area.
5. Some have claimed Paul was inconsistent in the way he treated Titus and Timothy regarding circumcision.
 - a. When Paul and Barnabas took Titus with them to the meeting in Jerusalem, Paul absolutely refused to allow Titus to be forced to be circumcised (cf. Gal 2:1-5).
 - b. Yet, in this case, Paul personally circumcised Timothy.
6. The truth is, Paul was not inconsistent at all in the way he treated Titus and Timothy regarding circumcision!
 - a. When Paul brought Titus to Jerusalem, some were claiming the Gentile Christians had to be circumcised in order to be saved (15:1)!
 - (1) Paul and Barnabas vigorously disagreed with these false teachers and brought the matter to Jerusalem.
 - (2) If Paul would have allowed Titus to be forced to be circumcised he would have contradicted the action which he and Barnabas had just taken in resisting this false teaching.
 - (3) In other words, Paul would have been indirectly agreeing with the false teachers that it was essential to be circumcised to be saved.
 - (4) That is why Paul absolutely refused to allow Titus to be forced to be circumcised.
 - b. On the other hand, Timothy’s case was quite different.

- (1) As we have seen, Paul wanted Timothy to go with him to preach the gospel.
 - (2) But, Paul knew that since Timothy's mother was of Jewish background and his father was a Gentile, it would be a stumbling block to those with Jewish backgrounds if Timothy was not circumcised.
 - (3) With this in mind, Paul circumcised Timothy so he would not be a stumbling block.
 - (4) So, Timothy was circumcised to remove a stumbling block which would have hindered his effectiveness in preaching the gospel, not because he needed to do so in order to be saved!
- c. With those facts in mind, we can clearly see Paul was not inconsistent in the way he treated Titus and Timothy regarding circumcision!

d. (16:6-10) AT TROAS - MACEDONIAN CALL

1. After Paul and Silas preached in the regions of Phrygia and Galatia the Holy Spirit forbade them to preach any more in Asia.
2. Thus, they went up to the region of Mysia and tried to go into the region of Bythinia, but the Holy Spirit would not allow them to go.
3. Therefore, they came to Troas where Paul received a vision in the night.
4. In the vision a Macedonian man pleaded with Paul to come over to Macedonia to help the people in that region.
5. Paul and those with him concluded that through this vision the Lord had called them to preach the gospel to those in Macedonia.
6. Please notice that in verse 10 Luke said, "We sought to go to Macedonia..."
 - a. As we noticed in our study of the background material this is a clear indication that Luke joined Paul and his group here at Troas.

e. (16:11-40) AT PHILIPPI

(1) (16:11-15) CONVERSION OF LYDIA

1. Sailing from Troas they went to Samothrace, Neapolis and then to Philippi which was the major city in that part of Macedonia.
2. In Philippi they went to the place where prayers were usually offered, and they preached the word to some women who met there.
3. One of those women was Lydia, who is described as one who worshiped God.
 - a. Thus, Lydia was obviously a very religious-minded person!
4. In verse 14 we learn the Lord opened Lydia's heart (i.e., her mind) to heed or obey the things spoken by Paul.
 - a. Some in the religious world severely abuse this passage by saying the Lord opened Lydia's mind by some direct, miraculous, mysterious operation of the Holy Spirit on Lydia's mind.
 - b. But, we have already seen in several earlier studies the Holy Spirit did not work *directly* on people's minds, even in the first century when miracles were being worked.

- c. Instead, He worked on people's minds *indirectly* through His instrument, the sword of the Spirit, the word of God (cf. Eph 6:17 and our study of 2:37).
- d. And that is exactly how the Lord opened Lydia's mind in this case. He used His word as delivered by His spokesman, Paul!
- e. There are two ways we can know the Lord used His word to open Lydia's mind.
 - (1) First, from the context of this passage.
 - (a) (13) Lydia was accustomed to praying to God, i.e., she was a person who chose to have an honest and good heart and was seeking the Lord.
 - (b) (14) She was a person who was used to worshipping God, i.e., she was a reverent, religious person.
 - (c) (13) Paul spoke to Lydia and the other women who were gathered for prayer.
 - (d) (14) Lydia heard the words spoken by Paul.
 - (e) (15) After hearing those words, Lydia took heed to or obeyed them, by being baptized.
 - (f) Thus, from this context, we draw the conclusion that the Lord opened Lydia's mind through the word of God spoken by Paul!
 - (2) Second, from the context of the rest of the Bible.
 - (a) Psalm 19:7-8.
 - (b) Psalm 119:104-105.
 - (c) Psalm 119:130.
 - (d) From these verses, we see the Lord uses the sword of the Spirit, the word of God to:
 - 1. Convert the soul.
 - 2. Make uneducated people wise.
 - 3. Enlighten the eyes.
 - 4. Give understanding to His people.
 - 5. Act as a lamp and a light to enlighten our way through life.
 - 6. To enlighten and give understanding to His people.
 - 7. This is certainly consistent with what happened to Lydia that day!
 - a. As she listened to God's powerful word, her mind was made wise, enlightened, received understanding and was converted.
 - b. Thus, the belief that God opened Lydia's mind through the preaching of His word, is consistent with the context of this passage, as well as the rest of the Bible!
- 5. In verse 15 we see find Lydia and her household responded obediently to the gospel by being baptized.
 - a. With these obedient souls we see the establishment of the Lord's church in Philippi.
 - b. These Christians were a constant source of joy for Paul (compare the book of Philippians).
- 6. Some in the religious world assume and teach that since Lydia and her household were baptized, this must have included infants.

7. Therefore, they conclude this passage, and others in the book of Acts which mention baptism of households, contain authority to baptize babies.
8. Actually, neither this passage nor any other in the book of Acts, or the rest of the New Testament, authorizes the baptism of infants!
9. That is true because infants are *not* eligible candidates for scriptural baptism for the following reasons:
 - a. There is not one example of the baptism of an infant in the New Testament.
 - b. There is no need for an infant to be baptized since they are innocent of sin (Mt 18:1-13).
 - c. An infant is not capable of meeting the conditions which must be met before submitting to scriptural baptism, i.e., hearing, believing, repenting and confessing Christ.
 - d. For additional information please see our notes on 2:38, including the special study on infant baptism.
10. In addition to these biblical facts a close study of the passages where baptism of households is mentioned is also very helpful.
11. Please notice the following information which shows very clearly that when households were baptized, infants were not included:
 - a. Cornelius and his household (chapters 10 and 11).
 - (1) 10:2.
 - (2) 10:33.
 - (3) 10:44.
 - (4) 10:46.
 - (5) 10:48.
 - (6) Obviously, then those in Cornelius' household who were baptized were not infants because they did all these things which infants are not capable of doing!
 - b. The Philippian jailer and his household (16:27-34).
 - (1) 16:31.
 - (2) 16:32.
 - (3) 16:33.
 - (4) 16:34.
 - (5) Again, it is quite obvious those in the jailer's household who were baptized were not infants!
 - c. The household of Stephanas (1 Cor 1:16).
 - (1) (1 Cor 16:15) Those in his household who were involved were old enough to "devote themselves to the ministry of the saints!"
 - (2) Once again, it is abundantly clear those in Stephanas' household who were baptized were not infants!
12. With all of this biblical information in mind, there is absolutely no doubt that household baptisms did not include infants and that infant baptism is a sinful addition to God's word!

(2) (16:16-18) PAUL CASTS A SPIRIT OUT OF A SLAVE GIRL

1. A slave girl who was possessed by a demon met Paul and those with him.
2. It is also noted in the text that this slave girl brought much profit to her masters because of her fortune-telling.
3. The girl followed Paul and his group and kept saying they were the servants of the Most High God who were proclaiming the way of salvation.
4. Paul became greatly annoyed by this, commanded the demon to come out of her by the authority of Jesus Christ and the demon came out.
5. This incident clearly showed the power of almighty God over the devil and demons.
6. But, why did Paul cast this demon out of the slave girl when she was reporting accurately that Paul and those with him were servants of God?
7. To answer that question please consider the following facts:
 - a. This slave girl and her masters were claiming the ability to predict the future (fortune-telling).
 - b. She was possessed by a demon.
 - c. Thus, even though she was speaking the truth, Paul did not want to use the truth expressed by and associated with that demonic source.
 - d. If Paul had allowed this to continue the people would have been convinced that there was a joining together of God's servants with those of Satan.
 - e. This would have caused the good reputation of Jesus and His apostles to be shared by the demon-possessed girl and her masters.
 - f. In addition, it would have caused the evil reputation of demons to reflect on Jesus and His apostles.
 - g. Obviously, this would have had a disastrous effect on the Lord's work and would have helped Satan's work.
 - h. To avoid that horrible situation Paul removed the demon from the slave girl so the truth was not being proclaimed by demons.

(3) (16:19-24) HER MASTERS HAVE PAUL AND SILAS BEATEN AND IMPRISONED ON FALSE CHARGES

1. When the slave girl's masters saw their hope of profit was gone they brought Paul and Silas before the authorities on false charges.
2. As a result Paul and Silas received many lashes with rods and were placed in the most secure part of the prison.
3. In addition the jailer obeyed the command to attach their feet to wooden stocks or blocks.
4. When we see tragedies like this one we need to remember 2 Timothy 3:12!

(4) (16:25-30) PHILIPPIAN JAILER ASKED, "WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

1. In the midst of these horrible conditions Paul and Silas prayed and sang hymns to God (cf. Phil 4:4)!
2. Notice also the prisoners were listening to them (cf. Phil 2:15-16)!

3. Suddenly there was an earthquake, the doors were opened and the prisoners' chains were opened.
4. When the jailer awoke and saw the doors open he assumed the prisoners were gone and he was about to kill himself.
5. Paul called out to the jailer and advised him not to harm himself because the prisoners were still there.
6. The jailer then asked the most important question of all time - "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"
 - a. This question tells us the jailer was convinced by what had happened that Paul and Silas were men of God.

(5) (16:31-34) PHILIPPIAN JAILER OBEYED THE GOSPEL

1. In response to the jailer's question, Paul and Silas told him he needed to believe on the Lord Jesus and he would be saved (spiritually).
 - a. As we have seen several times in our study this was not faith only or faith alone, but a living, active, obedient faith which works by love (Jas 2:14-26; Gal 5:6)!
2. That it is *not* faith only or faith alone which saves is also seen in verses 32 and 33.
3. In those verses the following significant facts are revealed:
 - a. After telling the jailer of the need to believe Paul and Silas spoke more of God's word to him and his household.
 - b. In response to that apostolic preaching the jailer did two things:
 - (1) He washed the lashes which Paul and Silas had received.
 - (a). In doing this, the jailer was indicating his *repentance*.
 - (2) He was *baptized* along with his household.
4. A very important question which needs to be asked and answered is, "Where did the jailer learn of his need to be baptized?"
5. The answer is obvious - he learned of his need to be baptized when Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to him!
6. Thus, in response to the jailer's question on what he needed to do to be saved, we know that, at the very least, Paul and Silas told him to believe and be baptized!
7. This is consistent with a fact which we have observed throughout our study of Acts.
8. That fact is that belief and baptism are among those things which God requires man to do to be saved from his sins (cf. 2:38; 3:19; 8:35ff; 10:47-48).
9. In verse 34 we are told that after his baptism, the jailer fed Paul and Silas and he rejoiced (obviously because he knew his sins were cleansed by the blood of Christ)!
10. Also, it is important to notice at the end of verse 34 that the jailer's household also believed in God.
 - a. In other words, the jailer's household was not baptized because of the *jailer's* faith in God.
 - b. Instead, they were baptized because of *their own* faith in God!

(6) (16:35-40) PAUL AND SILAS RELEASED FROM PRISON

1. The city authorities sent word to the prison to let Paul and Silas go free.
2. However, Paul objected to being released in that way.
3. In doing so he made the following points:
 - a. The officials had caused Paul and Silas to be beaten *openly* (i.e., in front of a large crowd).
 - b. They had done that in spite of the fact Paul and Silas were Roman citizens who had not been provided a fair trial and condemnation.
 - c. They had also thrown Paul and Silas in prison unjustly.
4. It is clear Paul was making these points to show that the authorities had done serious wrong in violating their privileges as Roman citizens.
5. On the basis of these facts Paul refused to be released *secretly*.
 - a. He refused because this would have left the impression with the people that Paul and Silas were guilty as charged.
 - b. That would have done serious damage to their work of preaching the gospel.
6. Thus, Paul rightfully demanded that the authorities personally come and release them openly.
 - a. This would be a public indication on the part of the authorities that they had made a mistake.
 - b. It would also be a clear admission that Paul and Silas were *innocent* of those false charges.
7. When the authorities heard Paul and Silas were Roman citizens they were afraid because they knew they had done wrong!
8. As a result the authorities released Paul and Silas and asked them to leave the city.
9. Paul and Silas went to Lydia's house, encouraged the brethren and left Philippi.

f. (17:1-9) AT THESSALONICA

(1) (17:1-4) PAUL PREACHED JESUS IN THE SYNAGOGUE

1. From Philippi, Paul and Silas went through Amphipolis and Apollonia and then came to Thessalonica where there was a synagogue.
2. In that synagogue Paul reasoned with them from the scriptures for three Sabbaths.
3. In verse 3 Paul's teaching is summarized by saying he demonstrated two major points:
 - a. The Christ had to suffer and rise again from the dead.
 - b. This Jesus whom Paul preached was the Christ!
4. The result of that apostolic preaching was that some of the Jews were persuaded as well as a multitude of the religious-minded Gentiles.
5. Thus, the Lord's church was established in this city of Thessalonica.
 - a. As we see in the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians this became a fervently evangelistic and hard-working group of Christians (cf. 1 Thess 1:2-10).

(2) (17:5-9) SOME JEWS STIRRED UP THE PEOPLE AGAINST CHRISTIANS

1. Some of the envious Jews caused trouble as follows:
 - a. They used some evil men to gather a mob.
 - b. They set the city in an uproar.
 - c. They attacked the house of a man named Jason.
 - d. And, they tried to bring Paul and Silas out to the mob.
2. When the Jews were not able to find Paul and Silas they dragged Jason and some of the brethren to the rulers of the city.
3. They charged the Christians with two major things:
 - a. They “turned the world upside down.”
 - (1) This was a way of saying the Christians had caused disturbances or trouble everywhere they went.
 - (2) As we have seen, this was a false charge because the Jews were the ones who stirred up trouble, *not* the Christians!
 - (3) The Christians merely preached, taught and lived the glorious gospel of Christ!
 - (4) Would it not be wonderful if people falsely charged us with turning the world upside down because we faithfully and zealously preached, taught, and lived the gospel in each of our communities!
 - b. The second thing they accused the Christians of was teaching that Jesus was another king other than Caesar.
 - (1) There is no doubt Paul and others taught that Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords (cf. Rev 17:14).
 - (2) However, like Jesus Himself, Paul never claimed Jesus was an earthly king seeking to rule in Caesar’s place (cf. Jn 18:36)!
 - (3) Thus, these Jews were guilty of twisting what was true into something which was false!
4. In verse 9 we learn the city rulers took “security” from Jason and the rest and then let them go.
 - a. Apparently this involved Jason’s giving some kind of assurance, possibly financial, that Paul and Silas would conduct themselves in a lawful manner.

g. (17:10-15) AT BEREIA

(1) (17:10-12) THE NOBLE BEREANS BELIEVED

1. The brethren in Thessalonica sent Paul and Silas to Berea where they went into the synagogue of the Jews to preach the word.
2. Those in Berea were described as more fair or noble-minded than those in Thessalonica for two reasons:
 - a. They received the word of God with all readiness of mind, i.e., they listened eagerly, attentively and respectfully (cf. Psa 119:97)!
 - b. They searched the scriptures daily to determine whether what was being said was true (cf. Jn 5:39; 1 Jn 4:1).
3. What a wonderful attitude these people had toward the Lord and His marvelous word!

- a. We need more people like them today!
4. As a result of their wonderful attitude many people in Berea believed in the Lord!

(2) (17:13-15) THE THESSALONIAN JEWS STIRRED UP TROUBLE AGAIN

1. Unfortunately, the envious Jews from Thessalonica came to Berea to cause trouble there too.
2. As a result, the brethren took Paul to Athens while Silas and Timothy stayed in Berea.
3. Paul sent those who brought him to Athens back to Berea with a command for Silas and Timothy to come to Athens quickly.

h. (17:16-34) AT ATHENS

(1) (17:16-21) PAUL REASONED IN THE SYNAGOGUE / PHILOSOPHERS CURIOUS ABOUT HIS TEACHING

1. While Paul waited for Silas and Timothy in Athens he was provoked by the widespread idolatry in the city.
2. As a result he went to two major places to reason with the people of Athens.
 - a. The synagogue, to work with the Jews and Gentile worshipers.
 - b. The marketplace, to work with those who happened to be there.
 - c. In other words Paul went where he knew there would be large groups of people who might listen to the gospel.
3. As Paul worked in this way he encountered different groups of philosophers.
 - a. A philosopher is one who deals with the general cause and principles of things.
 - b. At that time, Athens was the center of human philosophy.
 - c. In sharp contrast with these human philosophies Paul was speaking by divine revelation!
4. In verse 18 two of the different groups of human philosophers are mentioned:
 - a. The Epicureans. These people believed in the following major things:
 - (1) They denied God created the world.
 - (2) They denied God's providence.
 - (3) They said that the soul is material, and is destroyed at death.
 - (4) Their motto was, "Eat, drink and be merry."
 - b. The second group of philosophers was the Stoics. These people believed in the following major things:
 - (1) That the existing universe is God.
 - (2) That the soul dies.
 - (3) That virtue has its own rewards.
 - (4) That vice has its own punishment.
 - (5) Their motto was, "Deny self."
5. Some of these philosophers said Paul was a proclaimer of foreign gods because he preached Jesus and the resurrection.

6. However, since the Athenians liked to hear new things they brought Paul to the Areopagus and asked him to explain his teaching.
7. The Areopagus was a hill overlooking Athens where trials were conducted and speeches were made frequently.

(2) (17:22-31) PAUL PROCLAIMED THE “UNKNOWN GOD”

(a) (17:22-23) PAUL INTRODUCED THE TRUE GOD WHOM THEY WORSHIPED IGNORANTLY

1. Paul said he perceived that those in Athens were very religious because among the many objects which they worshiped he even found an altar for the “unknown God.”
2. Paul then declared he wanted to proclaim that one God whom they worshiped without knowing who He was.

(b) (17:24-29) PAUL DESCRIBED THE ONE TRUE GOD AND CONTRASTED HIM WITH THEIR FALSE GODS

1. As we analyze Paul’s message we need to remember he was talking to a different kind of audience.
 - a. These people were not even believers in the one true and living God.
 - b. They probably were not very familiar with the scriptures, if at all.
 - c. Thus, Paul had to begin by describing the one true and living God, thus creating faith in Him.
2. With that thought in mind let us notice how beautifully and powerfully he described the one true and living God.
 - a. (24) God made the world and everything in it.
 - b. (24) God is Lord (ruler) of heaven and earth and thus, does not dwell in temples made by men.
 - c. (25) God does not need man’s worship in order for Him to survive.
 - d. (25) Instead of needing such worship God is the one source of life, breath and all things needed by man as His creature! Man lives, moves and has his being in God.
 - e. (26) In fact, the one true and living God made all men from “one blood.”
 - f. (26) Not only that, but God placed man on this earth and through His providence is in control of the destiny and boundaries of nations.
 - g. (27) All of mankind is obligated to diligently seek for and find this one true and living God.
 - h. (27) Indeed, He is not far from each one of us, i.e., He is omnipresent, in all places at the same time.
 - i. (28) It is in this one God that man lives, moves and has his very being, i.e., mankind is totally dependent upon God.
 - j. (28) In fact, man is described as the offspring of God, and even the Greek poets which Paul quoted admitted that!

- k. (29) Therefore, since man is the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the true God is something or someone which is created or shaped by men, like silver, gold, stone, etc.
 - (1) With this statement please notice what Paul had proved to them, even quoting from their poets.
 - (a) Man is the offspring of God.
 - (b) But, the gods which the Athenians worshiped were stones, silver, gold, etc., objects made by men.
 - (c) Thus, according to their view of God, man is the offspring of stones, silver, gold, etc.!
 - (2) In other words Paul was saying that the worship of objects and false gods does not make sense - it is not logical or reasonable.
 - (3) Remember that Paul was talking to men who were impressed by reasoning, logic and philosophy!

(c) (17:30-31) PAUL PRONOUNCED MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD

(3) (17:32-34) REACTIONS TO PAUL'S PROCLAMATION

1. Paul concluded by saying that in the past God overlooked this ignorance (idolatry).
2. It is crucially important that we recognize that Paul was *not* saying that God excused or approved of this idolatry.
 - a. Rather, He simply allowed men the freedom to choose whom they worshiped and how they lived (cf. 14:16-17; Rom 1:18-31).
 - b. However, those people still knew that the consequence of idolatry and other sinfulness was death, i.e., eternal separation from God (Rom 1:32)!
3. Now, God commands all men everywhere to repent (cf. our study of 2:38 on the meaning and importance of repentance)!
4. One reason all men everywhere should repent is that God has appointed a day when He will judge the world in righteousness (cf. Heb 9:27).
 - a. And that judgment will be carried out by the Man, Christ Jesus.
 - b. Compare with 2 Corinthians 5:10-11
 - c. Another reason all men should repent is the goodness of God (cf. Rom 2:4-10).
5. And, God has given assurance of the coming judgment day by His raising Jesus from the dead!

i. (18:1-17) AT CORINTH

(1) (18:1-3) PAUL WITH AQUILA AND PRISCILLA

1. Paul left Athens and went to Corinth where he met Aquila and Priscilla who were tentmakers just like Paul.

(2) (18:4-6) PAUL REASONED IN THE SYNAGOGUE - REJECTED BY THE JEWS

1. In Corinth Paul reasoned with those in the synagogue every Sabbath and persuaded both Jews and Gentiles.
2. When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia and joined Paul he was pressed in his spirit to preach to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.
3. However, the Jews opposed Paul and spoke evil words against him.
4. Paul replied that they (the Jews) were responsible for their own guilt ("your blood be upon your own heads").
5. And, as a result of the Jews' rejection of the gospel, Paul told them he would now turn to the Gentiles (cf. 13:46).

(3) (18:7-11) CRISPUS AND MANY CORINTHIANS CONVERTED

1. As a result of Paul's preaching of the gospel, Crispus, who was the ruler of the synagogue believed on the Lord.
2. In addition, many of the Corinthians hearing the gospel message believed it and were baptized!
 - a. This is the pattern which we have seen repeated over and over in this book of conversions!
3. In verses 9 and 10 the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision reassuring him as follows:
 - a. Do not be afraid (cf. Rom 8:31).
 - b. Speak (the word).
 - c. I am with you and no one will attack you to hurt you (cf. Heb 13:5-6).
4. Paul continued in Corinth for 18 months and taught the word of God among the Corinthians.

(4) (18:12-17) GALLIO REFUSED TO ACCEPT THE JEWS' FALSE CHARGES AGAINST PAUL

1. The Jews brought Paul up before a Roman government official named Gallio.
2. They charged Paul with persuading men to worship God contrary to the Law.
3. Gallio refused to get involved since Paul was not guilty of any crime.
4. Instead, he told the Jews to take care of this matter themselves and he drove them out of the judgment seat where all of this took place.
5. Then the Greeks beat the ruler of the synagogue in front of the judgment seat.

(5) (18:18-22) PAUL RETURNED TO ANTIOCH

1. Paul went toward Syria (where Antioch was located) and took Priscilla and Aquila with him.
2. In verse 18 Luke mentioned that Paul had his hair cut off because he had taken a vow.

- a. Although we do not know what kind of vow Paul made, it certainly appears it was some sort of Jewish vow associated with the Law of Moses.
 - b. But, since the Law of Moses was nailed to the cross (Col 2:14) why did Paul make a vow and shave his head as required by that Law?
 - c. Actually, this is just one of several occasions where Paul did things required by the Law of Moses *after* it went out of effect (cf. 21; 21:17-26).
 - d. How was Paul justified in taking these actions after the Law was nailed to the cross, while resisting every effort to bind parts of that Law on the Gentile Christians (Ch. 15)?
 - e. The answer seems to be that there was a special period of time from the cross until the destruction of the Jewish system in the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - f. During that period of time, it appears that the Jews (*not* the Gentiles) who had been under the Law still kept some of its requirements.
 - g. This thought is perhaps best seen in Hebrews 8:13.
 - h. For more detailed information please see Appendix "L" in the written notes.
3. In verse 19 Paul went to Ephesus with Aquila and Priscilla and reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue.
 4. They asked Paul to stay longer, but he refused, saying he had to go to Jerusalem.
 5. However, he promised to return to them if it was the Lord's will (cf. Jas 4:15).
 6. Then he sailed from Ephesus, landed at Caesarea and went down to Antioch where this second journey had started.
 7. This completes the second evangelistic journey.

C. (18:23-21:14) THIRD EVANGELISTIC JOURNEY

1. (18:23) IN GALATIA AND PHRYGIA

1. After Paul spent some time in Antioch he returned to the regions of Galatia and Phrygia strengthening the disciples.

2. (18:24-19:41) AT EPHESUS

a. (18:24-28) AQUILA AND PRISCILLA CORRECT APOLLOS

1. A Jewish man named Apollos came to Ephesus.
2. Please notice Luke's beautiful description of this man:
 - a. An eloquent man.
 - b. Mighty in the scriptures.
 - c. Instructed in the way of the Lord.
 - d. Fervent in spirit.
 - e. Spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord.
 - f. Except he knew only the baptism of John (the Immerser).
3. From this description we can conclude that Apollos was a great man!
4. However, he was preaching the baptism of John the Immerser rather than that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- a. John's baptism was for the remission of sins, but it was to prepare for the baptism of the Lord Jesus (cf. 19:4; Mk 1:4).
 - b. Thus, once Jesus' baptism went into effect, John's baptism was no longer valid.
 - c. Since Jesus' baptism went into effect on the day of Pentecost (2:37-41) John's baptism was no longer valid after that time.
 - d. Thus, in preaching John's baptism after the day of Pentecost Apollos was not teaching the truth on that subject.
5. When Aquila and Priscilla heard Apollos teach John's baptism they took him aside and taught him the way of God more accurately.
 6. From verses 27 and 28, it is obvious that Apollos accepted the truth as taught to him by Aquila and Priscilla.
 7. Afterwards, when Apollos wanted to go into Achaia, the brethren wrote a letter recommending him and he greatly helped the Christians in Achaia.
 8. He also *vigorously* refuted the Jews publicly by showing from the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ!

b. (19:1-7) PAUL FINDS 12 DISCIPLES BAPTIZED WITH JOHN'S BAPTISM

1. When Paul came back to Ephesus, he found twelve disciples and asked them if they received the Holy Spirit when they believed.
 - a. Since these were disciples, Paul obviously assumed they had been baptized into Christ and had received the normal indwelling of the Holy Spirit (cf. 2:38).
 - b. Thus, when Paul asked if they had received the Holy Spirit, he was asking whether they had received the Holy Spirit in a way which enabled them to work miracles (cf. our notes on 8:17).
2. When the disciples answered that they had not heard of the Holy Spirit Paul knew they had not received Christian baptism.
3. But, *how* did Paul connect the fact that these men had not heard of the Holy Spirit with the fact they had not received Christian baptism?
 - a. Because Christian baptism is into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and these men would have been taught that before they were baptized into Christ (cf. Mt 28:19).
 - b. And because Christian baptism results in one receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit (the normal indwelling) and these men would have been taught that before they were baptized into Christ (2:38)!
4. It was quite natural for Paul to ask them, "Into what then were you baptized?"
5. When the disciples said they had received John's baptism, Paul explained to them that John's baptism pointed to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
6. From Paul's response and what we studied in 18:24-28, it is clear that these disciples had been baptized with John's baptism *after* it had been *replaced* by Jesus' baptism!
7. Therefore, their baptism was not valid.
8. When the disciples realized that they were baptized with Jesus' baptism.
9. Then Paul laid hands on them enabling them to speak in tongues and prophesy.

- a. Once again, we see it was only through the laying on of the apostles' hands that the ability to work miracles was transferred to others (cf. 8:14ff).

c. (19:8-10) PAUL DISPUTED IN THE SYNAGOGUE AND TAUGHT IN A SCHOOL

1. For three months Paul spoke boldly in the synagogue reasoning concerning the *things of the kingdom* of God.
2. However, when some hardened their hearts and refused to believe Paul and his fellow Christians left the synagogue.
3. It is interesting to note in verse 9 that Christianity is described as "the Way" (cf. 23; Jn 14:6).
4. After those three months Paul taught in the school of Tyrannus for two years.
5. It is truly thrilling to notice the beautiful results of those efforts to teach God's word as described at the end of verse 10!

d. (19:11-12) PAUL WORKED MIRACLES

1. In these verses we learn God worked unusual miracles through Paul including diseases and evil spirits leaving people's bodies when Paul's handkerchief was brought to them!
2. You will recall God worked similar miracles through Peter. People were healed as Peter's shadow passed over them (5:15)!

e. (19:13-16) IMPOSTORS IMITATED MIRACLES AND WERE OVER-POWERED

1. In verse 13 Luke described some traveling Jewish exorcists (i.e., those who claimed to cast out demons).
2. These impostors tried to remove demons from people by the authority of Jesus whom Paul preached.
3. In verse 15 the evil spirit said it knew Jesus and Paul, but not the impostors!
4. Then the man possessed by the evil spirit overpowered the impostors and they fled wounded.

f. (19:17-20) JESUS GLORIFIED AND SOME CHRISTIANS REPENT

1. News of this incident spread to all in Ephesus bringing fear on the people and glory to Jesus!
2. In addition, many Christians confessed their past sinful deeds (v. 18).
3. Also, many who had practiced magic burned their books where all could see.
4. The power of God's word is shown in verse 20 in that it grew mightily and prevailed (i.e., was victorious over these impostors, magicians and all other obstacles)!

g. (19:21-22) TIMOTHY AND ERASTUS SENT TO MACEDONIA

1. Paul made up his mind to go to Macedonia, Achaia, Jerusalem and Rome.
 - a. It is ironic Paul eventually went to Rome, but probably not the way he originally intended!
2. Apparently to prepare the way Paul sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia, but he stayed in Asia for a while.

h. (19:23-29) DEMETRIUS STIRRED UP CRAFTSMEN AND A RIOT RESULTED

1. In these verses Demetrius is introduced as a silversmith who brought great profit to craftsmen by making silver statues of the goddess Diana.
2. In verses 25 and 27 Demetrius called the craftsmen together and made the following points:
 - a. Paul had turned many people away by telling them that those things made by men's hands are not gods!
 - b. As a result their trade of making such idols was in danger of being destroyed.
 - c. Not only that but the temple of Diana was going to be despised.
3. When the people heard this they were filled with wrath and the city was filled with confusion.
4. In addition, they seized Gaius and Aristarchus, two of Paul's traveling companions, and brought them into the theater.
 - a. Paul had baptized Gaius at Corinth and he had been a host to Paul (1 Cor 1:14; Rom 16:23).
 - b. Aristarchus later was a fellow-prisoner with Paul in Rome (Col 4:10).

i. (19:30-34) PAUL WANTED TO SPEAK TO THE CROWD, BUT THE DISCIPLES RESTRAINED HIM

1. Paul wanted to go into the theater to speak to the people, but neither his fellow Christians nor some officials of Asia who were his friends would allow him.
2. Some in the mob cried one thing and others cried out another thing and most of them did not even know why they were gathered together!
3. A man named Alexander wanted to speak in defense of the Jews.
4. However, when the mob learned he was a Jew, they united in crying, "Great is Diana of Ephesus" for a period of two hours.

j. (19:35-41) CITY CLERK CALMED THE MOB

1. In these verses we learn the city clerk quieted the crowd down.
2. He did that by making five major points:
 - a. (35-36) No one could deny that Ephesus was the guardian of Diana's temple. Therefore, they ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly.
 - b. (37) Paul and the others were not temple robbers or blasphemers of their goddess.

- c. (38) If there were legitimate charges Demetrius ought to bring them to the authorized courts.
 - d. (39) If they had other inquiries to make they should bring it to a *lawful* assembly.
 - e. (40) They were in danger from the Roman government because of their disorderly gathering.
3. After saying these things the town clerk dismissed the mob.

3. (20:1-5) IN MACEDONIA

- 1. After the uproar ceased Paul embraced the disciples and left for Macedonia where he encouraged his fellow-Christians with many words.
- 2. Then he went to Greece where he stayed three months.
- 3. When the Jews plotted against him there he decided to sail for Syria going through Macedonia first.
- 4. Some men mentioned in verse 4 went with Paul to Asia.
- 5. Then those men went ahead to Troas and waited for Paul, Luke and others (“us”) (v. 5).

4. (20:6-12) AT TROAS - LORD’S SUPPER / EUTYCHUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD

- 1. Paul and those with him went from Philippi to Troas where they waited seven days.
- 2. Please notice in verse 7 that the early Christians gathered together on the first day of the week to worship the Lord.
 - a. The first day of the week is Sunday.
 - b. That tells us that Christians should gather together to worship the Lord on Sunday, the first day of the week, *not* on Saturday which is the seventh day of the week.
- 3. When the disciples gathered together on Sunday they broke bread (v. 7).
 - a. This is a clear reference to the Lord’s Supper in this context.
 - b. That is true because one of the things which Christians did when they gathered together on Sunday was to partake of the bread representing Jesus’ body and the fruit of the vine representing His blood.
 - c. Compare with 2:42; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:20-29.
- 4. Another thing those early Christians did as part of their worship on Sunday was to preach, teach and study God’s word. Paul preached until midnight.
- 5. As Paul was preaching, a man named Euthycus fell asleep, fell out of a third story window and died.
- 6. However, Paul raised him from the dead and this gave the Christians great comfort.
- 7. Before we leave these verses it is critically important for us to recognize the apostolic example provided here.
- 8. It is clear from this example, and from the fact that Paul waited *seven* days in Troas, that Paul knew these early Christians gathered together every Sunday.

- a. But, we have seen that one of the things they did when they gathered together on Sunday was to “break bread,” i.e., partake of the Lord’s Supper.
- b. Therefore, we may properly and safely conclude that those early Christians followed the example of the apostles in partaking of the Lord’s Supper every Sunday (*not* monthly, quarterly or annually, etc.).
- c. That conclusion is made even more forceful when we look at two other passages of scripture:
 - (1) 1 Corinthians 16:2.
 - (2) Exodus 20:8.

5. (20:13-38) AT MILETUS

a. (20:13-16) TRIP TO MILETUS

1. Paul went on foot from Troas to Assos while the others went by ship.
2. From there they sailed to Mitylene, Chios, Samos, Trogyllium and then to Miletus.
3. In verse 16 we learn Paul decided to sail past Ephesus because he was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem by the Day of Pentecost.

b,c. (20:17-21) PAUL SENT TO EPHESUS FOR THE ELDERS AND REVIEWED HIS WORK WITH THEM

1. Since Paul did not have time to go to Ephesus he called the elders from the churches in Ephesus to meet him in Miletus.
2. When the elders arrived Paul reviewed his work among them by making the following points concerning his efforts:
 - a. Verse 19 – Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and
 - b. Verse 19 – with many tears, and
 - c. Verse 19 – temptations with befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:
 - d. Verse 20 – And I held back nothing that was profitable unto you, but
 - e. Verse 20 – have shewed you, and
 - f. Verse 20 – have taught you publicly, and from house to house,
 - g. Verse 21 – testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

d. (20:22-25) GOING TO JERUSALEM TO FINISH HIS RACE AND MINISTRY WITH JOY - DESPITE WARNINGS OF HARM

1. In these verses Paul told the elders he was determined to go to Jerusalem even though he did not know exactly what was going to happen to him.
2. He did know, however, that the Holy Spirit testified that imprisonment (“chains”) and tribulations were awaiting him.
3. In verse 24 we have one of the greatest statements of Paul’s faith and love for the Lord.
4. Please notice what Paul said in the face of these frightening predictions:

- a. None of these things moved him (i.e., they did *not* frighten him and they would *not* keep him from his purpose).
 - b. He did not count his own life dear to himself (he was willing to die for the Lord Jesus) (cf. Phil 1:21).
 - c. He just wanted to finish the Christian race with joy (cf. Heb 12:1-4).
 - d. And to complete his ministry of preaching the gospel of Christ.
5. Notice at the end of verse 24 Paul referred to the gospel as the gospel of the grace of God.
- a. This passage, verse 32, and others like it forever destroys the argument used by some that since we are under grace we do not have to worry about the Law of God.
 - b. These passages show you cannot legitimately separate God's wonderful gospel (i.e., His Law) from His wonderful grace!
6. In verse 25 Paul announced the heart-breaking fact that he would not see these brethren any more in this life.

e. (20:26-27) PAUL'S INNOCENCE

- 1. In verse 26 Paul made the bold claim that he was innocent of the blood of all men (i.e., he was not responsible for the guilt of any to whom he preached).
- 2. He said he could make that statement because he had not failed to declare the whole counsel of God.
- 3. In other words, Paul said he had boldly declared *all* of God's will to his audiences, even if they did not want to hear it (cf. 13:46; 18:6).
- 4. This is the undeniable responsibility of each elder, preacher, teacher and individual Christian, i.e., to declare all of God's will on any subject.
- 5. Compare with 2 Timothy 4:1-2; 1 Peter 4:11; Ezekiel 3:16-21.

f. (20:28-32) PAUL WARNED THE ELDERS ABOUT COMING APOSTASY

- 1. In these verses Paul issued a serious warning to the Ephesian elders and to each elder from that time forward.
- 2. Paul began in verse 28 by telling elders to watch over themselves very carefully ("take heed").
 - a. In other words elders are commanded to be on guard to ensure that their own lives are worthy of the high office in which they serve.
 - b. They have to be extremely careful that they lead a life worthy of the gospel of Christ which will be the best possible example for others (1 Pet 5:3).
 - c. They have to be on guard against such temptations as pride, the lust for power, greed, etc.
 - d. Like preachers, elders need to take heed to *themselves* and to *their teaching* (cf. 1 Tim 4:16).
- 3. Next, Paul said elders need to take heed or diligently watch over "all the flock."

- a. In the New Testament “the flock” refers to the sheep, which is God’s tender way of referring to Christians, the church (cf. Jn 10:1ff; 21:15-17).
- b. Thus, elders have the sobering responsibility of watching out for the souls of the members of the local congregation in which they serve (cf. Heb 13:17).
4. Next, Paul said the Holy Spirit had made these Ephesian elders, “overseers.”
 - a. This is the same word which is translated “bishop” in passages like 1 Timothy 3:1.
 - b. This tells us that the terms bishop, elder and overseer all refer to the same office in the Lord’s church (cf. Titus 1:5-7).
 - c. The word translated overseer or bishop means “a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly; any guardian or superintendent” (Thayer).
 - d. Thus, the office of elder, bishop, overseer involves *authority* entrusted by God to these specially qualified men (cf. 1 Thess 5:12; Heb 13:7,17).
 - e. Today, the Holy Spirit makes overseers in that He revealed the special qualifications which these men must meet in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-14.
 - f. Thus, when men work for many years to develop these qualifications given by the Holy Spirit in the Bible and the brethren in the local congregation recognize those qualifications and appoint men to serve as elders, then the Holy Spirit has made overseers in that *indirect way!*
5. Still, in verse 28, Paul said another responsibility of elders is to “shepherd” (NKJV) or “feed” (KJV, ASV) the church.
 - a. The word translated in this way was used to refer to the duties of shepherds to the sheep for whom they were responsible.
 - b. These duties included such things as feeding the sheep, governing their activities for their ultimate good, discipline, protecting the sheep from enemies, taking care of the sick sheep and returning those who had strayed from the flock.
 - c. Thus, in using this word, God was painting a wonderful picture of the responsibilities of elders as shepherds to God’s sheep, i.e., to the members of the congregation!
 - d. Therefore, the elders’ responsibilities to the congregation include such things as:
 - (1) Ensuring that the sound doctrine of God’s word is provided as spiritual food (cf. Titus 1:9).
 - (2) Overseeing the activities of the congregation by implementing God’s word properly (cf. 1 Pet 5:2).
 - (3) Administering discipline when necessary (cf. 2 Thess 3:6,14-15).
 - (4) Protecting the congregation from spiritual enemies (cf. 29-31; Titus 1:9-14).
 - (5) Taking care of those who are spiritually sick (cf. 1 Thess 5:12-14).
 - (6) And bringing those back who have strayed from the faith of the gospel (cf. Titus 1:9-14).
6. Finally, in verse 28, Paul made a beautiful reference to the Lord’s church as the one purchased with His own blood.

- a. This verse establishes forever, and without successful contradiction, that the Lord's church is *extremely valuable* to the Father and His beloved Son!
 - b. We determine the value of something by the price which someone is willing to pay to purchase that object.
 - c. Jesus purchased His church by paying the price of His priceless blood, showing us that its value is beyond human ways of measuring (cf. Eph 5:25-27; 1 Pet 1:18-19; 1 Cor 6:19-20)!
 - d. With that in mind, how can anyone say the church is not important, or it does not make any difference what church you belong to?!
7. In verse 29 Paul warned that strong, fierce, dangerous men ("savage wolves") would enter among the elders to try to destroy the local congregations of the Lord's church.
 8. Furthermore, in verse 30, Paul identified another source of danger to the church as follows:
 - a. Men would arise from within the eldership.
 - b. They would speak perverse things, i.e., things to distort, twist and corrupt the truth of God.
 - c. Their purpose would be to lead Christians away to follow them (rather than the Lord Jesus Christ).
 - d. Incidentally, a study of church history reveals this is exactly what happened in the early church.
 - e. Men arose from within the eldership to claim more and more power for themselves until one man claimed power over all others in his position as "pope" in 666 A.D.
 - f. Although we do not have time to study the details of this tragic and saddening departure from New Testament Christianity, we invite you to study these details in the church history course offered by World Video Bible School.
 9. In verse 31 Paul warned elders to watch for these, and all other dangers to the congregations of the Lord's church (cf. 1 Pet 5:8).
 10. Paul also reminded the elders how he had warned them and the other brethren about such things before.
 11. Notice Paul's beautiful description of his efforts as a model for all faithful proclaimers of God's word:
 - a. For three years he did not cease to warn everyone.
 - (1) Indeed, Paul was longsuffering in his efforts to teach and warn the brethren (cf. 2 Tim 4:2; 2:24-26).
 - b. Night and day.
 - (1) A gospel preacher's work is never done; he must be ready in season and out of season (cf. 2 Tim 4:2).
 - c. With tears.
 - (1) The faithful preacher is not glad to rebuke others by preaching the word; instead, it grieves him when people will not obey the Lord (cf. Psa 119:136)!
 12. In verse 32 Paul told the elders *how* to take care of and guard the local congregations of the Lord's church.

13. The way to do that is with the word of God through which His marvelous grace is received!
14. Also, please notice the wonderful power of God's word described by Paul in this verse:
 - a. It is able to build you up, i.e., to edify, to strengthen you (cf. 1 Jn 2:14)!
 - b. It is able to give you an inheritance of eternal life through the words which, if obeyed, will lead to eternal life (1 Pet 1:3-4; Jn 6:68).
 - c. This is possible among those who are sanctified.
 - (1) To be sanctified is to be set apart from the world and dedicated to the Lord.
 - (2) Only those who are set apart from the world and dedicated to the Lord will receive the inheritance of eternal life.
 - (3) And the only way one can be sanctified, or set apart, is through reading, meditating upon and obeying the word of God (cf. Jn 17:17).
15. The following six points summarize Paul's instructions to the Ephesian elders in these verses:
 - a. Take heed to themselves,
 - b. Take heed to the flock (the congregation),
 - c. Shepherd the church of the Lord which was purchased with His blood,
 - d. Watch for strong, fierce, dangerous men who would enter into the congregation,
 - e. Watch for men arising from within the eldership to speak perverse things to draw disciples away and
 - f. Use the word of God's grace to avoid these things.

g. (20:33-38) PARTING REMARKS, PRAYER AND SORROW

1. In these verses Paul reminded the elders he was not guilty of coveting the financial resources of others.
2. In fact, he worked with his own hands to provide for his own needs and those with him.
3. In doing so he showed them that Christians must support the weak and that, as Jesus said, it is more blessed to give than to receive (cf. 2:44-45; 4:34-36).
4. After Paul spoke these stirring words he knelt down and prayed with them.
5. After that prayer all who were there cried abundantly and they kissed Paul.
6. They were so grieved because Paul told them they would never see each other again.
7. This touching scene tells us of the tremendous love which those Christians had for each other (and which we should have for each other) (cf. Jn 13:34-35; Col 2:2)!
8. Finally, the elders and others accompanied Paul to the ship in which he was going to leave.

6. (21:1-6) AT TYRE - PAUL WARNED NOT TO GO TO JERUSALEM

1. Paul and those with him set sail, and after stopping at Patara sailed past Cyprus to Tyre.
2. At Tyre they found some Christians and stayed with them seven days.

3. Those Christians warned Paul not to go to Jerusalem.
4. At the end of the seven days the Christians accompanied Paul to the ship, knelt down with him and prayed.

7. (21:7-14) AT CAESAREA - AGABUS WARNED PAUL ABOUT JERUSALEM - HIS RESPONSE

1. After stopping in Ptolemais for one day Paul and his companions came to Caesarea and stayed with Philip the evangelist who was one of the seven appointed to take care of the daily distribution in chapter 6.
2. In verse 9 we learn Philip had four daughters who prophesied.
 - a. It appears these women had received the miraculous ability to prophesy (cf. 1 Cor 12:4-10; 14:3).
 - b. This would have been a fulfillment of God's promise to pour out His Spirit on "daughters" (2:17).
 - c. However, we know these women did not violate God's command not to teach or have authority over a man (cf. 1 Tim 2:11-12; 1 Cor 14:34).
3. In verses 10 and 11 a prophet named Agabus predicted Paul would be bound by the Jews in Jerusalem and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles.
4. When Paul's companions and others heard this prediction they begged him not to go to Jerusalem.
5. Paul responded beautifully by making two points:
 - a. He asked why they were weeping and breaking his heart.
 - b. He said that he was not only ready to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. 20:24; Phil 1:20-24)!
6. When they saw Paul's mind could not be changed they said - "The will of the Lord be done."
7. This completes the third evangelistic journey.
8. In this exciting and dramatic journey we have seen the devoted work of faith and labor of love of Paul and his companions preaching the gospel, converting souls and strengthening Christians in the following places:
 - a. (18:23) Galatia and Phrygia
 - b. (18:24-19:41) Ephesus
 - c. (20:1-5) Macedonia
 - d. (20:6-12) Troas
 - e. (20:13-38) Miletus
 - f. (21:1-6) Tyre
 - g. (21:7-14) Caesarea
9. That brings us to the final major section of our outline.

D. (21:15-28:31) PAUL IN THE HANDS OF ENEMIES

1. (21:15-23:23) IN JERUSALEM

a. (21:15-17) PAUL ARRIVED IN JERUSALEM AND WAS RECEIVED GLADLY

1. It is clear from other parts of the New Testament that Paul brought some relief for the Christians in Judea.
2. That relief was in the form of a contribution from their fellow Christians in Macedonia and Achaia.
3. Before his arrival in Jerusalem, Paul was concerned that the Christians in Judea who had Jewish backgrounds would not accept the gift from the Gentile Christians (cf. Rom 15:26-31).
4. Thus, it must have been a relief to Paul to arrive in Jerusalem and be received gladly!

b,c. (21:18-22) PAUL MET WITH JAMES AND THE ELDERS, JAMES IDENTIFIED A PROBLEM

1. Paul met with James and the elders and told them in detail what God had done with the Gentiles through Paul's work.
2. James and the elders glorified the Lord when they heard that good news.
3. Then they informed Paul of what many Christians with Jewish backgrounds who were zealous for the Law of Moses had heard that he taught.
4. More specifically, they had heard that Paul taught the following:
 - a. The Jews should forsake Moses, i.e., that they should forsake the Law of Moses.
 - b. They should not circumcise their children.
 - c. They should not walk according to the customs, i.e., those customs associated with the Law of Moses.
5. After reporting these things, James and the elders asked what should be done since the Jews would be assembling together because they heard Paul was in Jerusalem.

d,e. (21:23-26) JAMES' ADVICE AND PAUL'S RESPONSE

1. James' advice to Paul was that he be purified with four men who had taken a vow and pay their expenses so they could shave their heads, indicating the completion of their vow.
2. Apparently, this is a reference to the Nazarite vow described in the Law of Moses (cf. Num 6:3-20).
3. James said this was to be done so that all could see that the things which they heard about Paul were not true.
4. Then, in verse 25, James repeated that the Gentile Christians did not have to observe such customs, except the four things we studied earlier in chapter 15.
5. Finally, in verse 26, Paul did what James suggested.
6. Thus, as was the case in 18:18, Paul kept a part of the Law of Moses even though it had been nailed to the cross (cf. Col 2:14).

- a. As we noticed in our study of 18:18 this was during a time when some of the requirements of the Law were still being kept by those Christians with Jewish backgrounds.
 - b. However, these actions were taken as matters of liberty, expediency or indifference which were *not* required for salvation.
 - c. That was true because no one could be justified or saved by keeping that Old Law (Rom 3:20,28).
 - d. Thus, Paul took these actions not because he had to, and not to be saved, but to avoid being a stumbling block for Christians with Jewish backgrounds.
7. Finally, with respect to what was said about Paul teaching that Jews should not circumcise their children we know that charge was not true!
- a. For example, he circumcised Timothy whose mother was of Jewish background (cf. 16:3).
 - b. However, Paul always did make it absolutely clear that a person did *not* have to be circumcised to be saved (15:1-2; (cf. Gal 5:6; 6:15).

f. (21:27-30) THE JEWS ACCUSED AND SEIZED PAUL TO KILL HIM

- 1. While Paul was in the temple some Jews from Asia stirred up a crowd, laid hands on Paul and made some charges against him.
- 2. They falsely charged Paul as follows:
 - a. Teaching all men everywhere against “the people,” i.e., the Jews.
 - b. Teaching against the Law.
 - c. Teaching against the temple.
 - d. Bringing Gentiles into the temple, thus defiling (contaminating) it.
- 3. In verse 29 Luke pointed out that their charge concerning bringing a Gentile into the temple was based upon an assumption which they made.
 - a. This shows us the danger of making assumptions and jumping to conclusions before we have all the facts!
 - b. We certainly ought to assume the best about our brethren until they prove otherwise by their teaching or behavior (1 Cor 13:4ff).
- 4. Based upon the false charges, the people seized Paul and took him out of the temple.

g. (21:31-36) ROMAN OFFICERS ARRESTED PAUL

- 1. As the Jews were trying to kill Paul the commander of the Roman soldiers heard about the uproar and brought soldiers to the area.
- 2. When the Jews saw the soldiers they stopped beating Paul.
- 3. The commander had Paul bound with chains and asked him who he was and what he had done.
- 4. Since the crowd called out different things about Paul the commander could not determine the truth and commanded Paul to be taken to the barracks.

5. The soldiers actually had to carry Paul because of the violence of the mob who were crying out, "Away with him" (cf. Jn 19:15 - this is what they said concerning Jesus)!

h. (21:37-39) PAUL ASKED FOR PERMISSION TO SPEAK TO THE CROWD

1. Paul asked to speak to the commander who had concluded Paul was an Egyptian who had led a rebellion with 4,000 assassins.
2. Paul informed the commander that he was a Jew from the important city of Tarsus.
3. In other words Paul was saying he was *not* the criminal who the commander thought he was!
4. Then Paul begged the commander for permission to speak to the people.

i. (21:40-22:21) PAUL RECEIVED PERMISSION AND BEGAN TO SPEAK

(1) (21:40-22:5) HIS HEBREW BACKGROUND

1. The commander gave Paul permission to speak to the crowd.
2. When Paul addressed them respectfully and spoke to them in the Hebrew language they kept silent.
 - a. Paul could obviously have chosen to speak in Greek.
 - b. However, he chose to speak in Hebrew as a sign of respect for the Jewish nationality.
 - c. This calmed the crowd.
3. Paul told the crowd about his strict upbringing in the Jewish faith.
4. In verses 4 and 5 he even pointed out that he persecuted "this way," i.e., Christianity.
5. That included killing Christians and placing them in prison.

(2) (22:6-10) HIS VISION OF THE RISEN JESUS ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

1. In these verses Paul reviewed his vision of Jesus on the road to Damascus (cf. our study of 9:3ff).
2. In verse 9 please notice that Paul said those with him on the road to Damascus did *not* hear the voice of the One who spoke to Paul.
3. Some claim that this statement contradicts the account in 9:7 where it was said that those with Paul *did* hear the voice.
 - a. Actually, there is no contradiction at all!
 - b. The word translated "hear" is capable of being translated in two ways:
 - (1) The act of physically hearing sound, or
 - (2) Not only hearing words, but also *understanding* them.

- c. Thus, in chapter 9 Luke recorded that those with Paul heard the sound of the words spoken by the Lord.
 - d. Now, in chapter 22, Luke recorded that the men heard the sound, but did not *understand* the words spoken by the Lord.
4. Thus, as we have seen several other times in our study of the book of Acts there are no contradictions in God's word no matter what "scholars" and critics claim!

(3) (22:11-16) ANANIAS CAME TO PAUL IN DAMASCUS AND TOLD HIM WHAT TO DO

- 1. These verses contain basically the same information as we studied in 9:8-19.
- 2. However, there is one additional important piece of information revealed in 22:16.
 - a. In this verse, God revealed what Ananias told Paul to do to be saved from his sins!
 - b. After Paul believed in the Lord and fasted and prayed three days he was still in his sins!
 - c. He still needed to do something else to have those sins cleansed from his soul.
 - d. Ananias asked Paul why he was waiting and told him to get up and be baptized to wash away his sins! Notice that baptism is included among those things which are necessary to "wash away sins" (forgiveness of sins).

(4) (22:17-21) PAUL'S VISION IN JERUSALEM

- 1. Here Paul reported to the crowd what happened when he returned from Damascus to Jerusalem.
- 2. As he was praying in the temple the Lord told him in a vision to leave Jerusalem quickly because they would not receive his testimony there.
- 3. In the vision Paul responded to the Lord that the Jews knew of Paul's persecution of Christians, including his consenting to and watching the death of the martyr Stephen.
 - a. Apparently Paul brought this up to the Lord to suggest that maybe the Jews *would not* listen to him because he had persecuted Christianity previously.
- 4. Nevertheless, the Lord commanded Paul to go to the Gentiles.

j. (22:22-23) THE JEWS' REACTION TO PAUL'S SPEECH

- 1. The Jews listened attentively to Paul until he mentioned the word "Gentiles."
- 2. When they heard that word they cried out that Paul was not fit to live.
- 3. This horrible attitude shows the destructive, ungodly result of racial prejudice which is something God absolutely forbids (Gal 3:28-29; Jas 2:1-13).

k. (22:24-29) PAUL CLAIMED HIS ROMAN CITIZENSHIP

- 1. The Roman commander ordered Paul to be examined under scourging so they could determine why the people shouted so violently against him.

2. As the soldiers bound Paul he asked the centurion if it was unlawful to scourge a Roman citizen who was not condemned.
 - a. Paul knew it was against Roman law to bind and scourge a Roman citizen.
3. When the centurion learned that Paul was a Roman citizen he immediately went to the commander and advised him to be careful what he did because Paul was a Roman citizen.
4. The commander asked Paul if he was really a citizen and that he himself had *purchased* his Roman citizenship at great expense.
5. When Paul responded that he was *born* a Roman citizen the commander was afraid because he had bound a Roman citizen.

I. (22:30-23:11) PAUL BROUGHT BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

(1) (22:30-23:5) HIS ENCOUNTER WITH THE HIGH PRIEST

1. Since the commander wanted to know why Paul was accused by the Jews he brought Paul to the Sanhedrin.
2. Paul addressed the Sanhedrin respectfully and said that he had lived in all good conscience before God until that day.
 - a. The conscience is part of our inner being which either accuses us of doing wrong, or excuses what we have done as acceptable (cf. Rom 2:15).
 - b. But, Paul had just said that he had Christians killed and imprisoned (both of which were sinful actions)!
 - c. That tells us that the conscience is not an error-free guide to make decisions by.
 - d. In addition, the conscience can be rejected or seared with a hot iron if we choose to (cf. 1 Tim 1:19; 4:2).
 - e. Thus, the conscience is a wonderful gift from God, but it must be educated by the word of God in order for it to be effective as God intended it.
3. In response to Paul's claim, the high priest commanded those who were close to Paul to strike him on the mouth.
4. Paul, not knowing that it was the high priest who gave the command predicted that God was going to strike the one who gave the command.
5. Paul said that because he knew whoever had commanded him to be struck without a fair trial violated the Law of Moses (cf. Deut 25:1-2).
6. When they told Paul he had spoken these words against the high priest, Paul apologized, quoting from the Law of Moses.

(2) (23:6-9) PAUL DIVIDED THE SANHEDRIN

1. Paul knew there were both Pharisees and Sadducees present in the Sanhedrin.
 - a. As we studied earlier, the Pharisees believed in the resurrection, angels and spirits while the Sadducees did not believe in any of these things (cf. v. 8).
2. With that fact in mind Paul announced he was a Pharisee and he was being judged concerning the hope of the resurrection of the dead.

- a. He knew this statement would divide the Sanhedrin.
3. And that is exactly what happened - the Sanhedrin was divided into two opposing groups.
4. Then some of the Pharisees said they found nothing against Paul and that if an angel or spirit had spoken to him, the Sanhedrin should not fight against God.

(3) (23:10-11) ROMAN COMMANDER RESCUED PAUL AND THE LORD SPOKE TO HIM

1. When the commander saw Paul might be pulled to pieces by the violent, squabbling Jews he had the soldiers bring Paul back to the barracks.
2. Then the following night the Lord told Paul to be cheerful because he was going to testify to the Lord in Rome just as he had in Jerusalem.

m. (23:12-15) SOME JEWS PLOTTED TO KILL PAUL

1. Some Jews were so determined to kill Paul they bound themselves by an oath to neither eat nor drink until they killed him.
2. These men went to the chief priests and elders and recommended that they make a suggestion to the Roman commander.
3. That suggestion was to request permission to bring Paul back before the Sanhedrin to ask further questions.
4. But, of course, their real purpose was to kill Paul before he came close to the Sanhedrin.

n. (23:16-22) PAUL LEARNED OF THE PLOT AND SOUGHT HELP FROM THE ROMAN COMMANDER

1. Paul learned of the planned ambush through his nephew and asked one of the centurions to take his nephew to the commander.
2. Paul's nephew revealed the whole plan to the Roman commander who then sent the young man away commanding him not to tell anyone he had revealed this information.

o. (23:23-30) THE COMMANDER DELIVERED PAUL TO FELIX THE GOVERNOR IN CAESAREA

1. The commander authorized a force of 200 soldiers, 70 horsemen and 200 spearmen to take Paul to Felix the governor during the night.
2. In verse 26 we learn the Roman commander's name was Claudius Lysias and that he sent a letter to the governor with Paul and the soldiers.
3. In that letter, Claudius Lysias recognized Paul was not guilty of anything worthy of death or imprisonment, but was accused concerning questions of the Jewish law.
4. The commander also wrote that he had told Paul's accusers to make these charges before Felix.

2. (23:31-26:32) IN CAESAREA

a. (23:31-35) PAUL SENT TO FELIX

1. The soldiers delivered Paul and the letter to Felix in Caesarea.
2. Felix placed Paul in Herod's headquarters until his accusers came to Caesarea.

b. (24:1-9) PAUL'S ACCUSERS PRESENTED CHARGES AGAINST HIM BEFORE FELIX

1. After five days the high priest and elders came down with an orator (literally, an attorney) named Tertullus to present evidence to the governor against Paul.
2. Tertullus flattered Felix then asked him to listen to a few words from him.
3. Tertullus said the following things about Paul:
 - a. He was a plague.
 - b. He created dissension among all the Jews.
 - c. He was a ringleader among the sect of the Nazarenes.
 - d. He tried to profane (make common or contaminate) the temple.
4. Then Tertullus claimed that the Jews seized Paul and intended to judge him by their law, but Lysias came and took Paul away from them violently.
5. Tertullus closed his argument by saying Felix could determine all of these things by examining Paul.
6. The Jews agreed all of these things were true.

c. (24:10-21) PAUL RESPONDED TO THE CHARGES

(1) (24:10-13) HE SAID THEY COULD NOT PROVE THE CHARGES

1. Paul pointed out that it had been no more than twelve days since he went to Jerusalem to worship.
 - a. In saying this he was proving the point that he had not been in Jerusalem long enough to really create dissension among the Jews as they charged.
2. Furthermore, Paul said that while he was there the Jews did not find him doing any of the following:
 - a. Disputing in the temple with anyone.
 - b. Encouraging the crowd to riot, either in the synagogues or in the city.
3. Paul concluded by saying they could not prove the charges against him.

(2) (24:14-16) HE SUMMARIZED HIS BELIEF AND PRACTICES

1. Paul did confess he worshiped God and believed what was recorded in the Old Testament.
2. He also stated he had hope in God that there will be a resurrection of the dead.
3. Furthermore, that resurrection will include the just and the unjust (cf. Jn 5:28-29).

4. Then Paul pointed out he always tried to live in good conscience toward God and men (an admirable goal)!

(3) (24:17-21) PAUL TOLD WHAT HE WAS ACTUALLY DOING IN JERUSALEM WHEN ACCUSED

1. Paul reported he actually came to Jerusalem to bring charitable offerings to his nation.
2. Next, Paul declared some Jews from Asia found him in the temple without a multitude, and without a disturbance being caused by him!
 - a. He reminded Felix that those Jews from Asia should have been before Felix to make charges if they had anything against Paul (obviously, they were not there)!
3. Then Paul challenged any of the Jews who were there to document what wrong he was legitimately charged with by the Sanhedrin council.
4. Finally, Paul offered that the only thing they might have against him was his statement before the Sanhedrin that he was before them because of his belief in the resurrection.

d. (24:22-27) FELIX ADJOURNED THE PROCEEDINGS / PAUL REASONED WITH HIM / FELIX REPLACED BY FESTUS

1. Felix adjourned the proceedings saying he would wait until the commander Lysias came before he made a decision.
2. Felix allowed Paul some liberty including allowing his friends to provide for and visit him.
3. Later, Felix and his Jewish wife Drusilla sent for Paul to hear concerning the faith in Christ.
4. Paul reasoned with them about three major subject areas:
 - a. Righteousness -
 - (1) Justice in one's relationship with God and man.
 - b. Self-control -
 - (1) The Jewish historian Josephus reported that Felix and Drusilla were living in adultery.
 - (2) Thus, self-control was an especially appropriate topic for Paul to bring to their attention!
 - c. The judgment to come -
 - (1) All men and women everywhere need to be reminded of that day when we will stand before the Lord and give an accounting to Him (cf. 17:30-31; Eccl 12:13-14; Rom 14:12)!
5. When Paul spoke these sobering words Felix was afraid (cf. 2 Cor 5:10-11)!
6. Please pause a moment to think about the courage of Paul in speaking these strong words to Felix.
 - a. Felix had the authority to release Paul, or to keep him confined.

- b. For many of us today the temptation would be to try to please Felix by speaking smooth words and a soft, inoffensive message.
 - c. Paul loved the Lord and Felix more than to do that!
 - d. What an example for elders, preachers, teachers and each Christian today (Eph 4:15; Gal 4:16)!
7. However, Felix told Paul that he would call for him at a more convenient time!
 8. After that day Felix talked with Paul often hoping Paul would give him money (a bribe)!
 9. After two years Felix was replaced as governor by Porcius Festus.
 10. Festus wanted to please the Jews so he left Paul in prison.

e. (25:1-5) FESTUS WENT TO JERUSALEM AND ASKED THE JEWS TO BRING CHARGES AGAINST PAUL IN CAESAREA

1. When Festus went to Jerusalem the leaders of the Jews asked him to send Paul to Jerusalem so the Jews could ambush and kill him.
2. Festus said Paul would stay in Caesarea, but he invited the Jews to go there and accuse Paul.

f. (25:6-12) PAUL CLAIMED INNOCENCE BEFORE FESTUS AND APPEALED TO CAESAR

1. The Jews went down to Caesarea and made many serious complaints against Paul which they could not prove.
2. In verse 8 Paul responded by denying he had committed offenses against any of the following:
 - a. The law of the Jews.
 - b. The temple.
 - c. Caesar.
3. Because Festus wanted to please the Jews he asked Paul to go to Jerusalem to be judged by the Sanhedrin in the presence of Festus (“be judged before me”).
4. Paul replied by making the following points:
 - a. He was at Caesar’s judgment seat where he should be judged.
 - b. He had done no wrong to the Jews, as Festus knew.
 - c. He was willing to die if he had done anything worthy of death.
 - d. If he was not guilty of doing wrong to the Jews no person could legitimately deliver him to them.
 - e. He appealed to Caesar (which was his right as a Roman citizen).
5. Festus said that since Paul appealed to Caesar he would be sent to him.

g. (25:13-22) FESTUS DISCUSSED PAUL’S CASE WITH KING AGRIPPA, WHO AGREED TO HEAR PAUL

1. Some time later King Agrippa and Bernice visited Festus and he told them about Paul.

2. In verses 15-19 Festus reviewed Paul's case with Agrippa.
3. Festus summarized the charges by saying there were some questions about the Jewish religion and a man named Jesus who had died but Paul claimed was alive.
4. Then Festus told Agrippa about Paul's appeal to "Augustus" (Caesar).
 - a. Festus was troubled about Paul's case because he did not have, and could not obtain, any legitimate charges against Paul and he needed charges in order to forward the case to Caesar.
5. Agrippa asked to hear Paul and Festus said he would do so the next day.

h. (25:23-27) PAUL BROUGHT BEFORE FESTUS AND AGRIPPA

1. The next day Festus had Paul brought before Agrippa, the commanders and the prominent men of the city and briefly reviewed his case before them.
2. Then Festus admitted he did not have anything certain to write to Caesar so he was hoping Agrippa would examine Paul and find something to write to Caesar.
3. Festus recognized that it was unreasonable to send a prisoner to Rome without specifying the charges against him.

i. (26:1-32) PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE AGRIPPA

(1) (26: 1-5) HIS LIFE AS A HEBREW

1. Paul appealed to Agrippa to listen patiently since he was an expert in the customs of the Jews.
2. Paul pointed out that from his youth he had lived as a Jew including his later service in the strictest sect of the Jews, the Pharisees (cf. 22:3).

(2) (26:6-8) HIS BELIEF OF THE REAL REASON THAT HE WAS BEING CHARGED

1. Paul stated he was being judged for the hope of the promise of God to the fathers of Israel, i.e., the hope of the resurrection from the dead.
2. Then Paul asked Agrippa and the others why they thought it was unbelievable that God raises the dead.

(3) (26:9-11) HIS ORIGINAL PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANITY

1. In these verses Paul repeated the story of his persecution of Christianity (cf. 22:4-5, 19).
2. In verse 11 one thing he added in this account was that he had made Christians blaspheme, i.e., speak evil against the Lord.

(4) (26:12-18) HIS VISION OF THE RISEN JESUS ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

1. In verses 12-15 Paul repeated the account of the vision of Jesus on the road to Damascus (cf. 9:3-8; 22:6-11).
2. In verses 16-18 Paul revealed some additional information not found in the other two accounts.
3. First, three reasons were given for the Lord appearing to Paul, as follows:
 - a. To make him a minister.
 - b. To make him a witness of the things he had seen.
 - c. To make him a witness of things Jesus would reveal to him.
4. Second, that Jesus would deliver Paul from the Jews and the Gentiles, and would send him to the Gentiles.
5. Jesus had three reasons for sending Paul to the Gentiles, as follows:
 - a. To open their eyes (through the preaching of the gospel),
 - b. To turn them from darkness (sin) to light (righteousness) and
 - c. To turn them from the power of Satan to God.
6. Two of the purposes of opening their eyes and turning them were that they may:
 - a. Receive forgiveness of sins, and
 - b. Receive an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Christ.
 - (1) The inheritance is eternal life reserved in heaven (1 Pet 1:3-4).
7. Please remember that the way God sanctifies people (sets them apart) is through His wonderful word (cf. Jn 17:17)!
8. When we see these statements from Jesus to Paul we have to be impressed with the urgency, beauty and great privilege of spreading the gospel through *words* and *actions*.
9. Those are the *only* ways in which we will turn people from their wicked lives to being servants of God thus receiving forgiveness and an inheritance!

(5) (26:19-23) HIS OBEDIENCE TO THE VISION

1. Paul declared to Agrippa that he responded obediently to Jesus' invitation to preach His glorious message of salvation.
2. In verse 20 we see that among the things which Paul preached was the need to do the following things:
 - a. Repent (i.e., based upon godly sorrow for sins), have a change of mind (cf. 2:38).
 - b. Turn to God - this includes a turning away from the past sinful life and it includes baptism for the forgiveness of sins (cf. 3:19).
 - c. To do works befitting repentance, i.e., if we really repent people will be able to know that by our change in actions, our changed lifestyle (cf. Mt 3:8; Col 3:1-23).
3. In verse 21 Paul boldly stated that his preaching of this message was the real reason why the Jews seized him in the temple and tried to kill him.
4. However, through God's help, Paul had escaped and been able to preach the same things which Moses and the other prophets had said would come to pass.
5. Those things included the following:
 - a. The Christ would suffer (cf. Lk 24:26,44-46; Isa 53),

- b. He would be the first to rise from the dead and
 - c. He would proclaim light to the Jews and Gentiles.
6. The statement that Christ would be the first to rise from the dead is an interesting one!
 7. That is true because Christ was certainly *not* the first person to rise from the dead in order of time.
 8. For example, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead before He rose from the dead Himself.
 9. Then, what does the statement that Christ would be the first to rise from the dead really mean?
 10. It simply means that He was the first in rank, power and office who would rise from the dead.
 - a. He would be the most distinguished, the chief, the head of those who rose from the dead.
 - b. He rose from the dead, never to die again!
 - c. Compare with Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:18.

j. (26:24-32) FESTUS INTERRUPTED / PAUL ADDRESSED AGRIPPA

1. At this point Festus interrupted Paul and said he was beside himself because his much learning was driving him mad!
2. Paul replied he was not mad, but was simply speaking words of truth and reason and Agrippa knew these things because they were done openly.
3. Then Paul asked Agrippa if he believed the prophets and confidently stated he knew he did.
4. Agrippa responded by saying Paul *almost* persuaded him to be a Christian!
5. Paul dramatically stated his fervent desire that not only Agrippa but everybody there could be like him (i.e., Paul a Christian) except for his “chains” (imprisonment).
6. After Paul spoke, Agrippa, Festus and others with them arose and talked among themselves.
7. They agreed Paul was not doing anything worthy of death or imprisonment and said if he had not appealed to Caesar he might have been set free.

3. (27:1-28:15) PAUL WENT TO ROME

a. (27:1-8) SAILING AGAINST THE WINDS TO FAIR HAVENS

1. It was decided to send Paul with some other prisoners to Italy under the supervision of a centurion named Julius.
2. Among those with Paul was Aristarchus of Thessalonica (cf. 20:4) and Luke (“us”).
3. According to verse 3 their first stop was at Sidon where Julius treated Paul kindly by allowing him to see his friends and receive care.
4. From there they sailed to the north of the island of Cyprus and landed at the city of Myra in the province of Lycia.
5. In Myra the centurion found a ship sailing to Italy and put Paul and the others on board.

6. They made slow, difficult progress off of Cnidus, then sailed under the shelter of the island of Crete, past Salmone to a place called Fair Havens.

b. (27:9-13) PAUL'S WARNING OF DANGER IGNORED

1. In verse 9 reference is made to "the Fast" already being over.
 - a. This is an apparent reference to the fast during the Day of Atonement.
 - b. This would have been around October.
 - c. Traveling by ship in that area at that time was dangerous.
2. On the basis of that danger Paul warned the centurion and others as follows:
 - a. The voyage would end with disaster.
 - b. There would be much loss of cargo.
 - c. Also loss of many lives.
3. The centurion ignored Paul's warning choosing to listen to the ship's owner and captain instead.
4. Since the harbor at Fair Havens was not suitable to spend the winter in they decided to try to sail to the harbor of Phoenix, sailing close to the island of Crete.

c. (27:14-20) THE SHIP WAS DRIVEN BY A FIERCE WIND, CAUSING DESPAIR AMONG SOME PASSENGERS

1. In verses 13-17 we learn that shortly after they left Fair Havens they encountered a fierce wind called "Euroclydon" which drove them out of control.
2. In verses 18 and 19 the ship was tossed around so badly by the storm they were forced to lighten its load by throwing things overboard.
3. In verse 20 after not seeing the sun or stars for three days they gave up hope of being saved.

d. (27:21-26) PAUL'S PREDICTION OF SHIPWRECK WITHOUT LOSS OF LIFE

1. After going without food for a long time, Paul rebuked them for not listening to him the first time.
2. Then, in verses 22-26, Paul told them to be encouraged because there would be no loss of life, just the ship.
3. He told them how an angel of God had told him:
 - a. Do not be afraid.
 - b. You must be brought before Caesar.
 - c. God has granted you the safety of all those who are sailing with you.
4. In verses 25 and 26 Paul affirmed His belief in what the angel had said; however, he said they were going to run aground on a certain island.

e. (27:27-32) SOME SAILORS UNSUCCESSFULLY TRIED TO ESCAPE

1. On the fourteenth night the sailors sensed they were coming close to some land.
2. As they measured the depth of the water they found it was getting more and more shallow, indicating land was near.
3. To avoid running aground they put four anchors out and prayed for day to come.
4. After that some of the sailors tried to escape from the ship using a smaller boat.
5. However, Paul told the centurion that unless the sailors stayed on board the rest could not be saved.
6. As a result of Paul's warning, the soldiers cut the ropes, allowing the smaller boat to fall, thus keeping the sailors from escaping in it.

f. (27:33-37) PAUL ENCOURAGED ALL TO EAT AND REMINDED THEM THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE HURT

1. After they had not eaten for fourteen days Paul encouraged them to eat in order to survive since not one of them would be harmed in the storm.
2. Then Paul gave thanks to God in the presence of them all and ate some food.
3. That encouraged the rest of them to eat too.
4. In verse 37 Luke revealed there were 276 people on the ship.

g. (27:38-44) LAND SIGHTED / SHIP RAN AGROUND / ALL MADE IT SAFELY TO LAND (MALTA)

1. When all had eaten enough they lightened the ship more, including the wheat which they had been carrying.
2. When it was day they sighted land and attempted to run the ship on a beach.
3. However, they ran aground on a reef before they made it to the beach and the ship began to be broken up by the violence of the waves.
4. In verse 42 we learn that the soldiers intended to kill the prisoners to keep them from escaping.
5. However, the centurion wanted to save Paul so he kept the soldiers from killing the prisoners.
6. Then the centurion told those who could swim to jump over board and swim to the land.
7. The rest of the men went on boards and pieces of the ship.
8. As a result of these actions all escaped safely to land just as Paul had predicted!
 - a. The men of this ship were spared from death because they were with Paul and the Lord wanted Paul to go to Rome to testify for Him.

h. (28:1-6) KIND RECEPTION BY NATIVES / PAUL BITTEN BY A VIPER

1. When they escaped safely to the island they found that it was called "Malta."

2. The natives showed unusual kindness by doing two things:
 - a. Making them feel welcome.
 - b. Building a fire to keep them warm in the midst of the rain and cold.
3. However, as Paul was placing some wood on the fire a deadly viper (snake) fastened on to his hand.
4. When the natives saw that they concluded Paul was a murderer who was receiving justice and would not be allowed to live.
5. They expected Paul to swell up and suddenly fall dead.
6. But, when Paul shook the snake off and suffered no harm the natives changed their minds about him.
7. They watched him a long time and when they were sure that no harm had come to him they were convinced that he was a god!
8. This was a remarkable fulfillment of Mark 16:17-18.
 - a. With all kindness and love we ask why those who claim to have miraculous powers cannot do this today.
 - b. They claim to have the same powers that Paul and others had in the first century.
 - c. They claim to be able to do other things in these two verses which are easier to imitate.
 - d. Yet, they *cannot* drink deadly poison and be bitten by deadly snakes without harm.
 - e. The reason they cannot do those things is simple and clear.
 - f. They do not have the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit and their claims are absolutely false!

i. (28:7-10) FURTHER KINDNESS SHOWN

1. In these verses we learn that Publius, one of the leading citizens of the island, treated Paul and his group courteously for three days.
2. When Paul learned that Publius' father was sick with a fever and dysentery he prayed, laid hands on him and healed him.
3. Then others who had diseases came to Paul and were healed.
4. In gratitude the natives honored Paul and his group and provided many necessary things when they left later.

j. (28:11-15) SAILING TO ROME, THEY LANDED AT PUTEOLI / BRETHREN WERE FOUND THERE AND ALONG THE ROAD TO ROME

1. After three months Paul left Malta and headed for Rome.
2. They first landed at Syracuse, then Rhegium and then Puteoli where they met brethren who invited them to stay seven days.
3. Next, as they went toward Rome they were met by brethren from as far away as Appii Forum and Three Inns (Taverns).

4. Before we leave this section please notice the beautiful statement at the end of verse 15. When Paul saw his brethren he thanked God and was encouraged!
 - a. This is a great example of the joy we should have to see and meet with our brothers and sisters in Christ, even those we may have not met before.
 - b. What a comfort and what peace of mind it should give us to be able to travel all throughout the world and still find some fellow-members of the family of God!
 - c. We rejoice, are comforted and have peace of mind for reasons such as the following:
 - (1) 2 Peter 1:1.
 - (2) Jude 3.
 - (3) 1 John 3:1.
 - (4) Romans 8:16-17.
 - (5) Romans 12:5,15; 1 Corinthians 12:26.
 - (6) 1 Thessalonians 5:11.
 - (7) Hebrews 10:24.
 - (8) Colossians 2:2.
 - (9) John 13:34-35.
 - (10) 1 John 3:16.
 - d. Reasons like this are why Paul thanked God and was encouraged when he met his beloved brothers and sisters in Christ.

4. (28:16-31) PAUL PREACHED IN PRISON FOR TWO YEARS

a. (28:16-22) PAUL ARRIVED IN ROME / SPOKE TO LEADING JEWS WHO WANTED TO HEAR HIS THOUGHTS

1. When they arrived in Rome the centurion delivered the other prisoners to the captain of the guard, but allowed Paul to be guarded only by one soldier.
 - a. This was a great tribute to the character of Paul and the trust the centurion had in him.
2. After three days Paul gathered the leaders of the Jews together and spoke to them.
3. He assured them he had not done anything against “our people” (the Jews).
4. He then related how he was brought before the Roman officials who found him not guilty of anything worthy of death.
5. However, when the Jews spoke against that decision Paul was forced to appeal to Caesar for his own safety, not because he accused the Jews of anything.
6. Next, in verse 20, Paul reported to the Jews that he was bound with his chain because of “the hope of Israel.”
 - a. This is an apparent reference to Israel’s long-held hope of the Messiah coming into the world.
 - b. Thus, Paul was saying it was because of his preaching Jesus as the Messiah that he was a prisoner.
 - c. That is why Paul often referred to himself as “the prisoner of the Lord” (cf. Eph 3:1; 4:1)!
7. In response the Jews said they had not heard anything evil about Paul from their fellow Jews.

8. In addition they wanted to hear what he had to say because “this sect” (i.e., Christianity) was spoken against everywhere.

b. (28:23-29) PAUL SPOKE AGAIN, QUOTING THE SCRIPTURES / MIXED REACTION

1. The Jews appointed a day when many came to hear Paul.
2. At that time Paul persuaded them concerning the kingdom (church) of God and Jesus.
3. And, he did that by quoting from the Law of Moses and the prophets from morning until evening.
 - a. Incidentally, contrary to some elders, preachers and teachers today Paul believed in preaching and teaching by *quoting the scriptures* (cf. 1 Pet 4:11; Isa 8:20; 2 Tim 4:1ff)!
4. As is usually the case, some who heard Paul were persuaded by his words of truth and some chose to disbelieve.
5. Before they left Paul said that the Holy Spirit had spoken accurately through Isaiah the words recorded in 6:9-10 concerning the people of Israel.
6. Please notice the following powerful points contained in that remarkable prophecy:
 - a. The people would hear, but not understand.
 - b. The people would see, but not perceive (i.e., not accurately evaluate what their senses were telling them).
 - c. Their hearts had become dull (i.e., not sensitive to the input they were receiving; hardened).
 - d. They allowed their ears to become hard of hearing.
 - e. They had closed their eyes so they could not see.
 - f. As a result of their choices they *would not* see, hear or understand so that they could turn to the Lord (repent and obey) so that He could heal them.
7. What a remarkably accurate description of many of the Jews during Paul’s time as we have seen many times in our study of Acts!
8. Paul concluded by telling the Jews that because of their hardened hearts the salvation of God had been sent to the Gentiles - *and they would hear it!*
9. Upon hearing these words the Jews left and had a great dispute among themselves.

c. (28:30-31) FOR TWO YEARS, PAUL PREACHED THE KINGDOM OF GOD

1. Paul spent two years in his own rented house and received all who came to him.
2. And, in verse 31 we see a very appropriate end to this remarkable book in that Paul’s activities were described as follows:
 - a. He preached the kingdom (church) of God.
 - b. He taught the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - c. He did that with all confidence (cf. 2 Tim 1:12).
 - d. And he did not allow anyone to forbid him to do so (cf. 20:23-24)!

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE PROOF FROM PROPHECY (25-28)

Gary Workman

The quotation from David

In order to prove the resurrection of Christ to his Jewish hearers who already believed in the Old Testament Scriptures, Peter quoted Psalm 16:8-11 from the Septuagint (Greek) translation. Since the Jews never expected the true Messiah to be murdered, and since they also considered that anyone crucified was under God's curse (Deut 21: 23), Peter needed to demonstrate the truthfulness of his previous statement that Jesus had been delivered up according to the predetermined plan of God. Peter also needed to prove his assertion that God had raised Jesus from the dead. We are indebted to Peter and Paul (Acts 13:35-37) for verifying the Hebrew title of Psalm 16 - that David was the inspired penman.

Peter asserted that the quoted words were said by David "concerning him," that is, Jesus. These verses are *not* to be understood as originally spoken by David in reference to himself and only reapplied by Peter to Jesus as an accommodation, for the thrust of Peter's argument in explanation of the quotation (Acts 2:29-32) was that the words *could not* have applied to David. They referred to Jesus and to no one else!

The intermediate state

"Hades" ("hell" in KJV) in verse 27 is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Sheol, which is found in the passage Peter is quoting from Psalm 16. Of the 65 times this word occurs in the Old Testament, the KJV rendered it as "hell" and "grave" 31 times each, plus 3 times as "pit." This was an unfortunate blunder, for Sheol *never* means anything but the intermediate state of the soul. It is never translated in the Septuagint by *mnema* (the Greek word for grave or tomb - Acts 2:29), but only by Hades. Nor is the Hebrew word for grave (*qeber*) ever translated as Hades. This demonstrates that, as David indicated, only the soul enters Sheol/Hades. The "corruption" David spoke of is the normal decay of the body. He affirms that in the case of Jesus both his soul and his undecayed body would return, obviously to be reunited in resurrection.

Another key passage for our understanding of the intermediate state of the dead is Luke 16:19-31. There Jesus tells of an ungodly rich man who died and his body was buried, yet he (his soul) continued on in conscious existence in "Hades." A righteous beggar also died and he (his soul) was "carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom." The passage further tells us that the intermediate state has two separate divisions with an impassable gulf in between. Hades is the inclusive term for the entire realm since both the wicked (Lk 16:23) and the righteous (Acts 2:27,31) have gone there. The state of the wicked is further described as "torment" (Lk 16:23-25,28) and the state of the righteous as "Paradise" (Lk 23:43).

From these facts, however, we must not draw the conclusion that Hades is some one particular place as in our three-dimensional world. The word simply means “unseen,” and since it is the realm of disembodied *spirits*, it may refer more to an unseen *condition* or state than to an unseen *place* such as has often been diagrammed on charts. The question may legitimately be asked, therefore, where the dead are actually located - especially the righteous dead about whom we have more information.

To answer the question, one cannot rightly appeal to Luke 23:46 and Acts 7:59, for at death every spirit, whether good or bad, “returneth unto God” (Eccl 12:7). The spirit of every man “goeth upward” (Eccl 3:21) to be placed where God sees fit. However, Paul said of the righteous that when our mortal body is “dissolved” we have a habitation “in the heavens” (2 Cor 5:1). Further, Paul said that to be “absent from the body” is to be “at home with the Lord” (v. 8) and that he longed “to depart and be with Christ” (Phil 1:23). It has been objected, though, that we must not ignore the omnipresence of Christ. It is true that God can be in Sheol (Psa 139:8) and that Christ promised to be “with” us even here (Mt 28:20), but the above verses indicate a presence with Christ in the same literal sense that we are now in the body. Here we are “absent” from him, but there we are “at home” with him. And since Jesus is in heaven (Mk 16:19), this must be where the righteous go also to be with him.

There is other strong indication in the New Testament that Hades for the righteous is in heaven. Paul located Paradise in “the third heaven” (2 Cor 12:1-4). The first heaven is atmospheric (Jer 4:25) and the second is sidereal (outer space - Isa 13:10). The third is God’s own dwelling place (Dan 2:28) - “the heaven of heavens” (1 Kgs 8:27). Paul was caught up to the latter and into Paradise. There is only one such place, since in all three references to it (Lk 23:43; 2 Cor 12:4; Rev 2:7) it is called “the” Paradise. There the tree of life is located (Rev 2:7), but the tree of life is in heaven (Rev 22:1-3,14). Righteous souls are therefore in the heavenly realm. The book of Revelation clearly pictures them there prior to judgment day in 6:9-11, and this is the consistent scene that book presents (cf. 7:9-17; 11:12; 15:1-4; 20:4-6). Finally, at the end of time, Jesus will return from heaven (2 Thess 1:7) and bring the souls of those saints “with him” to be reunited with their resurrected bodies (1 Thess 4:14-16).

It has been objected that departed spirits could surely not occupy heaven without seeing God (Rev 22:4) and that since “no man hath seen God at any time” (1 Jn 4:12), no human soul has gone to heaven. However, this ignores the case of Paul (2 Cor 12:1-4), and 1 John 4:12 was written after that visit. Perhaps our seeing God is reserved only for future eternity in glorified bodies. Then again, “no man” may simply mean *no mortal man on earth*. Another objection is based on Acts 2:34 and John 3:13 - that neither David nor anyone but Jesus has ascended into heaven. These passages, though, speak of *bodily* ascension. This is clear from the fact that Paul *was* “caught up” into heaven. Peter’s argument is that David’s body has not left its tomb and that his soul is still in Hades (Acts 2:29-31). It is only at the end of time when death is no more (1 Cor 15:54-55) that we will be released from the grave (Jn 5:28-29) and ransomed

from Sheol/Hades (Hos 13:14) to be “caught up” bodily “in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thess 4:17). But the question is - where are disembodied souls meanwhile?

It may be that prior to the ascension of Jesus righteous souls were not yet in heaven, for Jesus went “into heaven itself” (Heb 9:24) as a “forerunner” (6:19-20), “having obtained eternal redemption” (9:12), in order to cleanse the “heavenly things” (v. 23) and open the “way” for us (10:19-20). Whereas Paradise/Hades *may* have been moved to heaven as a result of the cross, it is more certain that it is *now there* (however long that has been the case), for Paul affirmed that it is. There righteous souls are told to “rest” until other earthly lives are over (Rev 6:11). We must therefore not confuse the intermediate state with some non-heavenly place. For the righteous, Hades is in the Paradise of heaven.

Taken From: McClish, Dub, Ed., *Studies In Acts*, Valid Publications, Denton: 1985, pp. 81-84.

APPENDIX B

THE BOOK OF ACTS AND ARCHAEOLOGY BY WAYNE JACKSON

INTRODUCTION

The study of Biblical archaeology is fascinating indeed. Though this area of scientific investigation is only about a century and a half old, it has yielded rich results. For example, approximately 500,000 cuneiform tablets have been exhumed from the dust heaps of the ancient Near East. In addition numerous manuscripts (papyrus and parchment) have disclosed their venerable secrets, and archaeologists have just scratched the surface. Only about 10 percent of the material discovered has thus far been published and there are many known sites which are as yet unexplored. For instance, in Palestine alone, of the 5,000 possible places for exploration, work has been done at only about 150 sites.

The book of Acts has been a beneficiary of a number of archaeological discoveries. In this presentation, we will highlight several of these.

ACTS AND CHRONOLOGY

Some religions, both ancient and modern, require no historical basis, for they depend upon ideas rather than events. Christianity is not one of these. It is a religion rooted in history; it is a system, therefore, that is *checkable* in terms of historical data. A part of that information deals with chronology.

The purpose of Bible chronology is to determine, as accurately as possible, the correct dates of events and persons recorded in the sacred narrative, in order that we may better understand their role in the great plan of Jehovah.

It is difficult to assign exact dates to many of the events in the New Testament for several reasons: First, there is the lack of data. The secular historians of the first century looked with contempt upon Christianity; consequently, they frequently ignored the events related to the church. Second, there was a variety of ways of reckoning chronology in those times so that chronological references in the literature of the period are sometimes very difficult to interpret. Third, the chronological idioms of those days contained some degree of elasticity. For instance, the Lord's reference to "three days and three nights" (Mt 12:40) was somewhat equivalent to our expression, "the day after tomorrow." For these reasons, many of the events recorded in the New Testament must be dated approximately.

One archaeological discovery, however, has helped us establish a key date in the book of Acts. While Paul was in Corinth, during the proconsulship of Gallio of Achaia, the Jews rose up against the apostle and brought him before Gallio's judgment seat

(Acts 18:12). Near the commencement of this century, in the city of Delphi (on the northern side of the Gulf of Corinth, six miles inland), a mutilated inscription was discovered that mentions Gallio (with his official title, "proconsul") and dates the time of his administration. The inscription contains a portion of a letter from the emperor Claudius to the citizens of Delphi, which contains mention of "Lucius Junius Gallio, my friend and proconsul of Achaia," and also notes the date of the 12th tribunician year of Claudius, for the 26th time acclaimed Imperator. This information, together with other data, has led Biblical scholars to conclude that Gallio commenced his post about July 1, A.D. 51.¹ As one writer notes:

The impression given by the book of Acts is that Gallio had arrived in Corinth only shortly before the time when the Jews brought Paul into his presence. Since at that time the apostle had been in the city a year and six months (Acts 18:11), we can date Paul's arrival in Corinth (Acts 18:1) with considerable confidence at the beginning of the year 50.²

Working backwards and forwards from this date, and correlating it with other literary references, enables scholars to put the book of Acts in chronological perspective.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE ACCURACY OF ACTS

The accuracy of Luke's writing in the book of Acts was questioned for many years by such scholars as Adolf Harnack of Germany, who in his book, *Luke the Physician* (1907), said: "St. Luke is an author whose writings read smoothly, but one has only to look somewhat more closely to discover that there is scarcely another writer in the New Testament who is so careless an historian as he." It was Harnack, however, who was careless in his charge, for Luke's historical references in the book of Acts have been vindicated repeatedly.

Sir William Ramsay, a skeptic who became convinced of the accuracy of Acts on the basis of his own personal explorations, declared that Luke "should be placed along with the very greatest of historians." This companion of Paul was a careful and meticulous writer. For instance, in Acts he mentions 32 countries, 54 cities, and 9 Mediterranean islands. He also names 95 persons in Acts, 62 of whom are not mentioned else-where in the New Testament. He is thoroughly familiar with the geographical and political conditions of his day. This is really amazing since the political/territorial situation of that time was in an almost constant state of flux. It is, therefore, a real test of a writer's accuracy to see whether he can keep such matters straight. Luke comes through with flying colors!

Sergius Paulus, the Proconsul

On Paul's first evangelistic tour, he and Barnabas came to the latter's native island of Cyprus. At Paphos, on the western end of the island, they encountered the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of understanding who was interested in the gospel, and

who, because of Paul's message, and the miracle performed on that occasion, eventually believed (Acts 13:6-12). For years, Bible critics asserted that Luke had erred in designating Sergius Paulus as a "proconsul." Augustus Caesar had divided the Roman provinces into two great classes - Senatorial and Imperial. The Senatorial were governed by proconsuls and the Imperial provinces were administered by propraetors or consular legates. The claim was thus made that Cyprus was Imperial, so Luke had employed the wrong title. It is now known, of course, that whereas Cyprus was made an Imperial province in 27 B.C., five years later Augustus gave it to the Senate in exchange for Dalmatia, and from that date it was, like other Senatorial provinces, governed by a proconsul.³ A coin from Cyprus mentions Proclus, the successor of Sergius Paulus, and calls him "Proconsul of the Cyprians." Other inscriptions record the names of several men denominated as "Sergius Paulus." A fragmentary Greek inscription from Kythraia in North Cyprus mentions "Quintus Sergius Paulus," a government official, though the name of his office is marred. From Soli, on the north coast of Cyprus, is an inscription which tells of a proconsul named Paulus.⁴ Archaeology has thus demonstrated that Luke was entirely correct in his use of the term "proconsul," and possibly even confirmed the exact man!

The Chief Men of Antioch

Continuing on that initial evangelistic campaign, Paul and Barnabas eventually came to Antioch of Pisidia. On the Sabbath day in the synagogue, Paul was invited to speak. So powerful was his sermon that he was given an appointment to preach again the following Sabbath. The Jews, however, were filled with jealousy, and they stirred up certain women of honorable estate and "the chief men of the city" and so brought a persecution upon the Lord's preachers (cf. Acts 13:50). When Luke uses the expression "the first men of the city" he correctly employs a title applied to a board of magistrates in Greek cities. See also Acts 28:7 where Publius is termed "the First Man" of the island of Malta. Archaeological inscriptions have confirmed the use of these official titles.⁵

Politarchs in Thessalonica

Upon reaching Thessalonica, Paul and Silas proclaimed the gospel, and again the Jews were stirred to persecute the brethren. Jason and certain others were dragged before the "rulers of the city" (Acts 17:6). The term in the Greek text is *politarchas*. Because this word was nowhere else found in ancient literature, liberal scholars again questioned the accuracy of Luke's language. But once more the spade vindicated the inspired historian and humiliated his critics. H. T. Frank comments:

The word *politarch* was unknown apart from its use in Acts 17:6. Then archaeologists found it in the Oxyrhynchus Papyri from Egypt and on the Galerian Arch at Thessalonica. In addition, two other inscriptions from this Macedonian city, one from the reign of Augustus (27 B.C.-A.D. 14) and the other from that of

Claudius (A.D. 49-54) contain it. We now know that politarchs were four or five civic officials who made up the governing councils of Macedonian cities.⁶

Conybeare and Howson noted, as a “curious coincidence,” that three of the names of the politarchs recorded in Thessalonica are identical to some of Paul’s friends of that area - Sopater of Beroea, Gaius the Macedonian, and Secundus of Thessalonica (cf. Acts 19:29; 20:4).⁷

Paul in Athens

In Acts 17 there is Luke’s exciting record of Paul’s visit to Athens, Greece. Again, archaeology has highlighted the precision of the inspired account. For instance, while in Athens Paul’s spirit was provoked within him because he beheld “the city full of idols” (Acts 17:16) and the apostle characterized the men of Athens as being “very religious” (17:22). It has been said that there were more gods in Athens than in the rest of Greece combined,⁸ and Pausanias, a writer of the 2nd century A.D., declared that it was easier to meet a god or goddess on Athens’ main street than a man! J. A. Thompson has noted that even today: “The extant remains of temples and religious sculptures certainly support Paul’s remark.”⁹

Second, in his great sermon the apostle alluded to an Athenian altar with this dedication inscription, *Agnosto Theo* (“To An Unknown God”). The men of Athens claimed to know everything, and they almost did, but they did not know the true God! Pausanias, in his *Description of Greece* (I.1.4), spoke of altars to gods called “unknown.” Philostratus, in the third century, observed that in Athens “even unknown divinities have altars erected to them” (*Life of Apollonius*. vi.3.5).¹⁰ In 1909 an inscription was found at Pergamum with this dedication: “To unknown gods.” Acts 17 is thus quite true to the 1st century situation.

Paul at Corinth

During the course of his second evangelistic journey, Paul came to Corinth, where he labored for 18 months (Acts 18:1-11). The Jews became agitated at his preaching, hence had the apostle brought before the judgment seat of Gallio, who was proconsul of Achaia. As we noted earlier, inscriptional evidence dating the administration of Gallio has been found at ancient Delphi. Moreover, in 1896 archaeologists commenced excavations at Corinth, which have continued over many years. Prominent in the city was the market place, called the agora. One of the discovered features of the agora was the “judgment seat” (Greek, *bema*), a stone platform which was probably the very place where Paul was accused before Gallio. Additionally, one of Paul’s converts from paganism was Erastus, who is called the “treasurer of the city” (Rom 16:23). In April of 1929, archaeologists uncovered in Old Corinth a slab bearing a Latin inscription translated as follows: “Erastus, in consideration of his aedileship [Commissioner of Public Works], laid this pavement at his own expense.”¹¹ It is possible that this Erastus

was the same person as that mentioned by Paul in Romans 16:23. At least the name was common to the literature of the period.

Paul at Ephesus

On his third evangelistic tour, Paul came to the great city of Ephesus where he established a congregation of the Lord's people (Acts 19:1-7). Luke's description of the apostle's three year work (cf. 20:31) in this place has proved to be accurate in many details. For example, Ephesus was known to be a center of superstition and magical arts (cf. 19:19). F. F. Bruce has noted that in the writings of antiquity the expression *Ephesia grammata* ("Ephesian writings") was commonly used for documents containing spells and formulae like the lengthy magical papyri to be found in collections in London, Paris and Leiden.¹² In Ephesus, there was the temple of the goddess Diana and one recalls how that Demetrius, a silversmith, was quite upset about the preaching of Paul, declaring that

this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they are no gods, that are made with hands: and not only is there danger that this our trade come into disrepute; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana be made of no account, and that she should even be deposed from her magnificence whom all Asia and the world worshipeth (Acts 19:26-27).

Silver coins, discovered in many places, show the validity of the claim that the goddess of Ephesus was revered all over the ancient world. They bear the inscription *Diana Ephesia* (cf. 19:34).

As a consequence of these charges, the city was thrown into an uproar and a great crowd of people rushed into the theatre (v. 29). This great theatre where the riot took place was located on the hollow slope of Mt. Pion. It was 495 feet in diameter. The seating arrangement was divided into three sections of twenty-two rows each and it could accommodate about 25,000 spectators. The ruins that one can see today represent a reconstruction after Paul's day, but the plan of the structure is essentially the same as in the apostle's time. Additionally, according to Luke's record in Acts 19, it was the "townclerk" who quieted the raging mob. Inscriptions discovered by the archaeologists reveal that the *grammateus* ("townclerk") "was the leading civic official, directly responsible to the Romans for such breaches of the peace as illicit assembly."¹³

The foregoing examples show, in a very wonderful way, how the science of archaeology has assisted in establishing the fact that the Biblical documents are first-rate pieces of literature; they are characterized by a precision of accuracy that is astounding. The famous archaeologist, Dr. Nelson Glueck, declared:

The reviewer has spent many years in Biblical archaeology, and, in company with his colleagues, has made discoveries confirming in outline or in detail historical statements in the Bible. He is prepared to go farther and say that no

archaeological discovery has ever been made that contradicts or contravenes historical statements in Scripture.¹⁴

ARCHAEOLOGY AND DOCTRINE IN ACTS

One must know the truth before he can be made free from sin (Jn 8:32); so, God has given the inspired Scriptures that man might have access to that body of Divine knowledge which can completely furnish him for the accomplishment of all good works (2 Tim 3:16-17). The way of salvation and acceptable service to God has been wonderfully evident throughout the many centuries of the Bible's existence. The truth about salvation is not dependent upon archaeological discoveries. However, in certain cases, archaeological evidence has reinforced certain doctrinal truths set forth in the book of Acts.

The main theme of the inspired preaching contained in the book of Acts is the resurrection of Christ from the dead (cf. Acts 2:31ff; 3:15; 4:2,10,33; 5:31; 10:40; 13:30ff; 17:18; etc.). There is, of course, evidence aplenty in the divine record itself for the bodily resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth from the grave. Indeed, Christianity is inexplicable apart from the resurrection! No wonder the great classical scholar, Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), who served as Professor of Modern History at Oxford, spoke of the resurrection as the "best attested fact in human history."¹⁵ In addition to the evidence of history, though, there is a good possibility that archaeology has further strengthened the case for the resurrection.

In 1930, historian Michel Rostovtzeff came upon a stone slab that has come to be known as the "Nazareth Decree." It appears to have reached Germany as early as 1878, but it was not translated until 1932. The text consists of twenty-two lines in Greek, and reads as follows:

Ordinance of Caesar. It is my pleasure that graves and tombs remain undisturbed in perpetuity for those who have made them for the cult of their ancestors, or children, or members of their houses. If, however, any man lay information that another has either demolished them, or has in any way extracted the buried, or has maliciously transferred them to other places in order to wrong them, or has displaced the sealing or other stones, against such a one I order that a trial be instituted, as in respect of the gods, so in regard to the cult of mortals. For it shall be much more obligatory to honor the buried. Let it be absolutely forbidden for anyone to disturb them. In the case of contravention I desire that the offender be sentenced to capital punishment on the charge of violation of sepulture.

Archaeologist E. M. Blaiklock believes this inscription was set up in Nazareth around 50 A.D. He observes:

If the date of this inscription is somewhere before the middle of the 1st century, and in spite of thirty years of active controversy, this dating appears the most likely, the emperor who caused it to be set up could have been none other than Claudius.¹⁶

But what is the significance of this marker which warns that “graves and tombs” are to “remain undisturbed” and that anyone apprehended transferring corpses to other places or displacing “the sealing or other stones” is to be put on trial? Professor Blaiklock pieces it together this way:

The early Christians must have been preaching the gospel in Rome by the early forties of the 1st century. Naturally, the fact of the bodily resurrection of Christ would be the central theme of their message. The Jewish enemies of Christianity would counter with the story that Christ’s disciples had stolen the body (cf. Mt 28:13). Possibly irritated by this controversy, Claudius “commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome” (Acts 18:2). We know, as the historian Suetonius records, that, “As the Jews were indulging in constant riots at the instigation of Chrestus [a corrupted form of the Greek, *Christos* - Christ], he banished them from Rome” (*Life of Claudius*, xxv.4). After further investigation of the matter, during which he learned that Christ was a native of Nazareth (Mt 2:23), it is very likely that the emperor authorized a decree to be erected (for emphasis in the Lord’s hometown) making body-stealing a capital crime. He thus hoped to prevent other religions from arising upon the basis of such stories. If this line of reasoning is correct, and it is probable that it is, then we have here the first *secular* testimony to the resurrection of Jesus Christ!

But let us note another example. More than one hundred times the New Testament mentions the rite of baptism. The word “baptize” is actually an Anglicized form of the Greek verb *baptizo*, meaning to immerse. New Testament baptism is immersion in water (Jn 3:5; Rom 6:3-4). Some religious groups, of course, insist upon allowing the practice of “sprinkling” as a substitute for Biblical immersion, and some drastic attempts have been made to justify this position.

In 1857, J. A. Alexander, the great scholar of Princeton, whom many considered to be the finest mind of American Presbyterianism, authored his famous *Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. Therein he contended that 3,000 persons could not have been immersed on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:41) since “Jerusalem has always been remarkably destitute of water, the fountain of Siloam being its only constant source.”¹⁷ This is a classic example of a man’s theology taking precedence over the Biblical text.

Twenty-two years later (1879), Professor J. W. McGarvey visited Jerusalem and made extensive studies of the pools of that city. His careful research completely destroyed the assertion that Jerusalem was “remarkably destitute of water.” In his book, *Lands of the Bible*, which was declared by critics to be the most valuable work yet published on Palestine, and which was used as a textbook in several theological seminaries, McGarvey devoted an entire section of one chapter to a thorough discus-

sion of the "Pools of Jerusalem." He carefully measured numerous pools in the environs of Jerusalem and demonstrated that there was an adequate water supply in the city. In addition, he pointed out that "under almost every building of any importance in the city there are one or more cisterns which receive the water from the roof and court of the same; and many of these are of large dimensions."¹⁸

In a recent issue of the journal, *Ministry*, Dr. George Rice of Andrews University observes:

The evolution of Christian baptism through the centuries has been recorded in mortar and bricks, paint and mosaics. Among the ruins of early Christian structures, and also in ancient churches still in use, the history of Christian baptism can be traced. Paintings in catacombs and churches, mosaics on floors, walls, and ceilings, sculptured reliefs, and drawings in ancient New Testament manuscripts add details to this history, as well as raising interesting questions that need further investigation. *The record left by these various witnesses overwhelmingly testifies to immersion as the normal mode of baptism in 10 to 14 centuries.*¹⁹

Rice further notes that when imperial persecution drove the Christians underground, they constructed baptistries in the catacombs at Rome. "The remains of these baptistries stand as the oldest archaeological witness to the rite of Christian baptism." As time went on, and infant baptism was introduced, and gradually became more popular, a decided change occurred in the size and shape of the baptistries.

Another controversy of the religious world concerns the purpose of baptism. Many people, correctly rejecting the false doctrine of salvation upon the basis of works of human merit, have erroneously concluded that no works - *of any type* - are involved in salvation. Hence, they have overlooked the clear connection between baptism (which is *not* a work of human merit; cf. Titus 3:5) and forgiveness of sins in such passages as Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38; 22:16, 1 Peter 3:21, etc.

Two passages in Acts have been illuminated by discoveries from the Greek papyri. In connection with the conversions of both the Samaritans and the men of Ephesus, the inspired historian declares that they were baptized "into the name [*eis to onoma*] of the Lord Jesus." What did Luke's expression "into the name" mean? Scholars were uncertain. Then archaeologists began to discover numerous Greek papyri containing the phrase *eis to onoma*. It was a technical expression denoting "into the possession" of someone. Arndt and Gingrich note that the phrase suggested that

the one who is baptized becomes the possession of and comes under the protection of the one whose name he bears; he is under the control of the effective power of the name and the One who bears the name, *i.e.*, he is dedicated to them.²⁰

It may thus be logically argued: one who is not possessed by Christ cannot be saved. But one is not possessed by the Lord until the point of his baptism. Therefore, one is not saved until he is baptized. This conclusion, of course, is borne out by other passages in Acts (2:38; 22:16).

CONCLUSION

The Christian has nothing to fear from the investigations of true science. The science of archaeology has been, and will continue to be, a genuine friend of the Bible student. We certainly endorse the sentiments of Sir Frederic Kenyon, formerly Director of the British Museum, who affirmed that "the Bible can do nothing but gain from an increase of knowledge "such as is brought forth by the discoveries of archaeology."²¹

ENDNOTES

1. F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), p. 253.
2. Jack Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946), p. 282.
3. F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), pp. 254-255.
4. Bruce, [Footnote 1], p. 161.
5. A. T. Robertson, *Luke the Historian in the Light of Research* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), Reprint, p. 187.
6. H. T. Frank, *An Archaeological Companion to the Bible* (London: SCM Press, 1964), p. 306.
7. W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson, *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1889), p. 259.
8. William Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955), p. 141.
9. J. A. Thompson, *The Bible and Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), p. 391.
10. Bruce, [Footnote 3], p. 336.
11. Bruce, [Footnote 1], p. 252.
12. *Ibid*, p. 291.
13. E. M. B. Green and C. J. Hemer, "Ephesus," *The Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, J. D. Douglas, Ed., (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1980), v. 1, p. 461.
14. Nelson Glueck, *New York Times*, Book Review Section, October 28, 1956.
15. James Orr, Ed., *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, v. 4, p. 2569.
16. E. M. Blaiklock, *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, Merrill C. Tenney, Ed., (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), v. 4, p. 391.
17. J. A. Alexander, *A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1956), Reprint, p. 89. Note: It need not be concluded necessarily that 3,000 persons were immersed on the day of Pentecost. Some have suggested that

the total "about 3,000" includes those who had already been immersed earlier under the commission of John the Baptizer and the Lord's disciples (see T. W. Brents, *Gospel Sermons*, [Nashville: McQuiddy Printing, 1918], pp. 19-21).

18. J. W. McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Lippencott & Co., 1881), p. 201.
19. George E. Rice, "Baptism in the Early Church," *Ministry*, March, 1981.
20. William Arndt and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), p. 575.
21. Frederic Kenyon, *The Bible and Archaeology* (New York: Harper, 1940), p. 279.

Note: Much of the material in this essay was taken from the author's book, *Biblical Studies in the Light of Archaeology*, (Montgomery, AL: Apologetics Press, 1982).

Taken From: McClish, Ed., *Studies In Acts*, Valid Publications, Denton: 1985, pp. 233-245.

APPENDIX C

“EIS” ACTS 2:38 “unto remission of sins” and agreement of verbs.

For your information we include this able work by Thomas B. Warren - “Acts 2:38 - Does It Teach That Baptism Is A Necessary Condition To The Remission Of Sins?” (A Compilation of Evidence), Galena Park, Texas, n.d.

INTRODUCTION

Protestants in general and Baptists in particular deny that one must be baptized in water in order to the remission of his alien sins. There are, however, many passages from the word of God which teach the necessity of baptism. Such passages Baptists must deny. One such passage is Acts 2:38, which reads, “And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (A.S.V.)

This verse very obviously teaches that baptism is “unto the remission of sins.” To avoid the force of it, Baptists concocted two plans: (1) “unto” (A.S.V.) or “for” (K.J.V.) means “because of” or “on account of,” i.e., “be baptized because of remission of sins” which has already taken place. (2) “Unto remission of sins” cannot modify both verbs, “repent” and “be baptized.” If either of them is false, then the Baptist idea that baptism is not essential is false.

1. Does “unto” mean “because of?” The word “unto” means “indicating the direction of movement reaching its object or of approach, inclination, or tendency, in respect of an unreached object.”
2. Does any recognized translation translate Acts 2:38 as “because of remission of sin.” Decidedly not!
3. Does any recognized Greek English Lexicon give the preposition (Gr. “eis”) the meaning “because of,” “on account of?” On the contrary, all render it as prospective, looking to an end to be reached, purpose, or aim. Thayer, recognized as the best lexicographer, says of Acts 2:38: “to obtain the forgiveness of sins.”
4. How do Greek scholars say “eis” should be rendered in Acts 2:38? What do they say it means?

(1) Winer, outstanding Greek scholar - “The purpose and end in view. . . Acts 2:38.” (Winer’s New Testament Grammar, p. 396.)

(2) J. W. Willmarth, Baptist, scholar - “. . .The truth will suffer nothing by giving to ‘eis’ its true signification. When the Campbellites translate ‘in order to’ in Acts 2:38, they translate correctly. Is a translation false because Campbellites endorse it? We

conclude without hesitation, and in accordance with such authorities as Hackett, Winer, Meyer, etc. , that the proper rendering of 'eis aphasis hamartion' in Acts 2:38, as in Matthew 26:28 is 'unto,' 'for', i.e. , 'in order to', remission of sins."

(3) Hackett, Baptist scholar in reference to Acts 22:16 - "This clause states a result of the baptism in language derived from the nature of that ordinance. It answers to 'for the remission of sins', in 2:38 - i.e., submit to the rite in order to be forgiven."

(4) H. A. Meyer, German scholar on Acts 2:38 - "'eis' denotes the object of the baptism, which is the remission of the guilt contracted in the state before 'metanoia'."

(5) D. A. Penick, Prof. of Classical Language, University of Texas - "Normally 'eis' looks forward and I know of no case in the New Testament where it looks back."

(6) Charles B. Williams; Baptist (Translator of the New Testament) - "so I feel from lexical authority you have been taught properly 'that it is always prospective'. (Letter to Porter Wilhite, 1 / 14 / 42.) His translation of the New Testament: "that you may have your sins forgiven."

(7) Johann P. Lange, prominent German Lutheran theologian - "This aphasis hamartion is unquestionably connected more intimately and directly than the gift of the Holy Ghost with the baptismal act; the former (aphesin) namely, is indicated by the word eis (for the remission, etc. as the immediate purpose of Baptism, and as the promise unseparably connected with it" (Commentary on Acts, p. 52. See also Commentary on Mt., p. 557.)

(8) Olshausen, German Lutheran, Professor of Theology - "And baptism is accompanied with the remission of sins (eis aphasis hamartion) as a result."

(9) C. H. Morgan, Dean, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary - ". . . I do not know of any recognized Greek Lexicon which gives eis the meaning of 'because of.'"

(10) W. R. Harper, Pres. of Chicago University (at that time) - "In answer to your letter I would say that the preposition eis is to be translated 'unto', i.e. , 'in order to secure.' The preposition indicates that remission of sins is the end to be aimed at in the action expressed by the predicates repent and be baptized. The phrase is telic." (Shepherd: Handbook on Baptism, p. 350.)

(11) Seth J. Axtell, Baptist, Professor of Greek language - "The preposition eis in Acts 2:38 may be rendered by several prepositions, or prepositional phrases, as for instance; unto, for, in order to, with a view to. The noun which it governs denotes the object or end toward which the action expressed by the predicate verbs was to be directed." (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 340.)

(12) S. H. Butcher, Scotch Presbyterian, Professor of Greek - “. . . In each passage the preposition eis seems to express the ‘end towards which the action tends’, the ‘result which it is designed to bring about.’” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 341.)

(13) Ingraham Bywater, Regius Professor of Greek’ - “As far as I can see, the preposition ‘eis’ in Acts 2:38 expresses the end or purpose to be attained: compare ‘Moulton’ ‘Winer’, ed. 3 p. 495 and Thayer’s ‘Grimm,’ p. 185. The translation, I suppose, is ‘with a view to the remission of your sins’ or ‘to the end that your sins may be remitted’. The form of expression is closely parallel to that in Acts 3:19 ‘metanoesate . . . eis to exaleipt nai humor tas hamartias. i.e. ‘Repent, to the end that your sins may be blotted out.’” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 341.)

(14) Henry Clay Cameron, Professor of Greek - “The preposition eis in Acts 2:38 is evidently used in its final sense, and the phrase is clearly connected with ‘metanoesate kai baptisthete; (repent and be baptized)’ as the end to which repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ led.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, pp. 341,342.)

(15) Philip Doddridge, English Congregationalist - They are not only called here to repent, a submission also to the ordinance of baptism is required of them, in order to the forgiveness of their sins.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 345.)

(16) Martin Luther D’Ooge, Baptist, Professor of Greek Language - “In reply to your inquiry I would say that in my judgment the preposition ‘eis’ in the verse referred to expresses the relation of ‘aim’ or ‘end’ in view, answering the question ‘eis ti’ (for what?) and to be translated by ‘unto’, ‘in order to’, ‘for’. This sense of ‘eis’ as you doubtless know is recognized by Liddell and Scott for classical, by Winer for New Testament usage.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 345.)

(17) Kempler Fullerton, Presbyterian, Professor of Hebrew and Greek Scriptures - “In Acts 2:38 it is probably to be translated into or unto remission of sins, conveying there the idea ‘purpose’; i.e. the aim or end of baptism, is remission of sins.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p, 346.)

(18) C. S. Sale, Presbyterian, Professor of Greek - “The preposition eis in Acts can only be used in one of two senses: (1) expressing the ‘result’ of the act of submitting to ‘baptism’; (2) expressing the ‘purpose’ or ‘object’. ‘So as to obtain remission of sins’ is the nearest translation I can suggest - and this translation will suit either of the above meanings.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 354.)

(19) Charles Fremont Sitterly, Methodist, Professor of Greek and English Bible - “. . . In the clause ‘eis aphesin hamartion’ Peter states the reason or motive that should induce to repentance and baptism, referring not to one but to both verbs preceding.

According to Winer 549 c. 'Eis here used tropically to denote the purpose or end in view.'" (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 356.)

(20) Joseph H. Thayer, Congregationalist, Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation - "I accept the rendering of the revised version 'unto the remission of your sins' the 'eis' expressing the end aimed at and secured by 'repentance and baptism' just previously enjoined." (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 356.)

5. Can the phrase "unto remission of sins" modify both verbs ('repent' and 'be baptized')? The context would surely indicate that it can since the words of Peter were given in answer the question, "What shall we do?" Of course, the inquirers wanted to know what to do to be forgiven of sin. Peter told them "repent ye and be baptized unto remission of sins." Clearly they are here commanded to do two things in order to be forgiven. But this, Baptists may deny since they say baptism is "because of" remission of sins. Thus they argue: The two verbs are different in number and person and so cannot be modified by the same prepositional phrase. But what do Greek scholars say about it? No real scholar will deny that "unto remission of sins" can modify both verbs.

(1) H. B. Hackett, Baptist scholar - "We connect naturally with both preceding verbs."

(2) J. W. Willmarth, Baptist scholar - ". . . For those who contend for the interpretation 'on account of remission', will hardly be willing to admit that Peter said 'repent' as well as 'be baptized on account of remission of sins.' This is too great an inversion of natural sequence. Yet to escape it we must violently dis sever 'repent' and 'be baptized', and deny that 'eis' expresses the relation of 'metaoesate' as well as of 'baptistheto' to 'aphesin hamartion'. But the natural construction connects the latter with both the preceding verbs. It 'enforces the entire exhortation, not one part of it to the exclusion of the other', as Hackett says."

(3) J. H. Thayer - "I accept the rendering of the revised version 'unto the remission of your sins' (the eis expressing the end aimed at, and secured by 'repentance and baptism' just previously enjoined.)" (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 356.)

(4) J. M. Pendleton, Baptist scholar - "It is clear as the sun in heaven that the same persons are commanded to repent and be baptized." (Three Reasons For Being A Baptist, p. 20.)

(5) John Reuman, Lutheran, Theological Seminary - "In the passage cited, Acts 2:38 I can see no grammatical reason why one couldn't take the phrase 'eis aphenin hamartion', for the forgiveness of sins (AV and RSV) with both verbs, metanoesate and baptistheo." (Letter to author 6/21/52.)

(6) M. H. Franzman, Concordia Seminary, Lutheran - "As regards the expression Acts 2:38, it is grammatically possible to connect 'eis aphenin', with both verbs, and

Zahn in his commentary seems to take repentance and baptism together as the necessary presupposition to forgiveness of sins.”

(7) Henry C. Cameron, Professor of Greek, Presbyterian - “The preposition eis in Acts 2:38 is evidently used in its final sense, and the phrase is clearly connected with ‘metanoesate kia baptistheti’ (repent and be baptized) as the end to which repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ led.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 342.)

(8) Robert Halley, Principal of New College, Manchester, English Congregationalist - “. . . Not only does the preposition ‘eis’ refer to the future and prospective relation of the remission of sins, but it does so with the same dependence on baptism as on repentance. The signification of ‘eis’ must correspond in its relation to both words, ‘repent’ and ‘be baptized’. In what sense does the apostle use the preposition, when he says, ‘Repent’ ‘for remission of sins’? The remission of sins is obviously represented, not as preceding repentance, but as subsequent to it. The preposition has its meaning clearly defined by its relation to the word ‘repent’. Used only once, it cannot have two interpretations thrust upon it. It must connect the remission of sins with both words, ‘repent’ and ‘be baptized’, by one and the same relation. If it be, ‘repent for the remission of sins’, it must also be, ‘be baptized for the remission of sins’. Let those who deny this, say by what canon of syntax they can construe the passage, so as to obtain the interpretation “Repent for the remission of sin and be baptized after their remission.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 348.)

(9) Albert Harkness, Professor of Greek, Baptist - “In my opinion ‘eis’ in Acts 2:38 denotes purpose and may be rendered ‘in order to’, or ‘for the purpose of receiving’, or in our English version ‘for’: ‘Eis aphasin hamartion’ suggests the motive or object contemplated in the action of the two preceding verbs.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 349.)

(10) W. H. Harper, Pres. of Chicago University, Baptist - “In answer to your letter I would say that the preposition ‘eis’ is to be translated ‘unto’ i.e. ‘in order to secure’. The preposition indicates that remission of sins is the end to be aimed at in the actions expressed by the predicate ‘repent’ and ‘be baptized’. The phrase is telic.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 350.)

(11) Levi L. Paine, Professor of Ecclesiastical History, Congregationalist - “‘Eis’ Acts 2:38 means ‘in order to’ or ‘with a view to’ the remission of sins but it is to be connected with both the previous verbs, repent and be baptized.” (Handbook On Baptism, p. 352.)

(12) J. C. Proctor, Professor of Greek - “It is my opinion that ‘eis’ is to be connected with both the predicates and that it denotes an object or end in view.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 353.)

(13) Charles F. Sitterly, Professor of Greek, Methodist - “. . . In the clause ‘eis aph-esin hamartion’ Peter states the reason or motive that should induce to repentance and baptism, referring not to one but to both verbs preceding. (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, P. 355.)

(14) W. S. Tyler, Greek Professor - “. . . The preposition ‘eis’ seems to denote the object and end of the two verbs which precede in the imperative.” (Shepherd: Handbook On Baptism, p. 356.)

(15) D. A. Penick, University of Texas - “Metanoesate - repent ye. The writer there wishes to be more emphatic, so he says ‘hekastos baptistheto’ - let each one of you be baptized. This distribution of a plural subject and predicate by the use of ‘hekas-tos’ and a third person singular is quite common in all Greek and is frequently used in the New Testament.” (Letter to the author.)

(16) Henry J. Cadbury - “The grammar of the sentence in Acts 2:38 is perfectly regular and better Greek than if the author had kept the second person plural of baptize after using the singular each. I have no doubt that another author would have written, ‘Do ye repent and be ye baptized, each of you,’ - but this writer seems to have preferred the less loose construction. . .”

APPENDIX D-1

Editorial Four Views on the Holy Spirit

This issue of *The Restorer* is devoted primarily to a discussion of the Holy Spirit and his relationship to Christians. Of particular interest is the meaning of “the gift of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 2:38 and the nature of the Spirit’s indwelling.

Since the beginning of the current movement to restore New Testament Christianity, brethren have been known to have differing views on some of these questions. It must be admitted by any careful student of the scriptures, no matter what his position, that there are difficulties relating to this subject. If this were not the case, all would be agreed. The fact that varying positions continue to exist among men who are known for their soundness as well as their ability to exegete the scriptures should serve as a caution against radical dogmatism on anyone’s part. At least two of the four men engaging in this discussion have changed some of their positions on this subject since the early days of their preaching. And we continue to hear of seasoned preachers re-studying the subject and sometimes altering their views and/or interpretations of certain passages. None of these four writers would countenance an intolerant attitude toward any representative of one of the other views. And all of them would stand as a solid phalanx against any disruption of fellowship over these particular questions, for the controversial aspects do not affect the way we obey our Lord.

The articles that follow are presented in order to encourage further study on these matters. Each of the four writers was invited to contribute an article on the basis of his well-known ability in handling the scriptures, the confidence that brethren have in him, and the fact that his position differs somewhat from the other three. These men are therefore able representatives of their views. Each of them would like to have had more space to develop his arguments and present his explanation of various texts, but space is limited. In some cases we had to make some editorial deletions of less relevant material in order for the articles to be of approximately equal length and, at the same time, fit into this one issue of the paper.

We wish it to be understood that the differences between these articles involve more than the interpretation of just one passage of scripture. One basic difference is whether the Holy Spirit dwells in the Christian personally or just representatively. There are also differences regarding particular passages - whether they speak of the miraculous or the non-miraculous. However, all of these writers agree most emphatically that any miraculous endowments were limited to the first century and phased out of existence as the scriptures themselves predicted (1 Cor 13:8-13; Eph 4:8-16). We also want the reader to understand that these articles are not mutually exclusive. The writers are far more in agreement on the entire scope of the Holy Spirit and his work than in disagreement. And there is necessarily some overlapping of views even in these areas

under discussion. Each writer agrees that Deity dwells in one, in a manner, of speaking, through the word (compare Jn 15:5 with v. 7). However, one view is that the Holy Spirit dwells in us *only* through the word and that “the gift of the Holy Spirit” refers to non-miraculous blessings. Another view differs only in that “the gift of the Holy Spirit” and a few similar expressions are said to refer to the miraculous. A third view accepts a representative indwelling in principle but holds that all specific references to the gift or indwelling of the Holy Spirit are to be understood as miraculous. A fourth view maintains that there is a personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We invite your careful attention to each of these articles.

Gary Workman
The Restorer, January 1987

APPENDIX D-2

View Number One The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit Perry B. Cotham

The question of the indwelling of the Spirit in Christians has been one of interest in our brotherhood for a number of years, especially in the last few years due to the rise of the Charismatic Movement. Either the Holy Spirit dwells in the child of God or he does not. If he does indwell, then he either indwells directly or indirectly. Our question at this time is this: "What does the Bible teach regarding the Spirit's indwelling?"

Basic Bible Doctrine

The Bible teaches: (1) that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, one of the eternal members of the Godhead (Mt 28:19, Acts 5:3-4), (2) that the Holy Spirit baptism was received by the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 1:4-5,8; 2:1-4), later by Paul (by implication, 1 Cor 15:8-9; 2 Cor 12:12, 1 Cor 9:1) and by the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-17), (3) that the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were imparted to some in the early church by the laying on of the apostles' hands (Acts 19:6; 2 Tim 1:6; 1 Cor 12: 4-11, 28-30), (4) that the baptism in (or with) the Holy Spirit and the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were necessary at the beginning of the church to reveal the truth (1 Cor 2:7-13), to confirm the word (Mk 16:20; Heb 2:3-4) and to record the message (Eph 2:3-5; 2 Tim 3:16-17), (5) that these miraculous manifestations of the power of the Spirit of God ceased at the completion of this work, being no longer needed, since we now have "the faith once for all delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3, ASV; 1 Cor 13:8-10, 13; Eph 4:8, 11-13), (6) that the three persons of the Godhead worked together to bring the scheme of redemption to man, that is, that God the Father planned for man's salvation (Eph 3:9-11), the Son of God came and executed the plan (Heb 2:9) and the Holy Spirit revealed, confirmed and recorded the plan for all future genera- (sic) establishing the church or Christianity (Jn 14:26; 16:13) and (7) that Christ had the Spirit without measure (Jn 3:34; Acts 10:38), implying there are different "measures" or "manifestations" (1 Cor 2:7) of the Spirit, that is, varying portions of power which the Holy Spirit bestows upon others.

Furthermore, the Bible teaches that in conviction and conversion, and in the sanctification of the child of God, the Holy Spirit exerts his influence on the heart of man only through the revealed word. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Ps. 19:7 cf. Acts 2:37). One is born again of the Spirit (Jn 3:5), but man is begotten (born again) by the word (1 Pet 1:23; 1 Cor 4:15; Jas 1:18). The spiritual birth is by the Spirit through the medium of the inspired word, the seed of the kingdom (Lk 8:11) and not in some direct, mysterious, miraculous manner over and above and in addition to the word of God. Not only did Paul call "the gospel of Christ . . . the power of God unto salvation" (Rom 1:16), he said that the "sword of the Spirit . . . is the word of God" (Eph 6:17).

Christians are strengthened by the Spirit through the word as they feed upon the word of God (Eph 3:16; Acts 20:32). This is how they grow (1 Pet 2:2). Christians are guided, directed and led by the Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom 8:14). But this leading or guidance by the Spirit is through the word. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Psa 73:24). "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa 119:105). "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple" (Psa 119:130). To the seven churches of Asia John wrote: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches" (Rev 2:7,11,17,29;3:6,13,22). The Holy Spirit taught the congregations through these letters penned by the inspired apostle. Hence, it is wrong to affirm some kind of direct influence of the Holy Spirit on the heart of man for his salvation, in addition to the word.

How the Spirit Indwells

The word of God teaches that in some sense or in some way the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians. Paul said:

But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you . . . But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you (Rom 8:9,11).

But *how* does the Spirit indwell? There is a difference between stating the *fact* and stating the *method* (the *how*) of the indwelling. The Bible plainly says that the Holy Spirit dwells within Christians, but it does *not* say that the Spirit dwells in them *apart from the inspired word*.

Some think there is no way to determine from the Scriptures how the Spirit indwells the child of God. Others set forth the idea of a direct, personal indwelling separate and apart and in addition to the word of God. To say that the Holy Spirit dwells *directly* in Christians today to give some kind of direct guidance, help or comfort is to affirm something not taught in the Bible. Yet in the minds of almost all people in the denominational world there is that idea of some kind of personal, direct indwelling of the Spirit in the heart of the child of God and that the Spirit gives the believer some extra help in addition to the word. This belief leads to all kinds of "experiences" and "feelings." In fact, there is no end to this doctrine, if and when it is carried to its logical conclusions.

Now let us carefully note some things:

1. Christ dwells in Christians. Paul wrote: ". . . Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27). But *how* does Christ dwell in us? Paul explains: "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (Eph 3:17, ASV). Now, how does faith come? Paul answered: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom 10:17). So it is not

personally but through the word of God that Christ dwells in the hearts of Christians (cf. 2 Cor 13:5).

2. God dwells in Christians. The apostle John wrote: "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us" (1 Jn 4:12, (cf. vv. 15-16; 2 Cor 6:16). But *how* does God indwell his children? Is it direct or indirect? It is indirect, through the word. "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him" (1 Jn 3:24).

3. The Holy Spirit dwells in Christians (1 Cor 6:19, 3:16). But *how*? The Spirit indwells indirectly, that is, through one's obedience to the word, the same way that God and Christ live in us. They dwell in each faithful member of the church. But neither God, Christ, nor the Holy Spirit dwells *personally* in Christians.

As one obeys the Spirit's message, the Spirit's influences are there in the Christian and he brings forth "the fruit of the Spirit" in his life: "love, joy, peace," etc. (Gal 5:22-23). Christians today have the "fruit-bearing measure" of the Holy Spirit, a nonmiraculous influence of the Spirit, in their lives. As one has the inspired Spirit's message in his heart, when he loves and obeys it, he has in this way the Spirit dwelling in him. This is not the "mere word" or the "dead letter," as some have said. Since there is life in the word (Lk 8:11; Jn 6:63), the Christian has the living, powerful word of God dwelling in his heart (Heb 4:12; 1 Pet 1:25). Thus, the Holy Spirit wields an influence upon us today through the word of God which he gave through the writers of the Bible (cf. Neh 9:30; Acts 1:16; Eph 3:3-5; 2 Pet 1:21).

Let us now compare Ephesians 5:17-19 with Colossians 3:16. Both statements are parallel commands from Paul to Christians:

Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is ... be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord (Eph 5:17-19).

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord (Col 3:16).

For Christians, therefore, to be "filled with the Spirit" is to let "the word of Christ dwell in" them richly. When "the word of Christ" dwells in Christians, the Holy Spirit dwells in them. *There is no statement of Scripture which teaches that the Holy Spirit today dwells literally, directly and personally in the child of God.* He indwells the Christian indirectly, that is, through the inspired word of God (2 Jn 2).

If God the Father and Christ the Son of God can indwell Christians without there being a direct, literal, and personal indwelling, and they do (as is commonly believed), why cannot the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, indwell children of God without there being a literal and direct indwelling? The Bible teaches that he does so indwell.

Some, however, believe that the Holy Spirit dwells personally and literally in Christians but that he does not do anything for them by this direct indwelling - that all leading, guidance, etc., is done only through the word. But why does the Spirit lie dormant in the heart of Christians? Nevertheless, usually many of those who hold to this idea of a direct indwelling will, sooner or later, come to believe that at times the Holy Spirit is actually doing something *to* them in a *direct* way. People often give verses of Scripture that state the *fact* that the Spirit dwells in us, and then *assume* that this means that the Spirit dwells in a direct, literal and personal manner and ignore such statements as Ephesians 3:17 and Colossians 3:16, which explain the *how* of his indwelling.

To quote from the well-known and scholarly Guy N. Woods:

The fact that the scriptures assert that the Spirit dwells in the Christian does not justify the conclusion that this indwelling is personal, immediate, and apart from the word of God (*Commentary on 1 John*, p. 286).

Likewise, J. W. McGarvey stated it well:

The fact that the Holy Spirit dwells in us is no proof that his action upon our moral sentiments is direct or immediate (*Original Commentary on Acts*, p. 143).

We agree with the statements of James W. Zachary, a pioneer gospel preacher, when he said:

The Bible teaches that God dwells in Christians, that Christ lives in Christians, and that the Holy Spirit abides in Christians; but it does *not* teach that either God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit exists in any man in the sense of real personality . . . The personal habitation of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit is in heaven, and they only dwell in Christians by faith and through the influence of wisely adapted *means and medium* (*The Witness of the Spirits*, pp. 50-51).

Thus, when the word of God, the Holy Spirit's teaching, is dwelling in the heart of the obedient child of God - leading, guiding, and directing him in living the Christian life - then it can be said that the Spirit of God is dwelling in him and leading, guiding, and directing his life. The sum of the teaching of the Scriptures on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is that God, Christ and the Holy Spirit dwell in Christians today only through one's obedience to the word of truth, that is, metaphorically. The more faithful a child of God is, the more influence of the Holy Spirit he has in his life. That does not mean that it is merely the written word dwelling in him, for that would mean that the person who memorized the most scriptures would have the most of the Holy Spirit. What it means is that as one loves and obeys the word, the Spirit indwells. It is therefore through revelation that Deity indwells us.

The Gift of the Holy Spirit

People often ask, "What did Peter, on Pentecost, mean when he promised 'the gift of the Holy Ghost (Spirit)' to all those who would repent and be baptized for the remission of sins?" Based upon the promise mentioned in Acts 2:38, modern charismatics say that they have the personal, direct indwelling of the Spirit and the Holy Spirit baptism. They seem to be unable to make a distinction between the different "measures" or "manifestations" of the Holy Spirit: (1) the baptismal measure, (2) the laying on of hands or miraculous gifts measure, and (3) the ordinary or non-miraculous measure. No one today has the Holy Spirit baptism or any of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, for these measures are no longer needed. All of the truth has been revealed, confirmed and recorded. The day of miracles has passed. Some think, however, that "the gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2:38 refers to the miraculous gifts of the Spirit which were imparted by the laying on of the apostles' hands and ceased at the close of the apostolic age. But not every baptized believer received miraculous gifts. So they confuse "the gift of the Holy Spirit" with miraculous "gifts" (1 Cor 12:4).

Moreover, no one now has or has ever had, according to the Bible, a personal, direct indwelling of the Holy Spirit - not even the apostles. The apostles were promised the power from the Holy Spirit. Christ said to them before his ascension: ". . . tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued (clothed, ASV) with power from on high" (Lk 24:49). Later he said: "But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8) and ". . . ye shall be baptized with (in, ASV) the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts 1:5). This POWER of the Spirit, a divine person, was necessary for the revelation, inspiration, confirmation and spreading of the gospel to all the world. But not one word of evidence can be found that the Spirit came into them and dwelt directly or literally inside their bodies.

The apostles had the *power* - the effects - of the Holy Spirit. This is a figure of speech known as *metonymy* - the cause for the effect. For example, in Lk 11:13 the "Holy Spirit" refers to the "good things" of the Spirit as mentioned in Mt 7:11. The cause is named, but the effect is meant. The Holy Spirit himself is not measured out, but the *portion of power* he gives is. The words "baptism," "endowment," and "filling" all refer to one and the same experience. So the apostles on Pentecost "were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:4) - that is, they had the miraculous power from the Holy Spirit to do their work. This was the baptism of the Spirit.

Later, Peter and John went down to the city of Samarla, after Philip had preached there, so that the recently baptized believers might "receive the Holy Ghost" (Acts 8:14-18) - that is, that they might impart unto them the miraculous gifts of the Spirit which only the apostles could bestow (Acts 6:6,8) and which were necessary in that early day of the church in the absence of the written New Testament scriptures. So these Samaritans received the Spirit; they received the miraculous powers of the Spirit, which Philip could not impart. (Here again is metonymy.) But they did not receive a direct, personal indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 2:38, did Peter mean that the ones baptized would receive the Holy Spirit himself in person as a gift or receive that which the Holy Spirit had to give? These words must be understood in the full teaching of the Bible on the subject. We should compare “the gift of the Holy Spirit” with the phrases “the gift of God” (Jn 4:10; Rom 6:23) and “the gift of Christ” (Eph 4:7); they mean a gift from God and a gift from Christ, not God and Christ as a gift. If one should be told to do something in order to “receive the gift of John Doe (a person),” what would that naturally imply?

If we compare Acts 2:38 with Acts 3:19, given later by Peter, it will help us to understand “the gift of the Holy Spirit.” The two verses are parallel; they mean exactly the same thing.

Acts 2:38	Acts 3:19
1. Repent	1. Repent
2. Be baptized	2. Be converted (turn again)
3. Remission of sins	3. Sins blotted out
4. Gift of the Holy Spirit	4. Times of refreshing from the Lord

Therefore, receiving the blessings or “refreshing” from the Lord (a figurative expression) is the same as receiving “the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Both statements refer to receiving the spiritual blessings that follow after one is baptized into Christ.

Let us now compare these two verses with Paul’s language in 1 Corinthians 12:13:

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

This means that by the teaching of the Holy Spirit (through the word) we are baptized (immersed in water, Rom 6:3-4) into the one body, the church (Eph 1:22-23) and are privileged “to drink into one Spirit,” that is, to enjoy the blessings provided by the Spirit in Christ Jesus (cf. 2 Cor 5:17; Gal 4:6; Eph 1:3). The church is a spiritual kingdom, entered by a spiritual birth, and in it are spiritual blessings.

Receiving “the gift of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 2:38 therefore means receiving the Holy Spirit - receiving the blessings from the Spirit. Here again is the use of the figure of speech known as metonymy - that which the Holy Spirit gives. All baptized believers today receive the remission of their sins and enter into Christ where are all spiritual blessings, but they do not receive any of the miraculous gifts of the Spirit or any kind of direct, literal, personal indwelling of the Spirit whether to be inactive in them or to illuminate, guide, strengthen and give them joy in living the Christian life. If the Holy Spirit dwelt directly in a Christian that would be miraculous. All the influence of the Holy Spirit on the heart of man for his salvation is only through the inspired word.

So, the “measure” of “the gift of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 2:38 must not be equated with either the baptism of the Spirit, or the receiving of any of the miraculous gifts of the

Spirit, or a personal, direct indwelling of the Spirit. Nevertheless, the three “measures” or “manifestations” of the Holy Spirit, spoken of in the New Testament, are each called the “gift” of the Spirit - namely, (1) the baptism of the Spirit (Acts 1:5; 10:44-45; 11:15-17), (2) the miraculous gifts of the Spirit (Rom 1:11; 1 Cor 12:1,4-11; 2 Tim 1:6) and (3) the common or ordinary (non-miraculous) gift of the Spirit (Acts 2:38). But all of these “measures” do not imply the same portion of power from the Holy Spirit. The word “gift” does not tell what “manifestation” of the Spirit is under consideration. The context must determine which “gift” is meant. But not every statement in the New Testament that mentions the Holy Spirit refers to the miraculous. A person might give to one man a gift of one dollar and that would be as much a gift as if he would give to another man a gift of five dollars, and to another one a gift of ten dollars.

David Lipscomb, commenting on Acts 2:38 and the presence of the Holy Spirit in all Christians, made this clear statement:

By receiving and cherishing the word in the heart, the Spirit enters and abounds more and more in the person, making him like Jesus in his thoughts, feelings, works. I feel sure this is the manifestation of the Spirit promised to those who would repent and be baptized. . . This Spirit enters the heart with and through the word of God, and spreads and strengthens as the word of God, the seed of the kingdom, more and more is understood and cherished in the heart (*Queries and Answers*, pp. 206-207).

Conclusion

Our conclusion is that the Bible teaches that men have had the Holy Spirit in different measures, or varying portions of power, but that all power of the Holy Spirit today in the hearts of men is only through the word of God. In this manner the Spirit indwells the Christian the same way in which God and Christ indwell. As children of God cherish the Spirit’s message in their hearts and live by it in their lives, the Holy Spirit dwells in them, and collectively in the church. Every one who becomes obedient receives the benefits provided by the Spirit in this Christian dispensation. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God . . . that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim 3:16-17).

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APPENDIX D-3

View Number Two What Is the Gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38? Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

There is an abounding interest in the answer to this question. For well over thirty-five years I have been a student of this passage in general and this part of it in particular. I have tried to read widely relative to what our brethren have written on this passage. I have often asked brethren what they thought it meant. Brethren, with frequency, have asked my thoughts about its meaning. It seems to me that there have been three main positions our brethren have sustained toward it.

1. Many, perhaps most of our brotherhood, espouse the position that this refers to the common, ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit's indwelling the Christian and comes at the very same time that remission of sins or pardon is tendered to the obeying individual. It would be their contention that every person who has been saved from Pentecost in Acts 2 to the present has been a sure recipient of this common, ordinary gift. Many of this number would say the Holy Spirit comes into the individual actually, personally, bodily and literally, though some would say he indwells the Christian through a medium - the word of God - and hence the indwelling is representative.

2. Others contend that the gift of the Holy Spirit is the equivalent of pardon - that this gift is what the Holy Spirit gives (and is not himself a gift), with that gift as pardon of past sins. Some would extend it a bit and say the gift is the equivalent of eternal life in yonder's world. Since Peter had already promised fulness of pardon in the expression - "remission of sins" - it seems a bit redundant that Peter would repeat himself with another expression that means only what he had already promised them. To make the gift the equivalent of eternal life is to ignore the remainder of the Bible which teaches that Christian faithfulness is the condition of going home to heaven for the penitent believer who has been immersed.

3. The third contention, one I have long held and defended, is that the tendered gift here is miraculous in that context and would be conferred upon them, as explained by subsequent scriptures, by apostolic imposition of hands. Obviously, it could not be possessed by anyone save those to whom the apostles transmitted it by the laying on of their hands. This is the position I shall seek to explain and defend in the remnant of this study.

An Analysis of the Passage

Acts 2:38 in fulness states,

"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'" (Spirit-ASV).

Peter has the keys to the kingdom (Mt 16:18). He and his apostolic colleagues have been asked the most crucial question of the ages in the preceding verse - what to do to be saved. Peter calls upon them as convicted believers in Christ to repent. Repentance is a change of mind. Godly sorrow precedes it; amended life is its forthcoming fruit. His second stipulation is baptism. This is immersion; water is the element. The commands are addressed to every one of them. Their obedience was to be done in the name of Jesus (Savior) Christ (the anointed One). This means by his authority. He who possessed all authority in heaven and on earth commanded baptism (Mt 28:18-19). "For" means in order to obtain this coveted pardon. Remission of sins is forgiveness, pardon, becoming saved, having sins washed away, or having sins blotted out (cf. Mk 16:16, Acts 22:16; 3:19).

"And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." *And* means something in addition to pardon - not pardon alone or exclusively. *Ye* is a personal pronoun. It is the subject of this expression. *Shall receive* is the predicate or the verb. It is a transitive verb and as such requires a direct object. The object here has to be in the accusative case. Obviously, Spirit is not that object. *Spirit*, as used in this expression, is in the possessive case as we view it from the English language. It is the Spirit's gift or that which he confers. The direct object is the word *gift*, which is in the accusative case. *Gift* here is not the Holy Spirit. To the woman at Jacob's well Jesus spoke of "the gift of God" (Jn 4:10). This is not God but something God gives. In eloquent Ephesians Paul speaks of "the gift of Christ" (Eph 4:7). This was not the gift of Christ himself but something the Christ gave. The same is true with the gift of the Holy Spirit. It was not the Holy Spirit given but something the Spirit gave.

This is a short and accurate analysis of the verse in general and of the controversial part I am examining - the gift of the Holy Spirit - in particular.

Why Take the Miraculous Measure Position?

For twenty or more years now it has been my sustained position that the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 is the miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit and was transmitted by apostolic imposition of hands on that and subsequent occasions. From a comprehensive study of such passages as Acts 8 and 19 and Romans 1:11 we learn that this miraculous transmitting could not occur without the presence of one or more of the apostles. Such poses no problem in Acts 2, for all twelve of the apostles were present with the ability to transmit such supernatural powers. Some might object by saying that my position is in jeopardy due to the fact that other scriptures are necessary to deduce such a conclusion. But this no more negates my position than other positions taken relative to the gift of Acts 2:38, for they also require additional information derived from kindred passages. The objection might have some merit if there were nothing else said on the matter. However, more is said and logical reasoning demands a comprehensive contemplation of ALL that is said. But why take this miraculous measure position on Acts 2:38? Let us note several weighty reasons for this view.

1. Acts 2:38 was first given in the first century - not the twentieth century - and in a supernatural framework at that! In Acts 2 we have Baptism of the Holy Spirit upon the twelve (vv. 1-4). In Acts 2 we have supernatural tongue speaking (v. 4ff). In Acts 2 we have an inspired message given by all the apostles at first and by Peter individually from verse 14 onward. Acts 2 is NOT set within an ordinary situation at all but in a most extraordinary setting. Yet, we are often assured that when Peter promised the gift of the Holy Spirit he was speaking about a totally non-miraculous or ordinary gift. Such is amazing. Objectors to my view have frequently countered my arguments by stating or asking, "What is the natural, normal conclusion WE should reach in surveying the statement 'ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?'" Much more apropos is how its *initial auditors* understood it, being as they were in the very midst of miraculous might, of supernatural signs, and not of just an ordinary occasion of non-miraculous activity. Instead of trying to place that Pentecost audience in a twentieth-century setting when that verse was first uttered, would it not be a thousand times more profitable to place ourselves in that first-century setting to understand the gift of the Holy Spirit as they understood it initially? Yes, verily!

2. The Greek term for "gift" here is of wonderful weight in this momentous matter. It derives from *dorea*. In Acts 8:20 Peter employs this term in speaking of the very gift erring Simon sought to purchase with silver from Peter and John. Surely, none among us will take the position that the gift in Acts 8:20 refers to that which was ordinary or non-miraculous! This word is used in Acts 10:45 to describe what came on Cornelius and his household, and Peter used the same expression in Acts 11:17 in his defense against objecting Jewish brethren at Jerusalem. Surely, this was not the ordinary or the non-miraculous. Paul used this term in Ephesians 3:7 and 4:7. Both verses are set in a context where the miraculous is being discussed. This same term is employed in Acts 2:38. It would be strange indeed if *dorea*, or one of its derivatives, in all these other parallel allusions is supernatural or miraculous in meaning and yet is NONMIRACULOUS and ORDINARY in Acts 2:38.

3. Additional sustaining proof is ascertained from the fact that the expression "gift of the Holy Spirit" occurs but twice in the Bible. One of these is in Acts 2:38, the other is in Acts 10:45 at Cornelius' household. I know of no one in our brotherhood who disassociates Acts 10:45 from miraculous activity. It was the baptismal measure in Acts 10:45 which constituted it as the miraculous; it was the laying-on-of-the-apostolic-hands measure in Acts 2:38. In Acts 2 and 10 Luke described what came on Jews and Gentiles respectively at the beginning of the gospel for both races. There is the miraculous on both occasions. Yet, and this is amazingly amazing, in the use of this strikingly similar statement we are told again and again that the Acts 2:38 reference is definitely the non-miraculous or ordinary but that the Acts 10:45 reference is definitely miraculous and not the ordinary at all. That which came in Acts 10:45 came directly from heaven; that which was promised so preciously in Acts 2:38 came by apostolic imposition of hands which had been received directly from heaven for the transmitting of such. Truly, both occasions demand the supernatural - not one the ordinary and the other the extraordinary.

4. The wonderful weight of the word “receive” is dear, cogent and convincing in this momentous matter. “Receive” is employed by Peter in Acts 2:38. Yet, “receive” is used with stirring frequency in sacred scriptures (both KJV and ASV) where supernatural signs involving the Holy Spirit are evident. Jesus employed “receive” in John 7:39 and the miraculous is there VERY evident. “Receive” is used in John 20:23 - “Receive ye the Holy Ghost” (Spirit - ASV). Though some would deny the miraculous link to John 7:39, I know of none who would do it with John 20:23. “Receive” is employed in Acts 8:15-17 with the apostolic transmission of miraculous power to the recently immersed Samaritans by Peter and John. Paul inquired of a dozen Ephesians in Acts 19 if they had “received” the Holy Spirit since they believed (or since they were saved). Paul was surely thinking of the miraculous when he raised the query. “Receive” is again employed among the Galatians in their reception of the miraculous (Gal 3:1ff). Peter, in Acts 10:47, referred to the miraculous reception of the Holy Spirit as proof positive that Gentiles were worthy of kingdom entrance and should not be denied immersion in water. The anointing in 1 John 2:27 is doubtless miraculous in nature. John used the word “received” in this apostolic allusion to the same. To deny that John here is speaking of the miraculous would be strange indeed. Since “receive” is the very word employed both by the KJV and ASV translators - 148 strong - to convey instance after instance of where the miraculous was received, it seems mighty conclusive that such is its stately significance in Acts 2:38 also.

5. The fundamental fact that apostles were present and could transmit this power to the now-to-be-baptized disciples is strong and convincing. People were there by the masses and from all over the known world. Soon, very soon, they would return home again. Each one could not take an apostle home with him; each one could not take a written New Testament home with him since not the first word of such had yet been composed. They would return to home-country people who would need to see visible evidence miraculously demonstrated to prove they spoke for God. The twelve could transmit such. Are we to understand that they sent them *all* home with neither a written new covenant nor any audible, visual, demonstrative way of proving conclusively the validity of each proclaimed message? Did they go home unaided by ANY transmitted power and just say, “We have the ordinary gift of the Holy Spirit as proof positive that we speak for the now-crowned King of kings and Lord of lords?” Did the apostles deliberately (sic) leave them in this highly unarmed condition as they left Jerusalem? If this happened, how strange as per the apostles’ subsequent interest in conferring such powers on the Samaritans, Paul’s desire to do the same for the dozen Ephesian men in Acts 19, and Paul’s driving desire to do so to the Romans in Romans 1:11. Are we then to conclude that the apostles in Acts 2 felt NO need to endow or equip with miraculous powers the initial converts to the Beginning Cause? Let no one say that they did confer such but just did not mention it. That would be a mere conjecture or assumption, and it flies in the very face of the fact that the apostles did confer such and told them beforehand of what was to come by referring to “the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

6. The miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 is reasonable. In fact, it is my long-held conviction that it is a far more reasonable position than is the commonly held view of the ordinary gift. Apostolic power was there to confer it, and people were there to receive it who needed it so desperately before they departed Jerusalem for the

four corners of the then inhabited earth with a brand new religion to impart to the world of the lost. Did the apostles totally ignore this obvious need and send them home ill-equipped to spread the good news of redemption and back it up with supernatural confirmation? I, for one, cannot believe they did.

7. In my judgment this is an eminently scriptural view. It makes for full and fervent harmony between Acts 2:38 and Mark 16:16-18. In Mark 16:16 the baptized believer is promised salvation. Then miraculous signs would follow. They are specified in verses 17 and 18. Apostles obviously performed such by the Holy Spirit baptismal measure. Apostolic converts in those initial days of early Christianity performed the miraculous by having apostolic hands laid on them. In Acts 2:38 penitent, baptized believers are promised pardon. Then, quite naturally and in the context of full miraculous activities, they are promised the miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to perform what was promised in Mark 16:17-18. I do not have a particle of a problem understanding Mark 16:17-18 even though it is immediately subsequent to Mark 16:16 and the promise to pardon each baptized believer. Neither do I have a particle of a problem with the miraculous gift measure of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 even though it comes on the very heels of the promise to pardon each baptized penitent. Acts 2:38 and 3:19 also are marvelous in their precious parallels. Both demand repentance. The baptism of Acts 2:38 obviously equates with “be converted” or “turn again” of Acts 3:19 in the KJV and ASV respectively. Acts 2:38 promises remission of sins; Acts 3:19 promises the blotting out of sins. Acts 2:38 promises the gift of the Holy Spirit, Acts 3:19 promises seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. Many who contend that Acts 2:38 refers to the ordinary gift of the Spirit (same as seasons of refreshing as per their view) will immediately argue that the Spirit confers no blessing upon them other than the natural or ordinary. Yet, as brother Guy N. Woods has stated so sagely, the personal indwelling of the spirit, as per their theory,

(a) gives them no awareness of his presence, (b) teaches them no truth, (c) and requires them to resort to a Book nineteen hundred years old to learn his will through study when he is actually there and in direct contact with the heart (understanding) all the time! Is it any cause for wonder that those who dwell upon an alleged actual personal indwelling of the Spirit go on, like Pat Boone, to believe that the Spirit does indeed move them to act apart from, and independent of the word of truth - the New Testament (Guy N. Woods, *Questions and Answers*, Open Forum, Freed-Hardeman College Lectures, Nashville, Williams, 1976, op. 56-57).

Five Consequences of Other Positions

1. To contend for just the ordinary gift measure here in this sacred text is to deprive the apostles from using the special power of imparting miraculous gifts by imposition of apostolic hands.

2. Furthermore, it would mean that they sent the newly baptized disciples to the four winds with neither a completed Bible in their hands nor any transmitted power to

confirm supernaturally what they uttered by word of mouth. Can it so be? I do not believe so.

3. If the Spirit indwells us bodily, personally, actually and directly, then how would Christians avoid being Deity, at least partially? The incarnation of our blessed Saviour was Deity in human flesh as he came to pitch his tent among the masses of men. It makes no appreciable difference whether the Deity that so indwells is that of the Second Person or that of the Third Person of the Godhead.

4. To make the gift of the Holy Spirit a synonym for salvation is to make Peter guilty of redundancy in word usage. Salvation had already been encompassed in the eloquent expression "remission of sins." Acts 2:39 has a strong theological link with Genesis 12:3 which makes crystal clear that salvation is for Jews, Jewish children (accountable beings, obviously) and for those afar off (Gentiles).

5. To make the gift the exact equivalent of eternal life, and upon terms of repentance and baptism which were necessary for pardon of past sins, is a failure to realize that the condition of going home to heaven, subsequent to entering the Saving Christ, is a faithful life (Mt 25:21,23). Peter makes this crystal clear in giving the Christian graces in 2 Peter 1:5-11. One *must* cultivate these soul virtues to enter abundantly the heavenly kingdom on high at last.

No Strength Hereby Offered to Current Charismatics

Be it recalled that spiritual gifts (all nine of them - 1 Cor 12:8-10) could *only* be transmitted by Baptism of the Holy Spirit or by apostolic imposition of hands. There have been no baptisms with the Holy Spirit since Acts 10. That is why Paul could affirm twenty-one years later that there is only one baptism, i.e., Great Commission immersion in water. This is the one and only baptism for us (Eph 4:5). Hence, we have no recipients of Baptism of the Holy Spirit today. Their only other way of reception was by imposition of apostolic hands. No such is still available! Hence, we have no miraculous measures of the Spirit at work or in evidence in our era. My position on Acts 2:38 will allow for no such miraculous gifts today - not even one! Those who claim possession of such today should be pressed relentlessly to demonstrate it.

This Is Not a New or Novel View

A dozen years ago I defended this view in a California lectureship. A veteran preacher present took issue and said he had *never* heard such before. I was amazed in that I had been acquainted with the view since I was just a young preacher. Brother Franklin Camp's book on the Holy Spirit, to which I wrote the Foreword, was already out at that time and now has been out for nearly thirteen years. Brother Camp takes this same view as I have just expressed. On pages 131-132 of the Camp classic, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, he quotes from David Lipscomb, T. W. Brents, H. Leo Boles, and Alexander Campbell who all said it may or did refer to miraculous powers to be conferred by apostolic imposition of hands. All these men quoted by brother Camp have been dead for decades. Campbell has been dead over 120 years. Brother Guy N.

Woods has held this view for more than forty years. Joe Warlick, likely the greatest debater of modern times, held this view. Alan E. Highers holds this view. So do many other eminent Bible scholars among us. I have not quoted these to prove the doctrine is true but only to show that the view is neither new nor novel. The doctrine must be decided as true or false on the basis of whether the Bible teaches it or fails to so teach. Anyone remotely acquainted with the works of Campbell, Lipscomb, Brents, Boles, Woods, Warlick, Camp, and Highers would *never* accuse these men of advocating modern charismatic gifts for either the nineteenth or twentieth centuries! I think *no one* acquainted with my preaching, writing, and lecturing across the years will so accuse me either!

Conclusion

I want to go on record again, as I have so many times in the past, that I do not reject an indwelling of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in Christians today. I so believe; I so teach; I so defend! I do not believe it is personal, actual, bodily, literal, direct, etc. Deity surely indwells us without question or quibble. The Father indwells us (1 Jn 4:15). Christ is in us (Col 1:27). The Holy Spirit is in us (Rom 8:9). But they do NOT indwell us actually, literally, bodily, personally and directly, in my seasoned judgment. As Deity's will is in us, moves us, and molds us, to that extent God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit indwell us. Ephesians 3:17 is a key passage in understanding this momentous matter of wonderful weight. Paul wrote, ". . . that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye being rooted and grounded in love. . ." Colossians 3:16 urges us to allow the word of Christ to dwell in us richly. On what other rational ground could one person indwell another person than in this way?

Many who knew my late father, a wonderful Christian for more than fifty years before he died in 1971, and have known me as well, have often remarked how they see my Dad in me. Yet he has never been in me actually, personally, bodily, literally, directly, etc. - not even when he was alive and we lived in the same house as I grew up. He has been and is yet in me to the extent, and this extent ONLY, as his teaching, example, ideals, etc., have and do move and mold me. *P.O. Box 464, Ripley, TN 38063*

APPENDIX D-4

View Number Three The Gift of the Holy Spirit Bobby Duncan

I was somewhat reluctant to accept the invitation to write this article, in view of the disposition of some to brand as unsound and unworthy of fellowship any who differ with them on any subject. As I understand it, the articles in this issue of *The Restorer* all represent differing views of the subject of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Until these articles are published I will not have read what all the other writers have said, but I am under the impression that none writing articles for this paper will advance any view which is in conflict with the idea that the only way the Spirit communicates with anyone today is through that which is written in the Bible. In other words, we are all in complete agreement on this point. So long as this is true, I want it to be understood that I do not consider those who differ with the view I will present as holding to “dangerous” views with reference to the matter. During the more than twenty years I have held the view I now hold I have never made the matter a test of fellowship nor have I had any reservations about recommending preachers for jobs and for meetings simply because they differed with me on this matter.

I am confident that the view I will present will not differ greatly from one of the views presented elsewhere in this issue. It is my understanding that another writer will present the view that the “gift of the Holy Ghost” of Acts 2:38 is a reference to the miraculous gifts which were imparted through the laying on of the hands of the apostles. I firmly believe this view to be correct. Acts 8 and Acts 19 are clear examples of this. The difference is in our interpretation of certain other passages that mention the indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

Receiving the Holy Ghost

To say that the “gift of the Holy Ghost” is not the Holy Ghost himself, but that which the Holy Ghost gives is correct. But there is a sense in which that which the Holy Ghost gives is referred to as the Holy Ghost himself. Acts 8:15 says the apostles came from Jerusalem that the people of Samaria might “receive the Holy Ghost.” The context shows it was speaking figuratively of the miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost which would be imparted. Verse 17 says they “received the Holy Ghost,” and verse 18 says, “the Holy Ghost was given.” Did they not “receive the gift of the Holy Ghost,” the very thing Peter mentions in Acts 2:38?

In Acts 19:2 Paul asked: “Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?” Then verse 6 tells us that “when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.” What they actually and literally received was power supplied by the Holy Ghost.

Acts 10:47 says that the household of Cornelius “received the Holy Ghost.” Verse 43 says it was “the gift of the Holy Ghost” which they received. They did not literally receive the Holy Ghost as a person, but by a figure of speech which we call *metonymy of the cause*, it is said that they received the Holy Ghost when, in fact, they received power given to them by the Holy Ghost. In explaining this occasion to the other apostles and brethren at Jerusalem, Peter said, “And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning” (Acts 10:15).

In all of these cases it is undeniably true that those who received the Holy Ghost received some miraculous manifestation of the power of the Holy Ghost. I am not suggesting that all of these received the same power, or that the Holy Ghost came upon all of them for the same purpose; such simply is not the case. But these passages, which are so plain, teach us what it meant in New Testament times for people to receive the Holy Ghost. One of the elementary rules of Bible study which we all recognize is that we are to allow plain passages to interpret those that are obscure. When I read some passage in the New Testament which mentions someone’s receiving or possessing the Holy Ghost, and the immediate context of the passage does not make it clear what is meant, I can depend on these passages which do tell what it means to receive the Holy Ghost. This is the kind of logic we use in reasoning with our friends about the action of baptism. If we did not know the meaning of the Greek word translated “baptize,” we could learn what it means from Romans 6:4 and Colossians 2:12. Having learned the meaning of the word from these two passages, we would know exactly what the word means when we find it in other passages in the New Testament. Why is that sound reasoning with reference to baptism, but not with reference to the Holy Ghost?

One might say that there are other passages which make it clear that references to receiving or possessing the Holy Ghost were to a non-miraculous indwelling. Let me make it clear that I firmly believe the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost dwell in Christians. 1 John 4:15 clearly shows that the Father dwells in us; Colossians 1:27 shows just as clearly that the Son dwells in us. All of us understand this to mean they dwell in us as we are influenced and developed by their written will. In this same sense, and only in this sense, the Holy Ghost dwells in us. *But I doubt there is a single verse in the New Testament which refers to one’s having the Spirit (Holy Ghost) that is not talking about possessing the Spirit in some miraculous way.*

Please keep in mind that not a single line of the New Testament was written to people like us, those who lived in a time when miracles had ceased and who had a copy of the New Testament to guide and direct them. Instead they lived in an age of miracles, when they were dependent upon the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost to furnish for them what the written New Testament would furnish for those who would live after the revelation of God’s will was completed. This faithful brethren have affirmed for years. If you had lived in that time and had received some miraculous power through the laying on of the hands of an apostle, and if that apostle wrote a letter to you and made mention of the fact that you had received the Spirit, what would you think he was talking about? Would you think he was referring to some non-miraculous, personal

indwelling of the Spirit? No. You would understand this reference to be to that which you had received through the laying on of the hands of the apostle.

For example, the church at Corinth had an abundance of miraculous gifts (1 Cor 1:7; 2 Cor 12:12-13). When Paul told them their body was the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor 6:19), what do you suppose came to their minds? When he said, "I have the Spirit of God" (7:40), what did they think he meant? When he said the Spirit of God dwelt in them (3:16), what would they understand him to be saying? Let us not forget that the proper understanding of any passage is the precise idea which the Holy Ghost intended to convey to those people to whom the passage was originally written. Therefore, we make a great mistake if we try to interpret passages which have to do with the miraculous as if they were originally written to people like us, who live in a nonmiraculous age and have a written New Testament. We have no trouble recognizing this principle in dealing with such passages as John 14:26, John 16:13 and Mark 16:17.

Various Passages Considered

It is sometimes argued that it was said of John the Baptist that he would be "filled with the Holy Ghost" (Lk 1:15) and yet John 10:41 says that John did no miracle. Therefore, John must have been filled with the Holy Ghost in a non-miraculous way. But this line of reasoning misses the point of either one or both of the passages cited. John 10:41 is talking about the fact that John did not perform miracles - like Jesus or the apostles performed - to confirm the word he preached. But who would say that John was not an inspired preacher? This is what is meant by the statement in Luke 1:15, which says he would be "filled with the Holy Ghost." Two other times in that same chapter it is said that certain ones were "filled with the Holy Ghost," and both times those so filled uttered inspired speeches. Verse 41 says Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost, and verse 67 says Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost. It was in this same sense that John was to be filled with the Holy Ghost - not in some non-miraculous sense, or merely as they would be influenced by the written word of God. Matthew 21:23-27 bears out this fact. The baptism which John administered was from God, but it was not something John was taught to do by the written word of God. Obviously he did it by direct revelation and inspiration.

Paul told the Ephesians that they were sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13). In the next verse he told them that the Holy Spirit was the earnest of their inheritance. The very idea of a seal or that which serves as an earnest demands something tangible. They were sealed, or received this earnest, when Paul laid his hands on them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied (Acts 19:5).

To the Galatians Paul wrote: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal 3:2). The Galatians were being disturbed by Judaizing teachers, those trying to bind upon them the keeping of the law of Moses. If Paul could get them to see that God approved of their obedience to the gospel separate and apart from the law of Moses, then the Judaizing teachers would be defeated. To do this, Paul simply asks in what connection they received the Spirit. Was it in connection with the keeping of the law, or was it in connection with their obedience

to the gospel? If Paul is talking about a miraculous reception of the Spirit, then his question would be quite easy for them to answer. They knew those Judaizing teachers had not imparted to them any miraculous powers. They knew also that they had received miraculous powers of the Spirit by the laying on of the hands of an apostle, after they had obeyed the gospel of Christ. Verse 5 shows this is exactly what is under consideration: “He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?”

Romans 8:9 is sometimes used to show that all who belong to Christ must have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them: “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” I will admit that this chapter is a very difficult one, and not merely to one who may hold the position I do with reference to the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. But before I comment on the verse before us, I would urge the reader to remember that the work of the Holy Ghost in connection with the scheme of redemption has always been to reveal the mind of God to man and to confirm that revelation by the performing of miracles. One in the first century who preached the word of God proved that what he had was the word of God by the miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit. In other words, preachers in apostolic days used the Holy Spirit to prove that they had the word of God; preachers in our day use the word of God to try to prove they have the Holy Spirit. What in the context of Romans 8:9 would lead Paul to make a statement to the effect that all who belong to Christ have the Spirit dwelling in them in a non-miraculous way? On the other hand, Judaism was the problem being dealt with in the book of Romans. But the Judaizing teachers could not confirm their false teaching by the performing of miracles. Those who preached the gospel could so confirm what they preached. Paul is reminding them of this fact in the latter part of this particular verse. If a man came teaching a doctrine which could not be confirmed by the performing of miracles, then he was to be considered a false teacher. Incidentally, Thayer’s Lexicon (p. 612) says that the expression “in the Spirit” in the first part of this very verse means “to be in the power of, be actuated by, inspired by, the Holy Spirit.” I personally do not believe Paul switched in the middle of the verse from the miraculous to the non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit.

Two Prominent Passages

What about the *promise* of Acts 2:39? The book of Luke closes with an account of Christ’s ascension. Before he ascended, he said, “And, behold, I send the *promise* of my Father upon you...” (Lk 24:49). This is an obvious reference to the miraculous outpouring of the Holy Ghost. As Luke takes up the narrative in Acts 1, he refers to the Lord’s admonition to “wait for the promise of the Father” (Acts 1:4) - another reference to supernatural power. After the outpouring of the Holy Ghost in Acts 2, Peter explained that what they had seen and heard was in connection with “the *promise* of the Holy Ghost” (2:33). Then after telling the people what to do to receive remission of sins, he said, “For the *promise* is unto you. . .” (v. 39). Now suppose you are Theophilus, and Luke had written the books of Luke and Acts to you. Would you get the impression that Peter was promising some non-miraculous gift of the Holy Ghost to those people? Or if you had been one of those Jews present on Pentecost, and had seen and heard what they had seen and heard, would you think Peter was talking about a non-miraculous

indwelling of the Spirit? I say again that what the apostles received and what others received upon whom the apostles laid their hands was not identical. The Holy Ghost came upon them for different purposes and to impart different powers. But the receiving of the Holy Ghost was the reception of miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost.

Some say that the language of Acts 2:39 demands that the gift of the Holy Ghost is promised to all in every age who would repent and be baptized, and therefore could not refer to those miraculous gifts which were limited to the apostolic age. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." But remember that Peter had quoted earlier in this speech a prophecy which said that the Spirit would be poured out upon "all flesh." Does "all flesh" mean literally *all* flesh? If you can explain that it means simply that Jews and Gentiles alike would have the Spirit poured out on them, then you should have little difficulty in understanding how "all that are afar off" might not mean literally *all* that are afar off. You may not agree, but at least you can see the point.

Some assert that Acts 5:32 proves that all Christians have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them: "And we are witnesses of these things: and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). Before discussing this verse, I would remind the reader again that those in the first century who had the Holy Ghost used it to prove that they had the word of God; they never had to use the word of God to prove they had the Holy Ghost. Acts 5:32 is set in the context of miraculous gifts. Verse 12 of this chapter states: "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people." It was this very fact that caused the high priest and those with him to be filled with indignation (v. 17) and to put the apostles in prison. That very night, by means of a miracle, the prison doors were opened and the apostles were sent to preach in the temple. Against this background, when Peter spoke of the "Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him," and said that he (the Holy Ghost) was a witness with them (the apostles) of the truthfulness of the things they preached, he was obviously speaking of the fact that their testimony concerning Jesus was confirmed by the miracles they performed. The fact that they performed miracles showed they were obedient to God, for God gives the Holy Ghost only to them who obey him. The apostles gave testimony concerning the resurrection of Christ; the Holy Ghost corroborated their testimony by performing miracles through them. This is the very thing Jesus had said would happen. In speaking of the Holy Ghost, which would proceed from the Father, Jesus said, "He shall testify of me." He then added, "And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning" (Jn 15:26-27).

Conclusion

I see little possibility that any of the Christians to whom the books of the New Testament were originally written understood any mention of the Holy Ghost as being a reference to a non-miraculous indwelling. If one reads these books as if they were originally written to individuals and churches who already had a copy of the New Testament, and who lived after miracles had ceased, then he will naturally think some of the references must be to a non-miraculous, personal indwelling, since miracles have ceased. But those of the first century would have no reason to think such.

Again I would emphasize that I believe the Holy Ghost dwells in Christians today, just as the Father and the Son dwell in us. But I doubt this is what any of the writers of the New Testament books had in mind when they made reference to the Spirit's being in or being possessed by those Christians in the first century.

Whatever differences we may have over the subject of the Holy Spirit should not be allowed to alienate us from one another, so long as we are in agreement that there is no leadership or guidance of the Spirit other than that furnished by the written word.

It was my privilege to live only thirty miles from the late beloved brother Gus Nichols the last seventeen years of his life. We differed over this matter, but our differences in no way hindered our fellowship. He preached in meetings and on other occasions at Adamsville where I lived and worked. I preached in the very last meeting the Sixth Avenue church in Jasper conducted while brother Nichols was still living. I attended meetings in which he preached at other places, and he attended meetings at other places where I was doing the preaching. He was a great source of encouragement to me. Our differences over this matter did not hinder our relationship at all. Though we differed, I knew brother Nichols was committed to being governed completely and totally by the word of God, and he knew the same about me. Though we differed in our understanding of this subject, what we tried to practice was the same. I would not pretend that I did as good a job in practicing it as did brother Nichols; few men have done so. Shortly before the death of brother Nichols a brother with whom I am largely in agreement on this particular subject wrote an article on the subject. In that article he called brother Nichols by name, left the impression he thought brother Nichols was a dangerous man, and even questioned the honesty of brother Nichols because of his position with reference to the Holy Spirit. This prompted me to write an article in which I pointed out that it is essential that we know who the enemies of the truth really are. Brother Nichols was not the enemy.

On the subject of the Holy Spirit, the enemy is the one who advocates some leadership of the Spirit in addition to that which is contained in the written word. Those committed to the written word as our only source of guidance, and yet who may differ with me on the subject of how the Spirit dwells in the Christian, are not the enemies.

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APPENDIX D-5

View Number Four The Gift or Indwelling of the Holy Spirit Wayne Jackson

To a multitude assembled on the day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter declared:

Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

The identity of “the gift of the Holy Spirit,” as that expression is used in Acts 2:38, has long been a matter of interesting discussion among Christians. Good and respected brethren hold differing viewpoints as to the meaning of the divine terminology employed in this passage. Aside from the radical notion that this verse asserts the perpetuity of miraculous gifts throughout the Christian age - an allegation which would clearly conflict with clear information elsewhere set forth in the New Testament (cf. 1 Cor 13: 8ff; Eph 4:8ff) - there is room for honest disagreement among the Lord’s people on this matter without there being any breach of fellowship.

The Views of Some Brethren

At the outset, I would like to briefly discuss several concepts which brethren hold regarding this matter which I believe to be incorrect.

Salvation. Some argue that the gift of the Holy Spirit mentioned in this passage is merely a reference to salvation from past sins. But this theory appears to gloss the very language of the verse. It seems very clear to this writer that “the gift of the Holy Spirit” is something *different from and in consequence of* the reception of the forgiveness of sins. Note the dual use of the conjunction (sic) “and” in this context: “Repent ye, *and* be baptized . . . unto the remission of your sins; *and* ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” If baptism is different from repentance, should not a similar recognition be given to the distinction between salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit? Moreover, other passages also suggest that the reception of the Holy Spirit is a blessing given in consequence of salvation (cf. Gal 4:6).

Miraculous gifts. Some contend that the gift of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38 was the reception of supernatural signs as bestowed by the apostles’ hands. If such a view is correct, it would seem that a reasonable approach to the passage would suggest that all who were baptized that day (cf. 2:41) received not only forgiveness of sins, but also supernatural gifts, so that literally hundreds of disciples were subsequently performing miracles in the city of Jerusalem. This notion, however, suffers from the lack of any supporting evidence in the book of Acts. There is absolutely no indication, from Acts 2 through chapter 5, that anyone other than the apostles possessed miraculous gifts. Note the following: “and fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were

done *through the apostles*" (Acts 3:43 [sic 2:43]). The miracle performed by Peter and John in Acts 3 seems to have been an unusual event; the Jewish leaders commented:

. . . for that indeed a notable miracle hath been wrought *through them*, is manifest to all that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it (Acts 4:16).

There is no hint that multitudes of Christians were duplicating such signs in the city. Again:

And *by the hands of the apostles* were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch. But of the rest durst no man join himself to them: howbeit the people magnified them . . . (Acts 5:13).

The religious awe with which the multitudes held the apostles suggests that they were doing signs not characteristic of the saints generally. It is only when one comes to Acts 6:6ff that mention is made of the imposition of the apostles' hands and the subsequent exercise of miraculous gifts by others (cf. Acts 6:8).

It has been suggested that the terms "gift" (*dorea*) and "receive" (*lambano*) in Acts 2:38 indicate a miraculous phenomenon, and thus in this context denote the supernatural gifts made available through the laying on of the apostles' hands. That such is not a valid observation can be verified easily by the consultation of a Greek concordance. Compare, for example, *dorea* in John 4:10; Roman 5:15,17, and *lambano* in John 12:48; Mark 10:30. Moreover, the fact is, the most common Greek term for those gifts conveyed by the imposition of apostolic hands is the word *charisma* (cf. Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:4,9,28,30-31; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6).

It is alleged that Acts 2:38 is parallel with Mark 16:16ff in that both sections promise salvation and the reception of signs. I personally do not believe that the passages are either grammatically or contextually parallel in all respects. Mark 16:16ff contains a *general* declaration that miraculous gifts would accompany the body of believers, confirming their divinely given testimony, whereas the persons *directly addressed* in Acts 2:38 were promised both remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. It does not seem reasonable that they would have understood the promise to have been *unlimited* with reference to forgiveness, but *limited* in regard to the gift of the Spirit.

The Word only. Other good brethren hold that "the gift of the Holy Spirit" is merely a metaphorical expression suggesting that only the Spirit's influence, by means of the Inspired Word, indwells the Christian. In my opinion, this concept does not adequately explain all of the biblical data on this theme.

A frequent line of argument in support of this position is to assemble two lists of passages which show common effects produced by both the Spirit and the Word. This is, however, the fallacy of analogy. (Compare the typical Oneness Pentecostal argument whereby lists of similar traits relative to the Father and the Son are assembled in an attempt to prove that they are the same Person.) The fact that the Holy Spirit

frequently uses the Word as his instrument (Eph 6:17) does not speak to the issue of whether or not he indwells the child of God.

The “Word only” view seems to fall under the weight of the context of Acts 2 as a whole. For example, Peter’s auditors on the day of Pentecost “gladly received his word” (v. 41), hence, the influence of the Spirit *before* their baptism. This is evidenced by their question, “What shall we do?” (v. 37), as well as an implied penitent disposition. Yet the promised Spirit was given after baptism. Since the Spirit operated on the Pentecostians through the Word prior to their baptism, just what did they receive as a “gift” *after* their baptism?

The Author’s Viewpoint

The Indwelling Spirit. It is the conviction of numerous highly esteemed brethren that the Holy Spirit, as a “gift,” is bestowed upon the obedient believer (Acts 2:38; 5:32; 1 Cor 6:19; etc.) and is an indwelling presence in his life. Let us consider several facets of this matter.

According to Acts 2:38, the baptized believer is promised “the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Is this a gift *consisting* of the Spirit, or a gift *given* by the Spirit? Actually, from a strictly grammatical viewpoint, it could be either. Some, though, have suggested that grammatically the phrase cannot refer to the Spirit as a gift. That simply is not correct. The expression *tou hagiou pneumatos* in Greek is in the genitive case. Greek grammar books list more than a dozen usages for the genitive (cf. J. Harold Greenlee, *A Concise Exegetical Grammar of New Testament Greek*, Eerdmans, 1963, pp. 28-31). It is context, either in its narrower or broader sense, that will determine the use of the genitive case in a given circumstance.

The fact of the matter is, almost every Greek authority known to this writer contends that the genitive of Acts 2:38 is epexegetical (appositional), i.e., *the Holy Spirit is the gift* (cf. the lexicons of Arndt & Gingrich, 209; Thayer, 161; Robinson, 196; also the works of Kittel, II, 167; Vine, 147; Robertson, *Word Pictures*, III, 36; Moulton, Howard, Turner, *Grammar*, III, 214; *Expositor’s Greek Testament*, II, 91). These sources are not cited as theological experts, but as language authorities; they obviously did not feel that it is grammatically *impossible* for the gift to consist of the Spirit himself. That “the gift of the Holy Spirit” can be the Spirit himself, and that usage be grammatically correct, is demonstrated by a comparison of Acts 10:45 and 10:47, even though the respective contexts reveal that different “measures” of the Spirit are in view.

It is probably safe to say that most of the scholars within our restoration heritage have also argued this meaning of “the gift of the Holy Spirit” in Acts 2:38, even when differing on the nature of receiving the Spirit. J. W. McGarvey wrote: “The expression means the Holy Spirit as a gift; and the reference is to that indwelling of the Holy Spirit by which we bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, and without which we are not of Christ” (*New Commentary on Acts*, I, p. 39). Moses Lard said: “Certainly the gift of the Spirit is the Spirit itself given” (*Lard’s Quarterly*, II, p. 104; cf. also Lipscomb and Sewell, *Questions Answered* p. 318).

Supporting evidence. The most forceful argument for this viewpoint is the subsequent testimony of the New Testament regarding the reception of the Holy Spirit by the believer. Note the following.

1. In Acts 5:32 it is affirmed: “And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God hath given to them that obey him.” Some would confine this passage to the apostles. Note, however, the “them” (others) who are mentioned in addition to the “we” (apostles).

2. Within the Roman letter, *in a context which discusses the indwelling Spirit as a possession of the saints* (cf. Rom 8:9,11,16,26-27), the apostle Paul declares that the Holy Spirit and the human spirit bear dual witness to the fact that we are children of God (v. 16). Does our spirit actually dwell within us? Some would suggest that only the Holy Spirit’s influence through the Word is here considered. Notice, though, it is the indwelling Spirit *himself* who bears testimony with us (see also 8:26). Compare the language of John 4:2 where it is stated that while the Lord representatively baptized disciples, he “HIMSELF baptized not.” There is a difference between what one does *himself* and what he accomplishes through an agent.

3. Paul inquired of the Corinthian saints: “Or know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God? and ye are not your own; for ye were bought with a price: glorify God therefore in your body” (1 Cor 6:19). The Greek word for “temple” is *naos*, and it is an allusion to that holy sanctuary of the Mosaic economy wherein God actually made his presence known (cf. Ex 25:22). Here is an interesting question: If the Holy Spirit bears a relationship to men today only “through the Word,” and yet, admittedly, he influences the alien sinner through the Word, would it be proper to suggest that the sinner’s body is “the temple of the Holy Spirit” to whatever extent he is affected by the Word?

4. Consider 1 Corinthians 12:13. “For in one Spirit (i.e., the Spirit’s operation by means of the gospel) were we all baptized into one body . . . AND (an additional thought) were all made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor 12:13). What is the difference in the Spirit’s relationship to us *before* baptism and *after* it? In Paul’s dual references to the Spirit in this passage, is he suggesting the identical concept in both statements?

5. In Galatians 4:6 the Spirit is said to be sent into our hearts *because we are* (i.e., in consequence of being) sons of God. Would not this suggest a relationship that is different from the mere influence of the Word, since the sinner has the leading of the Word *before* he becomes a child of God?

6. Finally, if the relationship of the Holy Spirit is exactly the same to both sinner and saint (i.e., only through the Word), can it be affirmed that the sinner, to whatever extent that he is influenced by the Word, has the earnest of the Spirit” (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; cf. Eph 1:13-14)? Do not these passages, and those above, set forth a precious promise that is exclusively confined to the Christian?

Some Points to Consider

Sincere brethren believe that there are strong arguments which negate the idea that the Spirit personally indwells the child of God. We will consider several of these.

1. It is argued that if the Holy Spirit actually dwelt in all Christians, he would be divided. If we may kindly say so, this a rather materialistic view of deity. The fact of the matter is, the apostles of Christ were filled with the Spirit of God (Acts 2:4) and yet, the Spirit was still one (cf. 1 Cor 12:9). It is countered, though, that the Holy Spirit actually did not dwell even in the apostles. Rather, it is alleged, the Spirit was only with them in the sense that they were miraculously endowed with divine power. However, it must be noted that the apostles had the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit before the day of Pentecost (cf. Mt 10:8; 12:28). This is obviously what the Lord had in mind when he affirmed that the Spirit was “with” (*para*) those disciples; yet, additionally, the Savior promised, “he SHALL BE in (*en*) you” (Jn 14:17). In view of this passage, how can it possibly be argued that the Holy Spirit cannot actually be in a person?

2. It has been suggested that if the Holy Spirit actually dwelt in someone that would be a form of “incarnation,” hence, the person would be deity. This is an erroneous assumption. The Spirit was in the apostles (Acts 2:4), but they were not deity. Peter refused to be worshiped as though he were a divine being (Acts 10:26). In an incarnation, deity *becomes* flesh (cf. Jn 1:14), but such is not the case when the Spirit simply indwells the believer’s body. When God called to Moses “out of the midst” of a bush (Ex 3:4), that did not imply that the bush was divine.

3. Others would contend that if the Holy Spirit personally dwells in the Christian then he would be able to perform miracles. The connection is unwarranted. John the Baptist performed no miracles (Jn 10:41) and yet he was “filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb” (Lk 1:15). Incidentally, the preposition “from” in this passage is the Greek term *ek*, meaning from the inside to the outside, thus suggesting that John was filled with the Spirit *even while in his mother’s womb*. This certainly excludes the notion that the Holy Spirit can dwell in one only through the agency of the Word.

4. It is further argued that even though the Samaritans had been baptized (Acts 8:12), they had not received the Holy Spirit (8:16), hence, there is no indwelling of the Spirit at the point of baptism. This assertion, however, overlooks a very important phrase in verse 16. The text states: “. . . for as yet it was fallen upon none of them: *only they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.*” Why did not the sentence conclude with the words, “as yet it was fallen upon none of them,” if absolutely no reception of the Spirit was being affirmed? Certainly such would have been sufficient to complete that thought. Rather, though, a qualifying clause is added: “only (*monon de* - literally, ‘but only’) they had been baptized . . .” Thus, the sense likely is: “. . . for as yet it had fallen upon none of them: but only (in the sense bestowed when) they had been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.” This compares well with the promise of the Spirit at the time of one’s baptism “in the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 2:38). Concerning Acts 8:16, McGarvey notes: “. . . previous to the arrival of Peter and John the Holy Spirit

had fallen *with its miraculous powers* on none of the Samaritans” (*ibid.*, p. 142, emphasis added).

5. It is contended that both God and Christ are said to dwell in us, though they do not actually inhabit our bodies, so, similarly, is the case with the Spirit. However, we are expressly told that God dwells in us *by means of the Spirit*. Paul says the Ephesians were “a habitation of God in the Spirit” (Eph 2:22), and John affirms: “. . .we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us” (1 Jn 3:24, cf. 4:13).

Benefits of the Spirit’s Indwelling

Many brethren believe that there are residual benefits to acknowledging the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. Let us consider a couple of these.

1. *The Confident Life* - Every child of God is painfully aware of his inability to live perfectly before his creator (cf. Rom 7:14ff). Frequently, we have deep spiritual needs of which we are not even aware. We ought not to despair, however, for “the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Rom 8:26). There are several important truths affirmed in this passage: (a) We have needs which we do not adequately know how to address. (b) In this regard, the Spirit continually helps us (literally, constantly bears the load with us). (c) This assistance he “himself” (personally) provides. (d) He takes our unutterable groanings and, by his ongoing intercessory activity, conveys our needs to the Father. (e) God, who searches the hearts (where the Spirit abides - Gal 4:6), perceives the “mind of the Spirit” and responds to our needs consistent with his own will (cf. Rom 8:27). What a thrilling concept of the Spirit’s activity in our lives. Moses Lard has a wonderful discussion on this passage in his *Commentary on Romans*, pp. 276-278.

2. *Holiness* - The Greek world, into which Christianity was born, tended to deprecate the human body. There was a proverbial saying, “The body is a tomb.” Epictetus said, “I am a poor soul shackled to a corpse.” That concept accommodated a fleshly mode of living. Since only the soul was important, and not the body, one could give himself wantonly to the indulgences of the flesh. It is this factor that certainly lies behind Paul’s rebuke of carnal indulgence in the church at Corinth. The body is not to be given over to fornication (1 Cor 6:13ff). One of the apostle’s effective arguments for the sanctity (sic) of the Christian’s body is that the Holy Spirit indwells that body as the temple of God, hence, those saints were to glorify the Father in their bodies (1 Cor 6:19, 20).

We are confident that an awareness of the Spirit’s abiding presence can be a powerful motivation to godly living. J. D. Thomas has noted that the doctrine “of the personal indwelling of the Spirit and a strong providential activity aids our own spiritual development towards its highest potential. Though the age of miracles is over, spiritual relationships and spiritual activities are not over! The awareness that the third member

of the Godhead personally and actually dwells within us is a tremendous incentive to holiness" (*The Spirit and Spirituality*, Biblical Research Press, 1962, p. 52).

Conclusion

In affirming that the Holy Spirit dwells within the child of God, one need not suggest (a) that miracles are performed today, (b) that the Spirit "guides" or "illuminates" us in some way apart from the Scriptures, (c) that he operates directly upon the saint's heart, etc. The fact of the Spirit's indwelling is a different issue altogether from the various modes of his operation as such were effected in the apostolic age.

I personally believe that a word of caution is in order as to the manner in which this controversy is addressed in our speaking and writing. Though most brethren acknowledge that this particular issue is not a matter of "fellowship," some, when addressing viewpoints that differ from their own, do so in a very condescending and caustic fashion. We do not believe that such a disposition is in the interest of candid investigation. Let us approach subjects of this type with a spirit of mutual respect and kindly accord.

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APPENDIX E
FIVE BAPTISMS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

	NATURE	PURPOSE	BY	SUBJECTS	ELEMENT	ACT	DURATION
JOHN'S	Commandment Lk 7:29-30	To prepare for Messiah Jn 1:31 Lk 3:3-6 Acts 19:4	John Mk 1:5	Penitent Jews Mk 1:4-5	Water Jn 1:26	Immersion Mk 1:10 Jn 3:23	Ceased before cross Acts 19:3-5
SUFFERING	Experience Mk 10:38-39	1. To bring salvation 1 Pet 2:24 2 Cor 1:5-6 2. Resulting glory Heb 12:2 2 Tim 2:12	Wicked Men Acts 2:23 2 Thess 3:1-2	1. Jesus Mk 10:38 2. His followers Mk 10:39	Suffering Mk 10:39	Over- whelming Mt 27:46, 50	1. On the cross Mt 27:50 2. Till Jesus returns 2 Tim 3:12
HOLY SPIRIT	Promise Acts 1:4-5	1. To empower for special work Acts 1:8; Jn 16:13; Jn 14:26; 2 Cor 12:12 2. To prove God's accep- tance of Gen- tiles Acts 11:15-18	Christ Mt 3:11	1. Apostles Acts 2:1-4 2. Cornelius' household Acts 11:15- 16	Holy Spirit Mt 3:11	Over- powering Mt 10:19- 20 Acts 2:4	Occurred but twice Acts 2,10 Each a special case

FIRE	Warning Mt 3:11-12	Punishment Mt 25:45-46	Christ Mt 3:11	Wicked Mt 3:10 2 Thess 1:7-8	Fire Mt 3:11	Over- whelming Rev 20:15	Everlasting Mt 25:41
GREAT COMMIS- SION	Commandment Mt 28:19 Acts 2:38	Forgiveness Acts 2:38 1 Pet 3:21	Disciples Mt 28:19	Penitent believers Mk 16:16 Acts 2:38	Water Acts 8:36- 39	Immersion Rom 6:3-5	Till end Mt 28:19-20

Reese, Gareth, L., *New Testament History - Acts*, College Press, Joplin: 1995, p. 8.

EXAMPLES OF CONVERSION

PREACHING	BELIEVED	REPENTED	CONFESSED	BAPTIZED	SAVED
Pentecost Acts 2:14-41		Repent 37-38		Baptized 38-41	Remission of Sins - Saved 37,47
Samaria Acts 8:5-13	Believed 12			Baptized 12-13	
Eunuch Acts 8:35-39	Believed 37		Confessed 37	Baptized 38	Rejoiced 39
Saul Acts 9:17-18 Acts 22:12-16				Baptized 18	Sins Washed Away 22:16
Cornelius Acts 10:34-48	Believed 43 (cf. 48)			Baptized 48	Remission of Sins 43
The Jailer Acts 16:25-32	Believed 34			Baptized 33	
Lydia Acts 16:13-14	Heeded 14			Baptized 15	
PREACHING Rom 10:14	FAITH Heb 11:6 Heb 5:8-9	REPENTANCE Lk 13:3,5	CONFESSION Rom 10:10 2 Thess 1:7-9	BAPTISM Gal 3:27	SALVATION 2 Tim 2:10

APPENDIX F
“BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT”
By DON DEFFENBAUGH

OUTLINE

INTRODUCTION

- I. PASSAGES IN WHICH THE EXPRESSION IS FOUND
 - A. Passages using *pimplemi* (*pletho*) - meaning “to fill.”
 - 1. Lk 1:15
 - 2. Lk 1:41
 - 3. Lk 1:67
 - 4. Acts 2:4
 - 5. Acts 4:8
 - 6. Acts 4:31
 - 7. Acts 9:17
 - 8. Acts 13:9
 - B. Passages using *pleroo* - meaning “to fill.”
 - 1. Acts 13:52
 - 2. Eph 5:18
 - C. Passages using *pleres* - meaning “full of.”
 - 1. Lk 4:1
 - 2. Acts 6:3,5
 - 3. Acts 7:55
 - 4. Acts 11:24
 - II. A STUDY OF EACH PASSAGE INVOLVING “PIMPLEMI”
 - III. A STUDY OF EACH PASSAGE INVOLVING “PLEROO”
 - IV. A STUDY OF EACH PASSAGE INVOLVING “PLERES”
 - V. DEDUCTIONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THIS STUDY
- CONCLUSION**

INTRODUCTION

“Be filled with the Spirit” is the magical expression of our day. It is being echoed in the four corners of the earth. By it, people mean that they have been baptized in the Spirit. By it, some Christians believe that they have a direct indwelling of the Spirit which enables them to be super-spiritual, and to enjoy unbelievable and unexplainable experiences.

It is a Biblical expression that is not only misunderstood by those in the classical Pentecostal and charismatic movements, but it is also misunderstood by many in the church of our Lord. What does the Bible mean when this expression is used?

I. PASSAGES IN WHICH THE EXPRESSION IS FOUND

No intelligent conclusions can be drawn concerning the expression until one has looked at the passages using it.

(1) *Our first list* of passages is where the word “Spirit” is used in connection with *pimplemi* (*pletho*), meaning “to fill:” Lk 1:15; Lk 1:41; Lk 1:67; Acts 2:4; Acts 4:8; Acts 4:31; Acts 9:17 and Acts 13:9.

(2) *Our second list* is of passages where the word “Spirit” is used in connection with *pleroo*, meaning “to fill:” Acts 13:52 and Eph 5:18.

(3) *Our third list* contains passages where the word “Spirit” is used in connection with *pleres*, meaning “full of:” Lk 4:1; Acts 6:3; Acts 6:5; Acts 7:55; Acts 11:24.

II. A STUDY OF EACH PASSAGE INVOLVING “PIMPLEMI”

(1) *Luke 1:15*. The first passage we find in the New Testament using this expression where *pimplemi* is involved is Luke 1:15. The angel in announcing to Zacharias the birth of John observed that “he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother’s womb.” Because it is obvious that in every other case in the New Testament where Spirit is used in connection with *pimplemi* that it is miraculous we thus conclude that such is the case with this passage. With this conclusion J. S. Lamar agrees when he says that this is a Hebrew hyperbole denoting that John was to be filled with the Holy Spirit “from the earliest period.” Barnes holds the view, “Shall be divinely designated or appointed to this office and qualified for it by all needful communications from the Holy Spirit.”²

(2) *Lk 1:41* is our second passage. There is no question but that this is a miraculous filling which the Holy Spirit especially when one views the results, “She cried out with a loud voice...” (vs. 42-45).

(3) *Lk 1:67* refers to Zacharias being filled with the Holy Spirit and the result was that he prophesied hence; we are dealing with another case of the miraculous.

(4) *In Acts 2:4*, Luke refers to the apostles being baptized in the Holy Spirit in the following manner, “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” It is quite obvious that we are dealing with the miraculous in this passage.

(5) *In Acts 4:8*, when Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit, he did some inspired preaching (vs. 8-12). Again, we are dealing with the miraculous.

(6) *Acts 4:31*. When the companions of Peter and John heard what the chief priests and the elders had said unto them they prayed and “they were all filled with the Holy Spirit . . .” and the result was that they began to speak the word of God with boldness (Acts 4:31). This sounds like inspired preaching to me.

(7) *Acts 9:17* presents some difficulties to us but they are the kind of difficulties that can be settled by a careful study of the text and its context. Saul was to become Paul, the apostle, and as an apostle he had to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. It is quite obvious that he possessed this measure of the Spirit (2 Cor 12:11), yet only Christ could administer Baptism of the Holy Spirit (Mt 3:11). The reason why it is mentioned in connection with the coming of Ananias is that if Saul had refused to listen to Ananias, he would neither have received his sight, nor have been baptized in the Holy Spirit. Even though Ananias did not give the Spirit to Saul, he would not have received it but for Ananias' coming. It is most significant for us to note that Saul's being filled with the Spirit is not attributed to the laying on of Ananias' hands. What did result from the laying on of his hands was that Saul received his sight (vv. 13,18). We are again dealing with the miraculous.

(8) *Acts 13:9* is yet another miraculous filling. The result is a miracle of judgment. Elymas the sorcerer was struck blind for a season because he withstood Paul and Barnabas as they worked with Sergius Paulus who desired to hear the word of God (sic).

When "Spirit" is used in connection with this word there is evidently a reference to the miraculous.

III. A STUDY OF PASSAGES INVOLVING "PLEROO"

(1) *In Acts 13:52* we have a reference to the non-miraculous. There are at least three reasons why we have reached this conclusion in reference to this verse. (a) The verb form shows a continued action, "continually filled." (b) "Spirit" appears in connection with "joy" which is non-miraculous. (c) There is every indication that all the disciples were filled with the Spirit, yet not all disciples had the miraculous measure of the Spirit.

(2) *When one studies Eph 5:18-19* along with the companion passage, Col 3:16, he must be convinced at once that we are dealing with the non-miraculous. The fact that *all* Christians are to be thus filled, is proof that we are dealing with the nonmiraculous. Again, not all New Testament Christians were miraculously endowed. In this passage we are dealing with a command, ". . . be filled with the Spirit." There is no command to be miraculously filled with the Holy Spirit in all the New Testament, unless of course, this is a case in point. But, it must be remembered that the miraculous measure of the Spirit lies in the realm of promise and not command.

When "Spirit" is used in connection with this word there is a reference to the nonmiraculous.

IV. A STUDY OF EACH PASSAGE INVOLVING "PLERES"

(1) *In Lk 4: 1* we find the expression and it must be remembered that it is used in reference to Christ immediately following the coming of the Holy Spirit upon him at his baptism (Lk 3:22). McGarvey says, "Just after his baptism, with the glow of the

descended Spirit still upon him, and the commending voice of the Father still ringing in his ears, Jesus is rushed into the suffering of temptation.”³ It must be remembered in this connection that according to John, our Lord had the Spirit without measure (Jn 3:34).

(2) *Acts 6:3,5*. *Acts 6:3* is a passage which tells of the qualifications of those men who were to serve tables. The expression in this passage appears to refer to the non-miraculous. One reason for concluding such is that it is included with other qualifications that are non-miraculous, “of good report” and “full of wisdom.” Even though some of these men were able to work miracles at a later date (*Acts 8*), such is no real proof that they were able to do so at this time. As a matter of fact, at this point in the history of the New Testament church the only ones of record who could perform the miraculous were the apostles. McGarvey’s observation is, “He means men who were full of the Spirit as respects the fruits of a holy life.”⁴

Acts 6:5 merely shows that the multitude chose Stephen, a man who possessed the qualifications set forth in *Acts 6:3*. We are not to conclude that the others did not possess these same qualifications. Verse 6 of this reading offers us some difficulty. The passage refers to the laying on of the apostles’ hands. There are at least three possible meanings: (a) that the apostles imparted to them the gifts measure of the Spirit; (b) that the apostles were merely setting them apart to this special function; (c) that the apostles were doing both; imparting the gifts measure of the Spirit and setting them apart to this special function. My choice is the last of the three. I believe that both ideas are involved. You see, Philip possessed the miraculous measure of the Spirit (*Acts 8*); and, if *Acts 6:6* does not refer, at least in part, to the gifts measure, then we have no New Testament account of Philip receiving the same. Furthermore, as far as we know, there was, as yet, no elders in the New Testament church; and, hence, the apostles were leading the congregation and would be the ones to set these men apart to the function.

(3) *Acts 7:55*. When Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit he was able to look up into heaven and see the glory of God (*Acts 7:55*). The results of his being filled with the Holy Spirit show us that this is a reference to the miraculous.

(4) *Acts 11: 24* seems to be a parallel to *Acts 6:3,5*. Again, because of its association with faith, it appears to be a non-miraculous filling; and, hence, is a reference to Barnabas being full of the Spirit as respects the fruits of a holy life (*Gal 5:22-23*).

The result of being “filled with the Spirit” is to be “full of the Spirit.” There are times in the New Testament when to be “full of the Spirit” refers to the miraculous, and there are other times when it refers to the non-miraculous.

V. DEDUCTIONS TO BE DRAWN FROM THIS STUDY

(1) *First*, there was a period of time in the New Testament church when to “be filled with the Spirit” meant that they were given miraculous abilities: *Acts 2:4*; *Acts 4:8*; *Acts 4:31*; *Acts 9:17*; *Acts 13:9*; *Acts 7:55*.

(2) *Secondly*, during that same period of time, to “be filled with the Spirit” meant that they were to be of distinguished piety: Acts 6:3; Acts 6:5; Acts 11:24; Acts 13:52; Eph 5:18.

(3) *Thirdly*, it is therefore erroneous for our classical Pentecostal and charismatic friends to conclude that the expression “be filled with the Spirit” is equal to Holy Spirit baptism. There are only two cases of Holy Spirit baptism in the New Testament (Acts 2, 10-11) and these fulfill the prophecy of Joel 2:28-29. The last recorded case of Holy Spirit baptism was in A.D. 41, the first case in A.D. 33. Paul said in A.D. 64, “there is one baptism.” By the time Paul wrote Eph 4:5 the baptism of the Holy Spirit had served its purpose in (a) guiding and qualifying the apostles, and (b) confirming the fact that the gospel was for the Gentiles as well as the Jews. There is one baptism for today and that is baptism in water for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).

(4) *Fourthly*, in those cases of non-miraculous filling of the Spirit in the New Testament there is no proof of super piety, better-felt-than-told feeling, fantastic highs, etc.; but, rather, that these disciples were producing the fruit of the Spirit in their lives. As Barnes says, they were of “distinguished piety.”⁵

(5) *Fifthly*, there is *NO* possibility that today’s Christian can be filled with the Spirit in a miraculous manner. There are two reasons why this is so: (a) Holy Spirit baptism has been fulfilled (Acts 2,10-11) and (b) there can be no laying on of the apostles’ hands today (Acts 8:14-19).

CONCLUSION

May the Lord help us to be filled with the Spirit (Eph 5:18)! But, may the Lord also hasten the day when his people rely wholly upon the sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17) to lead, guide and direct them. When one follows the complete guide, his spiritual life will be complete, and he will be completely furnished unto every good work (2 Tim 3:16-17). Only the evil and carnally minded look for direct operations of the Spirit which serve as their signs (Mt 12:39).

ENDNOTES

1. J. S. Lamar, *Commentary on Luke*, p. 23.
2. Albert Barnes, *Barnes on the New Testament*, Luke - John, p. 4.
3. J. W. McGarvey, *The Fourfold Gospel - Matthew, Mark, Luke, John*, p. 87.
4. J. W. McGarvey, *New Commentary on Acts of Apostles*, p. 105.
5. Albert Barnes, *Barnes on the New Testament*, Acts, p. 111.

Taken From: Winkler, W., Ed., *What Do You Know About The Holy Spirit?*, Winkler Publications, Ft Worth: 1980, pp. 78-83.

APPENDIX G
FOUR HUNDRED YEARS
Acts 7:5-8

Verses 5-8, *And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on: and he promised that he would give it to him in possession, and to his seed after him, when as yet he had no child. And God spake on this wise, that his seed should sojourn in a strange land, and that they should bring them into bondage, and treat them ill four hundred years. And the nation to which they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and serve me in this place. And he gave him the covenant of cricumcision (sic): and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob the twelve patriarchs.*

“None inheritance in it . . .” “The gift was not to Abraham personally, but to him as the founder and representative of the nation .”⁶ The only part of Palestine that Abraham ever owned was the cave of Machpelah which he purchased for a grave.

“Four hundred years . . .” This is one of the pseudocons! Exodus 12:40-41 gives the time as 430 years; but “The four hundred years is a round number as in Genesis 15:13 .”⁷ Also, there were two ways of counting the “sojourning,” these being (1) from the call of Abraham to the Exodus which was 430 years, and (2) from the birth of Isaac to the Exodus which was 400 years.”⁸ The bicentennial of the United States may be counted either from the Declaration of Independence, or from the ratification of the constitution. It is ridiculous to make anything out of such so-called discrepancies as these.

Perhaps Stephen intended that his hearers should notice that even the covenant of circumcision was given long before Moses or the law.

ENDNOTES

6. John W. Haley, *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible* (Nashville: B. C. Goodpasture, 1951), p. 318.
7. A. C. Hervey, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
8. B. W. Johnson, *Notes on the NT* (Delight, Ark.: Gospel Light Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 441.

Taken From: Coffman, James Burton, *Commentary on Acts*, Firm Foundation Publishing House, Austin: 1976, p.135.

APPENDIX H

DID 75 OR 70 MEMBERS OF ISRAEL'S FAMILY MOVE TO EGYPT? (7:14; Gen 46:26-27) Byron Denman

Let us first read the passages under consideration:

Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls (Acts 7:14).

All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six; And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten (Gen 46:26-27).

At least two other passages in the Old Testament also mention the number of Jacob's family that went into Egypt: "Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude" (Deut 10:22) and "All the souls that came out of the loins of Jacob were seventy souls: for Joseph was in Egypt already" (Ex 1:5).

It is obvious that there is a difference in the total members of the family of Jacob that went into Egypt as proclaimed by Stephen in Acts chapter 7 and from the total given in the three Old Testament references mentioned above. Many possible solutions have been offered to explain this apparent discrepancy.

McGarvey notes that the Septuagint translation of Genesis agrees with Stephen and concludes that the only method of reconciling these statements that is satisfactory is that the number given by Moses includes all "who came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives" (Gen 46:26). He continues by saying,

The number given by Stephen must, then include 'five of their wives,' who were, probably, all that were then living. The translators of the Septuagint, having some historical evidence, now lost to us, that five of their wives went with them, saw fit to fill up the number in their translation, and Stephen followed their enumeration.³

Brother Boles takes a different approach concluding that "Stephen counts some grandchildren of Joseph and so makes it seventy-five, whereas Genesis 46:26 has sixty-six, and then the next verse makes it seventy, including Jacob and Joseph with his two sons."⁴

A solution similar to McGarvey's is found in Coffman's commentary⁵ where he quotes Dehoff⁶ who quotes Haley,

Jacob's children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren amounted to sixty-six (Gen 46:8-26). Adding Jacob himself and Joseph with his two sons, we have seventy. If to the sixty-six we add the nine wives of Jacob's sons (Judah's and Simeon's wives were dead; and Joseph could hardly be said to call himself, his own wife or his two sons into Egypt; and Jacob is specifically separated by Stephen) we have seventy-five persons as in Acts.⁷

Coffman then adds,

Jewish genealogies did not regard women, or even count them; and such an attitude was noted during Jesus' public ministry, and for some time within the church itself, when, for example, the number partaking of the loaves and fishes was given as "five thousand men, besides the women and children," and when the number of disciples was stated as "five thousand men" (Acts 4:4). It was appropriate that in this inspired speech of Stephen the women should have been reckoned among the number going down into Egypt with Jacob. Thus there is logic in Stephen's following a different system of numbering; and another pseudocon bites the dust.⁸

Another attempt to explain this difference is offered by Lenski:

In Gen 46:27; Ex 1:5; Deut 10:22 the number of "souls" (persons, as in 2:41, which certainly included every child) is only seventy while in the first two of these passages the LXX has seventy-five. This is a mere matter of counting. The descendants of Jacob that went to Egypt were sixty-six in number (Gen 46:26), but counting Joseph and his two sons and Jacob himself (Gen 46:27), the number is seventy. In the LXX all the sons of Joseph who he got in Egypt were counted, "nine souls," which, with the sixty-six, made seventy-five. Various other ways of counting are suggested in order to explain this number: the one indicated is correct.⁹

The *Expositor's Greek Testament*¹⁰ and A. T. Robertson's *Word Pictures in the New Testament*,¹¹ as well as Barnes, give basically the same explanation as does Lenski, however, Barnes gives a more detailed account of what leads him to this conclusion.

There has been much perplexity felt in the explanation of this passage. In Gen 46:26; Ex 1:5 and Deut 10:22 it is expressly said that the number which went down to Egypt consisted of but seventy persons. The question is, in what way these accounts can be reconciled? It is evident that Stephen has followed the account which is given by the Septuagint. In Gen 46:27, that version reads, "But the sons of Joseph who were with him in Egypt, were nine souls; all the souls of the house of Jacob which came with Jacob into Egypt, were seventy--five souls." This number is made out by adding these "nine" souls to the sixty-six mentioned in ver. 26. The difference between the Septuagint and Moses is, that the former mentions five descendants of Joseph who are not recorded by

the latter. The “names” of the sons of Ephraim and Manasseh are recorded in 1 Chron 7:14-21. Their names were Ashriel, Machir, Zelophehad, Peresh, sons of Manasseh: and Shuthelah, son of Ephraim. Why the Septuagint inserted these, it may not be easy to see. But such was evidently the fact: and the fact accords accurately with the historic record, though Moses did not insert their names. The solution of difficulties in regard to chronology is always difficult: and what might be entirely apparent to a Jew, in the time of Stephen, may be wholly inexplicable to us.¹²

One more interesting attempt to explain this alleged discrepancy is found in the Old Testament Commentary by Keil and Delitzsch where the emphasis is given to the descendants of Jacob who became the founders of independent families.

That this was the design of our list, is still further confirmed by a comparison of Ex 1:5 and Deut 10:22, where the seventy souls of the house of Jacob which went into Egypt are said to constitute the seed which, under the blessing of the Lord, had grown into the numerous people that Moses led out of Egypt, to take possession of the land of promise. From this point of view it was a natural thing to describe the seed of the nation, which grew up in tribes and families, in such a way as to give the germs and roots of all the tribes and families of the whole nation; *i.e.*, not merely the grandsons who were born before the migration, but also the grandsons and great-grandsons who were born in Egypt and became founders of independent families. By thus embracing all the founders of tribes and families, the significant number 70 was obtained, in which the number 7 (formed of the divine number 3, and the world number 4, as the seal of the covenant relation between God and Israel) is multiplied by the number 10, as the seal of completeness, so as to express the fact that these 70 souls comprehended the whole of the nation of God.¹³

As we consider all of these approaches to finding an answer to the assigned question, let us return to the Genesis account in chapter 46 and examine the context. In the opening verses of this chapter, we are told that God had spoken to Israel (Jacob) instructing him to go to Egypt and not fear because, “I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes” (Gen 46:3-5).

We are then informed that “. . . they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him: His sons, and his sons’ sons with him, his daughters, and his sons’ daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt” (46:6-7). This description of who accompanied Jacob into Egypt is then further described by noting the 4 women who were the mothers of the 12 sons and one daughter of Jacob. The children given birth by Leah, including Dinah, along with her grandchildren, are counted to be 33 (46:15); the descendants of Zilpah are counted to be 16 (46:18); the descendants of Rachel are counted to be 14 (46:22); and the descendants of Bilhah are counted to be 7 (46:25). When these four groups are added, they equal 70, as stated in verse 27, “. . . all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were threescore and ten. “

Now notice verse 26, "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were threescore and six." We are told two important things in this verse: (a) the daughters-in-law of Jacob were not counted in this context, and (b) the emphasis in this verse is on those who "came with" Jacob into Egypt, omitting Joseph and his two sons who were already in Egypt (46:27; Ex 1:1-5) and the writer omits Jacob from the 66 figure.

It has been mentioned in this list of possible answers to our question that the translators of the Septuagint have changed the text to read 75 in both Genesis and Exodus.¹⁴ The reason given for this change is the addition of five names in Genesis 46:20 -

the names of Machir, the son of Manasseh, and Galaad, the son of Machir, and Sutalaam and Taam the sons of Ephraim, and Edem the son of Sutalaam. (See Num 26:28-37; 1 Chron 7:14.) Thus the whole number of persons becomes 75. The passage however is not in the Samaritan, with which the LXX mostly agrees.¹⁵

Adam Clarke gives the following as the translation of the addition to the text of Genesis 46:20, "These were the sons of Manasseh whom his Syrian concubine bore unto him: Machir; and Machir begat Galaad. The sons of Ephraim, Manasseh's brother, were Sutalaam and Taam; and the sons of Sutalaam, Edem." Clark continues,

These add five persons to the list, and make out the number given by *Stephen*, Acts 7:14, which it seems he had taken from the text of the *Septuagint*, unless we could suppose that the text of Stephen had been *altered* to make it correspond to the Septuagint, of which there is not the slightest evidence from ancient MSS. or versions. The addition in the Septuagint is not found in either the Hebrew or the Samaritan at present; and some suppose that it was taken either from Num 26:29,35, or 1 Chron 7:14-20, but in none of these places does the addition appear *as it stands* in the Septuagint, though some of the names are found interspersed.¹⁶

From the study of the context of Genesis 46, we can correctly conclude that included in the number 70 is Jacob, Joseph, Manasseh, and Ephraim. Therefore, we reject the idea that 9 of the wives were added to the 66 to make 75; if this is correct why was the wife of Joseph not included? Also, it appears that even in the New Testament the women were not included, as noted earlier in our study.

The only conclusion that seems to stay with the manner of counting as recorded in Genesis 46 is that in the 75 number an additional 5 members of the family of Joseph are included. Therefore, the Septuagint addition in Genesis 46:20 may be justified. However, concerning this point we cannot be dogmatic. It is evident from a study of the names given in Numbers 26 and 1 Chronicles 7, that Manasseh and Ephraim each had several sons and grandsons. On this point we can be certain: there is no contradiction.

ENDNOTES

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4. Boles, p. 106.
5. Burton Coffman, *Commentary On Acts* (Austin, TX: Firm Foundation Pub. House, 1976), p. 136.
6. George W. Dehoff, *Alleged Bible Contradictions Explained* (Murfreesboro, TN: Dehoff Publications, 1970), p. 275.
7. John W. Haley, *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Co., 1967), p. 389.
8. Coffman, pp. 136-137.
9. R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation Of The Acts Of The Apostles* (Minneapolis, M N: Augsburg Pub. House, 1961), p. 270.
10. R. J. Knowling, *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, W. Robertson Nicoll, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1974), v. 2, p. 184.
11. A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures In The New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1930), pp. 83-84.
12. Albert Barnes, *Notes On The New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1950), p. 123.
13. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary On The Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1976), v. 1, pp. 373-374.
14. Keil and Delitzsch, p. 370.
15. William Jacobson, *The Bible Commentary*, F. C. Cook, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1981), pp. 218-219.
16. Adam Clarke, *Clarke's Commentary* (New York, NY: Abingdon Press, n.d.), v. 1, p. 254.

Taken From: McClish, Dub, Ed., *Studies In Acts*, Valid Publications, Denton: 1985, pp. 406-411.

APPENDIX I

WHY DID STEPHEN SEE JESUS STANDING WHEN PETER SAID HE WAS SEATED IN HEAVEN? (7:55-56; 2:34)

Byron Denman

The two passages under consideration are as follows:

But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God (7:55-56).

For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand (2:34; note also verses 29-36).

The failure to understand the wonderful lessons learned from these passages has caused the “unlearned and unstable” to “wrest” them “as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction” (2 Pet 3:16). Remember that the word “wrest” is from the Greek word *strebloo* meaning to twist, wrench, distort something, so that a false meaning results.¹⁷ Thayer adds that the word signifies an instrument of torture, to twist to turn away, to torture, put on the rack; metaphorically to pervert, of one who wrests or tortures language to a false sense.¹⁸

For example, we are told,

Dispensational commentators have taken Stephen’s reference to Jesus’ “standing” as supporting their view that the distinctive redemptive message for this age was not proclaimed till the Pauline gospel (either at its inauguration, its close, or somewhere in between); and, therefore, in the transitional period between Israel and the church, Jesus is represented as not yet having taken his seat at God’s hand. Others speak of Jesus as “standing” in order to enter his messianic office on earth or depict him as “standing” in line with the common representation of angels standing in the presence of God.¹⁹

Let us make an in-depth examination of the context of these passages and remove the cloud left hanging by such false charges and abuses of the majestic scene revealed to Stephen.

First, it is important to remember that Peter’s words recorded in Acts 2 are a quotation from Psalm 110:1. This Old Testament declaration, we are informed, was made by David: “And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies thy footstool” (Lk 20:42-43). David made the statement by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Mark 12:36). Matthew informs us that our Lord used this context to bring to an end the efforts of the Pharisees,

Sadducees, and lawyers to deceive him with their questions when he asked them, “If David then called him Lord, how is he his son?” (Mt 22:45; note vv. 15-46). The chapter closes with the statement, “And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.” Another reference to this prophetic passage is found in the opening words of the Hebrews letter (1:13) and the apostle Paul gives the complete picture of the significance of this point in his first epistle to the church in Corinth:

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all (1 Cor 15:24-28).

The fact that Jesus is presently seated on his throne at the right hand of God (and was long before the apostle Paul became a Christian) is well documented upon the pages of inspiration: “So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God” (Mk 16:19); “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom 8:34); “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places” (Eph 1:20); “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God” (Col 3:1); “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb 1:3); “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God” (Heb.10:12); “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him” (1 Pet 3:22).

From these passages it is clearly seen that the picture drawn in the Scriptures of Jesus on the right hand of God is to declare that he is the victorious Son of God, the resurrected Christ, the king reigning over the kingdom which is his church. The very position or place designated for Jesus indicates his preeminence (Col 1:18). Clarke says it is an indication that Christ was to “take the place of the greatest eminence and authority.”²⁰

The position of being on the right hand of one in authority has always indicated in the Bible another position of authority, but inferior to the one by whom another is standing or seated. The phrase “right hand” is used symbolically to denote authority in the following examples: (1) Joseph thought his father had made a mistake when he placed his right hand on the head of Ephraim instead of Manasseh, for Manasseh was his first-born, but Israel informed Joseph that he knew what he was doing and had done correctly:

And Joseph said unto his father, Not so, my father; for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head. And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it; he also shall be great: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations (Gen 48:18, 19).

(2) Solomon placed a seat at the right hand of his throne for his mother, Bathsheba (1 Kgs 2:19). (3) Numerous times this symbolism appears in the Psalms, such as, “The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly. The right hand of the Lord is exalted: the right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly” (Psa 118:15,16). (4) In addition to the New Testament examples already given, the seven stars in the right hand of the one like unto the Son of man (Rev 1:16,20; 2:1) and the book with the seven seals in the right hand of the one sitting on the throne in heaven (4:3; 5:1), further show that authority or power is often represented by the “right hand” in Scripture.

Reese states, “The right hand is mentioned because that was the place of dignity and honor. Jesus has a place of exalted dignity at the right hand of the Father. . . . The Father (Jehovah) invited Jesus to a place at his right hand, a place of favor, trust, and power.”²¹

Our question points our attention not only to the position our Lord occupies as seen by Stephen, but also his posture; he is standing. Several writers state that our Lord was in a standing position because of his desire to honor, reward, encourage, or assist Stephen; these views are supported by Reese,²² Boles,²³ Coffman,²⁴ Pulpit Commentary,²⁵ Cook’s Commentary,²⁶ Ellicott’s,²⁷ and others.

We are in agreement with the idea that this heavenly vision was shown to Stephen for the purpose of reassuring him, and recorded by inspiration for the purpose of reassuring all Christians who die in the Lord (Rev 14:13), of the promises made to those who are faithful unto death. Remember these comforting promises: “. . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev 2:10c); “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him” (Jas 1:12).

For I am now already to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (2 Tim 4:6-8).

We believe one of the most eloquent presentations of this position is found in the 1928 edition of Elam’s Notes,

By the power of the Holy Spirit, Stephen saw these things. The Spirit revealed them to him as he “looked up steadfastly into heaven.” They were not ad-

dressed to the natural eye or senses. Being in the room in the temple where the Sanhedrin met did not interfere with this vision. He saw “into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.” God revealed these things to Stephen to encourage him. We cannot fully conceive the full import of “the glory of God” until, like Stephen, we see it for ourselves and realize “what it is to be there.” As the morning star fades out in the light of the sun, so the sun itself, in all its splendor, is lost in the greater effulgence of the glory of God. Others did not see these things; Stephen told what he saw: “I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.” While none of these saw Jesus on this occasion, did not some of them remember the declaration of Jesus when on trial before this court: “Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming on the clouds of heaven” (Mt 26:64)?²⁸

It has also been suggested that Jesus was standing, as Stephen was being stoned to death, fulfilling another of his promises to the faithful, serving as the one and only Mediator between God and men, as he is described in 1 Timothy 2:5²⁹ and confessing his faithful ones before his Father as he had stated, “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven” (Mt 10:32). Longenecker quotes F. F. Bruce,

Stephen has been confessing Christ before men, and now he sees Christ confessing His servant before God. The proper posture for a witness is the standing posture. Stephen, condemned by an earthly court, appeals for vindication to a heavenly court, and his vindicator in the supreme court is Jesus, who stands at God’s right hand as Stephen’s advocate, his “paraclete” (Book of the Acts, p. 168).³⁰

Since this is the only time Jesus is described as standing on the right hand of God, it must have the significance as suggested above. It is certainly not grounds for claiming that the inspired recorder of the book of Acts contradicts himself.

ENDNOTES

17. William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon Of The New Testament*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 771.
18. Joseph H. Thayer, *The New Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*, (Lafayette, IN: The Book Factory, 1979), p. 590.
19. Richard N. Longenecker, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Frank E. Gaebelin, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1981), v. 9, p. 350. (Also note the Introduction section where Longenecker discusses the criticism of the book of Acts for more evidence of the false charges questioning the reliability of the book, pp. 207-212).
20. Clarke, v. 5, p. 216.
21. Reese, pp. 55,59.

22. Reese, p. 244.
23. Boles, p. 118.
24. Coffman, p. 145.
25. A. C. Hervey, *The Pulpit Commentary*, H. D. M. Spence and Joseph S. Exell, eds., (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1962), v. 18, p. 221.
26. Jacobson, p. 405.
27. E. H. Plumptre, *Ellicott's Commentary On The Whole Bible*, Charles John Ellicott, ed., (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1959), v. 7, p. 45.
28. E. A. Elam, *Elam's Notes On Bible School Lesson* (Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Co., 1928), pp. 191-192.
29. Clarke, v. 5, p. 735.
30. Longenecker, p. 350.

Taken From: McClish, Dub, Ed., *Studies In Acts*, Valid Publications, Denton: 1985, pp. 411-415.

APPENDIX J
DID STEPHEN ADDRESS JESUS IN PRAYER? (7:59)
Byron Denman

The passage referred to reads as follows: "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep" (Acts 7:59,60).

The need of discussing the answer to this question is made very evident by reading the majority of commentaries written on the book of Acts; repeatedly the reader is told that Acts 7:59-60 teaches that it is possible for a Christian to pray to Jesus rather than through Jesus to the "One God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph 4:6).

Adam Clarke wrote,

Here is a most manifest proof that prayer is offered to Jesus Christ; and that in the most solemn circumstances in which it could be offered, *viz.*, when a man was breathing his last. This is, properly speaking, one of the highest acts of worship which can be offered to God; and, if Stephen had not conceived Jesus Christ to be God, could he have committed his soul into his hands?³¹

Barnes devotes almost two pages of his commentary attempting to justify his conclusion that Stephen engaged in prayer to the Lord Jesus.

. . . That is, he was engaged in prayer to the Lord Jesus. . . . This was, therefore, an act of worship; a solemn invocation of the Lord Jesus, in the most interesting circumstances in which a man can be placed - in his dying moments. And this shows that it is right to worship the Lord Jesus, and to pray to him. For if Stephen was inspired, it settles the question. The example of an inspired man in such circumstances is a safe and correct example. If it should be said that the inspiration of Stephen cannot be made out, yet the inspiration of Luke, who has recorded it, will not be called in question.³²

Other comments made by various writers include: (1) "a direct prayer to our Lord,"³³ (2) "And he was praying to Jesus Christ. These words are then memorable as an instance of direct prayer addressed 'to Christ as God' (to use the words of Pliny, Epist. x.97),"³⁴ (3) ". . . the words which follow, 'Lord Jesus,' show to whom the invocation was made, even to him whom he saw standing at the right hand of God,"³⁵ (4) ". . . as he was calling upon the Lord Jesus and making direct prayer to him as 'Lord Jesus.'"³⁶ Even in many of the commentaries by respected brethren are found similar remarks: (1) "Stephen's prayer was made to Jesus to receive his spirit. The prayer to Jesus was equivalent to calling on the Lord (Acts 9:21; 22:16; 1 Cor 1:2;"³⁷ (2) "The peculiar construction here has the effect of making 'calling upon the Lord' equivalent to praying

to Jesus personally. This is one of the few prayers in the NT directed to the Lord Jesus Christ, rather than to the Father through him.”³⁸

In every case listed above it appears that the false premise for the conclusion reached is the improper interpretation of the word “calling.” The idea seems to be generally accepted that the word “calling” can *only* refer to one approaching another in prayer. Notice the following carefully: The word for calling as used in this context is *epikaloumenon* which is from the verb *epikaleo* meaning “to call on, to attach or connect a name, to attach an additional name, to surname, to receive an appellation or surname, to call upon, invoke, to appeal to” according to the *Analytical Greek Lexicon*.³⁹ Thayer gives five different usages of this verb. The fourth one listed states, “to call upon, to invoke; Mid. to call upon for one’s self, in one’s behalf: any one as a helper, Acts 7:59.”⁴⁰ Arndt and Gingrich discuss the word when used in the middle voice when it can mean to appeal to someone as Paul’s appeal to Caesar (Acts 25:11,12,21,25; 26:32; 28:19).⁴¹

It is true that the word can be used in the sense of calling on Deity or to make an appeal to God, but the point to remember is that it is not demanded that every usage must be translated in this manner, as is clear when we think of the appeal Paul made to Caesar; *Paul certainly was not praying to Caesar*. We also need to point out that not every reference in the Bible to one’s calling on the name of God or Christ is a prayer. Notice these passages: (1) “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16); (2) “For there is no difference between the Jew and Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?” (Rom 10:12-14a); (3) “Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?” (Jas 2:7). These verses help us to see clearly that the idea of “calling,” as used in the Scriptures, does not always denote praying.

One of the best articles we have ever read on this subject was written by brother Gary Workman; we conclude this section with a quotation of the last few paragraphs from this excellent study and commend the complete article for your consideration.

Acts 7:59 and Revelation 22:20 are often referred to as evidence that we pray to Jesus. But if Stephen’s request and John’s “Come, Lord Jesus” authorize us to pray to him, do requests made to angels authorize us to pray to them? Can we base our prayers on the extraordinary experiences of Gideon (Jud 6:17-18, 22) or Manoah (Jud 13) or Mary (Lk 1:26-38) or Abraham (Gen 18) or Lot (Gen 19)? Remember that both Stephen and John were inspired men who at the very moment of these sayings were caught up in heavenly visions (Acts 7:55-56; Rev 22) in which Jesus was personally manifested. Therefore, their statements to our Lord can in no way serve as a pattern for our practices today.

Our instructions as to how to pray are very clear in the New Testament. Jesus, who is our mediator, intercessor, advocate and high priest, said: “Pray to the Father” (Mt 6:6,9; Lk 11:2) and “ask of the Father in my name” (Jn 15:16; 14:13-

14; 16:23-24). Paul, to whom both Jesus and an angel once appeared, said that we should give thanks always “in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father” (Eph 5:20). And those early Christians understood these things for when they prayed they bowed their knees “unto the Father” (Eph 3:14) and “lifted up their voice to God” (Acts 4:24). In the inspired history book of Acts we find it was God to whom they always prayed (12:6; 16:25; 27:35).

In light of all of this, Christians should neither practice nor advocate praying to Jesus. This will necessitate screening some songs that are commonly in our hymn books. “I Must Tell Jesus,” “Tell It To Jesus Alone,” and “Just A Little Talk With Jesus” do not represent scriptural views. These songs do not advocate praying through Jesus, but praying to Jesus. How utterly wrong it is, therefore, to encourage people to “have a little talk with Jesus” and “go to him in prayer,” saying that “just a little talk with Jesus made me whole.” In the area of prayer (as with all other Bible matters), let us practice what the New Testament teaches. And it clearly teaches that we may not pray to Jesus, too!⁴² *Amen!*

ENDNOTES

31. Clarke, v. 5, p. 735.
32. Barnes, pp. 135-136.
33. Knowling, p. 203.
34. Reese, p. 245.
35. Hervey, p. 222.
36. Robertson, p. 99.
37. Boles, p. 120.
38. Coffman, pp. 146-147.
39. *The Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1970), p. 157.
40. Thayer, p. 239.
41. Arndt and Gingrich, p. 294.
42. Gary Workman, *The Restorer*, May, 1981.

Taken From: McClish, Dub, Ed., *Studies In Acts*, Valid Publications, Denton: 1985, pp. 416-418.

APPENDIX K-1

DEMONS - WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM?

One of the most controversial topics to be discussed in recent years is that of *demons*. The subject has been given wide publicity by a variety of sensational books and movies, such as *The Exorcist*. Many people, upon considering this theme, have been led to believe that they are demon possessed, or else they fancy they know someone who has been taken with evil spirits. What is the truth regarding this matter? What were the demons of biblical fame? Where did they come from? What powers did they possess? Why did they enter certain persons and not others? Do they still possess people today? These questions engage the attention of thinking people.

The answers to the foregoing queries will not be found in the cheap books and shoddy movies of this perverse society. Rather, any information with which the human race has been indulged will be in the inspired Scriptures. The truth of the matter is, the Bible does not give a systematic treatment of demons. When one has examined every biblical reference to the subject, there are still many unanswered questions. The subject of demons is only introduced in the New Testament as the topic relates to *other* matters of importance; it is therefore incidental and so we are merely given sufficient minimal information - information necessary for the establishment of more important truths. The subject of demonology was thus obviously not an *end* within itself in New Testament doctrine.

Demon possession was a historical reality of first century society and no one, who respects the accuracy of the N.T. record, will deny this. Spiritual entities, known as demons, did inhabit and afflict human bodies during that age.

The question of demon *origin* is not spelled out in the Scriptures. Several theories have been advanced by respectable Bible students, some of which, incidentally, may be dismissed immediately.

Some, for instance, have suggested that demons were the disembodied spirits of a strange pre-Adam race of men that once lived upon the earth in an alleged "gap period" that is supposed to fall between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. The problem with that theory is this: *there is not a shred of biblical evidence that any such gap period ever existed!* That idea was born in the feverish minds of those who were panicked by the assertions of the evolutionists, and who thus sought to force the Bible into harmony with evolutionary chronology. How could there have been a pre-Adam race of men if Adam was the *first* man (1 Cor 15:45)?!

Others have contended that demons resulted from the cohabitation of angels with some of those ancient women who lived before the Flood. This theory is based upon a misunderstanding of Genesis 6:1-4 - "the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bear children unto them." But this cannot be correct since Christ clearly

taught that angels are sexless beings, incapable of such unions (cf. Mt 22:30). In that Genesis context the “sons of God” were the righteous lineage of Seth, while the “daughters of men” represented the wicked descendants of Cain.

The two more plausible views of the identity of demons are as follows. First, demons may have been the spirits of *wicked dead men* whom God, in harmony with his divine purposes, permitted to leave the Hadean realm to indwell some people. Alexander Campbell argued this position in his lecture entitled, “Demonology,” which is found in his volume, *Popular Lectures and Addresses*. Second, others have contended that demons were fallen *angels* who were allowed to escape their confinement to similarly accomplish some component in the divine plan (cf. Jude 6). Charles Hodge, in his *Systematic Theology*, contends for this viewpoint.

Regardless of the problem of origin, the NT clearly recognizes the *fact* of first century demoniacs.

As to their nature, demons were *spirits*. Note how Matthew interchanges the terms: “... they brought unto him [Jesus] many possessed with *demons*: and he cast out the *spirits* with a word” (8:16). Since Christ declared that “a spirit hath not flesh and bones” (Lk 24:39), it is certain that demons were not *physical* beings. Concerning their character, demons are represented as malevolent entities. They were *unclean* spirits and evil - under the sway of him known as “the prince of demons,” i.e., Beelzebub, Satan (cf. Mt 12:24,43,45) .

Demons were quite intelligent beings, possessing true knowledge (Mk 1:24); moreover they could exercise both volition and locomotion when permitted to do so (Mt 12:44-45). Demon possession frequently brought about physical and/or mental illness (though such illnesses were clearly distinguished from the demons themselves - see Mt 4:24). Demoniacs were sometimes smitten with dumbness (Mt 9:32), blindness (Mt 12:32), convulsions (Mk 9:18), epilepsy (Mt 9:32), etc. and occasionally they were endowed with superhuman strength (Mk 5:4; Acts 19:16). The N.T. gives no specific reasons why demons entered into *particular* individuals; they inhabited men (Mt 9:32), women (Lk 8:2) and even children (Mk 7:30).

Since demons were obviously under the control of God ultimately (Lk 10:17f), why were they allowed to enter into and to afflict those ancient folks? Apparently, demon possession was divinely permitted by God in order that the *supreme authority of Christ might be made manifest*. As the Lord revealed his control over nature (Mk 4:30), disease (Mk 1:12), material things (Jn 2:9) and even death (Jn 11:44) , so also must the Son of God demonstrate his power over the spirit realm. His power over unclean spirits heralded his approaching reign - “If I by the finger of God cast out demons, then is the kingdom of God come upon you” (Lk 11:20). The authority of Jesus over evil spirits amazed the Jews. They exclaimed: “What is this? a *new* teaching! with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him” (Mk 1:27). The Lord also empowered his disciples to expel demons, and they did so (Lk 10:17), except on one occasion when their own lack of faith hindered their efforts (cf. Mk 9:28; Mt 17:20).

There are about eighty references to demons in the NT. A careful study of the details in these cases reveals virtually *nothing in common* with alleged modern-day episodes of so-called demon possession. A good description of purported modern cases can be found in the article, "The Exorcism Frenzy," *Newsweek*, Feb. 11, 1974. But note some of the contrasts between these "modern" examples and the circumstances of the first century.

First, most demon "exorcisms" of today are secluded, back-room affairs that are only later publicized, yet when Jesus expelled evil spirits, his miracles were publicly viewed and they astonished the multitudes (Lk 4:36).

Second, Jesus and his apostles could expel demons with but a word, effecting immediate results (Mt 17:18; Acts 19:12). However, the Jesuit Priest, who was supposed to have exorcised (sic) the young boy who served as the main character in William Blatty's book, *The Exorcist*, was said to require two months and a ceremony employed *twenty times*! More recently, a Catholic Priest in San Francisco claimed that he was able to cast out a demon after only fourteen attempts!

Third, the demoniacs of the N.T. era were simply afflicted, either bodily or mentally, by some malfunction of otherwise normal traits. Those cases involved no grotesque details. By way of contrast, however, a Roman Catholic exorcist, Luigi Novagese, claimed: "A possessed man's skin turned white like paper, his teeth became transparent, his eyes bulged with balls of flame and fire issued from his mouth." Modern spirits are apparently much more dramatically qualified than their first-century counterparts! It is also very significant that the N.T. record is free of the absurdities that are common to current cases. Catholic Priest Karl Patzelt claims that during one of his "exorcising" (sic) sessions, a demon took a bite of a sandwich! A magazine photo shows a picture with a perfect set of teeth prints in the sandwich. One cannot but wonder though, *how* the demon could have bitten into the sandwich since spirits have no teeth (Lk 24: 39) and *why* such a thing would have occurred in the absence of any physical appetite?!

Fourth, modern demoniacs are described as frequently uttering "fierce curses" and "bursts of blasphemy." In the N.T., however, demons were always very respectful of deity. They believed in the one God (Jas 2:19); they acknowledged Jesus as the "Holy One of God" (Mk 1:24), the "Son of God" (Mk 3:11), who would ultimately banish them to torment (Mt 8:29). Never did they blaspheme deity.

Finally, it must be observed that the ability to cast out demons was a miraculous sign which demonstrated that the person with that gift was a proclaimer of God's revealed truth. The gift was to confirm the divine message (Mk 16:17-20; Heb 2:3-4). Modern exorcists are consistently contradicting themselves and their fellow exorcists, and also the written Word of God. Their very testimony is a commentary upon the fact that they cannot be true servants of Jehovah God.

With the termination of the supernatural era of the early church (cf. 1 Cor 13:8ff), demon possession, and the corresponding gift of expulsion, ceased. Does it seem reasonable to assume that since there is no gift of demon expulsion (sic) available

today, God would allow demons to continue to enter and afflict his human creatures? That would certainly suggest an imbalance of power and would put man at a great disadvantage. A careful study of the N.T. data reveals a gradual cessation of demonic activity as the apostolic age drew toward a conclusion.

Certainly Satan exerts great influence today. He does not, though, work miraculously. Just as God does not continue to work miracles in this age, but influences men by means of his Word and his providence, so also, the devil wields his power *indirectly* and non-miraculously through various media.

Current cases which are associated with demon possession are doubtless the results of psychosomatic problems, hysteria, self-induced hypnosis, deception, delusion, and the like. They have *natural*, though perhaps not always understood, causes. In conclusion, we may confidently affirm that demons do not possess men today.

Christian Courier
Editor Wayne Jackson

APPENDIX K-2

A Series On Demonology: Part One Demons—Spirit Entities

Demonology is a term which refers to a systematic study of demons. The word “demoniac” is used to refer to one who was demon possessed or to one who was considered to be demon possessed.

When all of the “demon” passages are collected a considerable body of material emerges on this subject. Careful Bible students will notice the meager mention of demons in the Old Testament - usually only two verses are cited: Deuteronomy 32:17 and Psalm 106:37. Sometimes 1 Samuel 28:7-10 is also included but this passage is questionable. The bulk of references comes from the New Testament. However, it is significant that demon possession is rarely mentioned outside the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. And it seems to fade the farther one travels into the New Testament. For example, note the conspicuous absence of “demon problems” among Christians in the early church. There is no record of any child of God being “demon possessed.” If there is, we have overlooked it. And, note further, the epistles remain silent relative to demon possession. Does this not raise some interesting questions?

Why was demon possession so active, concentrated and potent during part of the first century A.D.? Why did such occur during that one short period of time in history? Was it not for the express purpose of affording Christ, and a few others whom he authorized, the opportunity to exhibit miraculous displays of power over Satan and demons in order to confirm the gospel, the preached word? We think so (Mt 12:28-29).

Demons Were Spirits

The New Testament clearly reveals that demons were real. Demons were spirits, not physical beings (Mt 8:16; Lk 24:39). These spirit entities had the capacity to enter into a live human body, to inhabit it, to possess it, and to afflict human beings in the first century A.D. In Luke 10:1 we have the account of Jesus’ commissioning the seventy (under the “limited commission”) to go out two by two. On their return they reported to him how the “DEMONS” were subject to them through his name (Lk 10:17). Jesus, in reply, told the seventy not to rejoice that the “SPIRITS” were subject to them but to rejoice that their names were written in heaven (Lk 10:20). On another occasion Matthew wrote, “And when even was come, they brought unto him many possessed with “DEMONS:” and he cast out the “SPIRITS” with a word, and healed all that were sick” (Mt 8:16). Thus, we see that demons were spirits.

Demons Were Unclean and Evil Spirits

Demoniacs (those who were demon possessed) had “unclean” or “wicked” spirits. This is evident from the following: “And when Jesus saw that a multitude came running

together, he rebuked the UNCLEAN spirit (the KJV has 'foul' spirit), saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him" (Mk 9:25). On another occasion, when the Lord came to Capernaum, he found a man "that had a spirit of an UNCLEAN demon." Jesus rebuked this unclean spirit charging him to "come out" of his victim. Those who witnessed this great display of power were amazed that Christ had such authority (Lk 4:31-36). Our Lord taught:

But the UNCLEAN spirit, when he is gone out of the man, passeth through waterless places, seeking rest, and findeth it not. Then he saith, I will return into my house whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this evil generation (Mt 12:43-45; Lk 33:24-26; 7:21; 8:2; Acts 19:12-17).

Demons Actually Possessed People

Demons were real and they actually and literally possessed people. They were not mere physical diseases, vapors, a mist, an influence, an it, or a thing! Demons were immaterial, evil, spirit entities. These evil, unclean, "foul" spirits (KJV, Mk 9:25), did not have "flesh and bones" of their own (Lk 24:39), but rather they entered into and lived in live men, women, boys, girls, and on one occasion HOGS! (Mt 9:32; Lk 8:2; 9:38-42; Mk 7:30; 5:1-19). An individual could be possessed by "a" demon or "many" demons. Mary Magdalene had "seven" (Mk 16:9). One man was so infested with demons that he was called "Legion" (Mt 8:28-33; Mk 5:1-19; Lk 8:26-40).

Demons did not produce any good in an individual (Jn 10:19-21). They had the power to injure people both mentally and physically. Their torment was both painful and pitiful. Evidently they caused such things as dumbness (Mt 9:32), blindness (Mt 12:22), insanity (Lk 8:27-36) and personal injuries (Lk 9:38-42). Demons caused a certain maiden to "divine" (Acts 16:16,18) and gave superhuman strength to others (Mt 8:28; Mk 5:2-5; Lk 8:29). Individuals could be "vexed" with unclean spirits (Lk 6:18; Acts 5:16).

Consider this account of a pitiful demoniac:

And one of the multitude answered him, Teacher, I brought unto thee my son, who hath a dumb spirit; and wheresoever it TAKETH HIM, it DASHETH HIM DOWN: and he FOAMETH, and GRINDETH HIS TEETH, and PINETH AWAY: and I spoke to thy disciples that they should cast it out: and they were not able. And he answereth them and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I bear with you? bring him unto me. And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit TARE HIM GRIEVOUSLY; and he FELL ON THE GROUND, and WALLOWED FOAMING. And he asked his father, How long time is it since this hath come unto him: And he said, From a child. And oft-times it hath CAST HIM BOTH INTO THE FIRE AND INTO THE WATERS, TO DESTROY HIM: but if thou canst do anything

have compassion on us, and help us...He (Jesus) rebuked the unclean spirit, saying unto him, Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I command thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him. And having cried out, and TORN HIM MUCH, he came out: and the boy became AS ONE DEAD: insomuch that the more part said, He is dead. But Jesus took him by the hand, and raised him up; and he arose (Mk 9:17-27).

Conclusion

Demons (“devils” KJV), were real spirit beings who had the capacity to enter into live bodies. These spirits were unclean, evil (foul) entities. They are definitely distinguished from mere physical ailments or diseases. Their torment was both painful and pitiful - they “vexed” their poor victims. Jesus cast them out “with a word” (Mt 8:16) and “by the Spirit of God” (Mt 12:28).

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APPENDIX K-3
A Series On Demonology: Part Two
Were Demons Diseases?

Demons were “spirits,” not mere ailments, diseases or sickness (Mt 8:16; Lk 24:39). Furthermore, they are revealed in scripture as malevolent entities. They were evil, unclean, foul spirits who served under him who was called “the prince of demons,” that is, Beelzebub or Satan (Mt 12:24,43,45). The New Testament very definitely distinguishes between diseases and demons (or demon possession). This fact is easily seen from the following verses.

Clear Distinction Between Demons and Diseases in the New Testament

“And Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people. And the report of him went forth into all Syria: and they brought unto him all that were sick, holden with divers diseases and torments, POSSESSED WITH DEMONS, and epileptic, and palsied; and he healed them” (Mt 4:23-24).

“And when even was come, they brought unto him many POSSESSED with DEMONS: and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all that were sick” (Mt 8:16).

“Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, CAST OUT DEMONS: freely ye received, freely give” (Mt10:8).

“Then was brought unto him one POSSESSED with A DEMON, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the dumb man spake and saw” (Mt 12:22).

“And behold, a Canaanitish woman came out from those borders, and cried, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with A DEMON And there came unto him great multitudes, having with them the lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and they cast them down at his feet; and he healed them: insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb speaking, the maimed whole, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing: and they glorified the God of Israel” (Mt 15:22,30-31).

“And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were POSSESSED WITH DEMONS. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, AND CAST OUT MANY DEMONS; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him” (Mk 1:32-34).

“And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and he gave them authority over the UNCLEAN SPIRITS And they CAST OUT many DEMONS, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them” (Mk 6:7,13).

“And these signs shall accompany them that believe: in my name shall they CAST OUT DEMONS; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall in no wise hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mk 16:37-38).

“And when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. And DEMONS also came out from many, crying out, and saying, Thou art the Son of God. And rebuking them, he suffered them not to speak, because they knew that he was the Christ” (Lk 4:40-41).

“And he called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all DEMONS, and to cure diseases” (Lk 9:1).

“In that very hour there came certain Pharisees, saying to him, Get thee out, and go hence: for Herod would fain kill thee. And he said unto them, Go and say to that fox, Behold, I CAST OUT DEMONS and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I am perfected” (Lk 13:31-32).

“And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: insomuch that unto the sick were carried away from his body handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the EVIL SPIRITS went out” (Acts 19:11,32).

Conclusion

From the above scriptures, we note that demon possession is mentioned along side the following (and not standing for the following): the palsied, lepers, epileptics, the lame, the blind, the dumb, the maimed, and those who were afflicted with various other sicknesses or diseases. Demons are clearly distinguished in scripture from mere physical ailments, sickness, diseases or afflictions.

Demons were real, spirit beings. They knew and recognized Jesus as deity and carried on intelligent conversation with him. Jesus rebuked them and cast them out of people and charged them not to re-enter their poor victims.

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APPENDIX K-4

A Series On Demonology: Part Three Demon Origin

The question of demon “origin” is a fascinating one, but it is not addressed in the Scriptures. As a result, several theories have been proposed by Bible scholars, some of which need to be readily dismissed and abandoned. This article gives a brief description of some of the theories that have been advanced relative to the origin of demons.

Some Theories Concerning Demon Origin

Theory #1: Demons did not exist. One theory concerning the origin of demons states that demons were not real. It is said that there is no such thing as demons and never has been. These theorists assert that the New Testament references to demons were merely an accommodation of biblical language to superstitions with respect to diseases which caused the victims to become crippled and/or overcome by seizures. This theory is false. Demons were not mere myths, legends or superstitions. Demons were not manufactured in the minds of men and passed down through the ages. Demons were real. This theory contradicts scripture.

Theory #2: Demons were medical disorders. Another theory concerning the origin of demons states that demons were ailments of the body and/or mind (i.e. dumbness, blindness, epilepsy, convulsions, mental illness, etc.). This theory also contradicts scripture. Demon possession is mentioned along with epilepsy and palsy, and not as standing for such diseases. The casting out of demons is clearly distinguished from the healing of the sick. The New Testament very definitely makes a clear distinction between demons and diseases in the following passages: Mt 4:24; 8:16; 10:8; 12:22; 15:22,30-31; Mk 1:32,34; 6:7,13; 36:37,18; Lk 4:40,42; 9:1; 13:31-32; Acts 19:12.

Theory #3: Demons were pre-Adamic spirits. Another theory concerning the origin of demons states that demons were the disembodied spirits of a pre-Adamic race of men who lived upon the earth in an alleged “gap-period” between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. This theory, like some of the other theories taught, is nothing but a wild guess. There is no biblical evidence whatsoever of any such “gap-period.” Since Adam is clearly identified in scripture as the “first man” (1 Cor 15:45), there was no man prior to the time of Adam. This theory clearly contradicts scripture.

Theory #4: Demons were offspring of angels and women. Another theory concerning the origin of demons states that demons were the offspring of angels and antediluvian women. This theory is based on a misunderstanding of Genesis 6:1-4. Angels did not have sexual relations with women, producing demons. Demons were not the departed spirits of a mongrel angel-human race arising from the intermarriage of

angels with the daughters of men. Most scholars believe angels to be sexless beings. Note the following verses:

For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as angels in heaven (Mt 22:30).

For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as angels in heaven (Mk 12:25).

And Jesus said unto them, The sons of this world marry, and are given in marriage: but they that are accounted worthy to attain to that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; for neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the sons of God, being sons of the resurrection (Lk 20:34-36).

Theory #5: Demons came from the Flood. Another theory concerning the origin of demons states that demons were the evil spirits of those who perished in the Noahic Flood. The rationale for this theory is based on the following:

But the unclean spirit, when he is gone out of the man, passeth through waterless places, seeking rest, and findeth it not (Mt 12:43-45; Lk 13:34-36).

The point is made that this characteristic of the unclean spirits necessarily implies that they had experienced physical death (sic) by drowning which, in turn, necessarily implies that demons were the evil spirits who perished in the Flood. This theory begs for supporting evidence! "Waterless places" may have merely indicated desert (deserted) of uninhabited places.

Theory #6: Demons were fallen angels. Another theory concerning the origin of demons states that demons were fallen angels, perhaps the ones mentioned in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6. This seems to be a popular view with many. However, some objections have been raised concerning this theory. One problem with this view is that both Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4 have fallen angels "chained" and "awaiting judgment." Are fallen angels chained or not? How did they manage to escape Hades (Tartarus) in Jesus' day to possess and torture their victims? Advocates of the theory usually reply by saying that not all bad angels were "chained" but that Satan and other "free" angels will eventually, someday, at the end be confined and punished (Mt 25:43; Rev 20:30). Proponents of the view do not see any major problem with the above mentioned objection.

Some other objections to this view are these: (1) Angels were never said to enter into or possess anyone. But this was said of demons. At times angels appeared as men and talked with men, but that is as far as it went. (2) Angels evinced no peculiar affection or affinity for fleshly bodies as places of habitation, but demons did. If demons were fallen angels why did they feel so strongly the need of a physical body? (3) Angels never indicate any special desire for cemeteries, for the tombs of the dead, but demons did (Mt 8:28-32; Mk 5:1-5; Lk 8:27-36). Demons showed a great affinity for

mortal tenements - grave yards, tombstones, sepulchers - but angels never had physical bodies and thus never had the experience of a physical death.

Theory #7: Demons were souls of wicked men. Another theory concerning the origin of demons state that demons were the souls of the wicked dead - the departed spirits of wicked people who lived in Old Testament times. It is taught that these wicked spirits were allowed or permitted to leave Hades (Tartarus) for a limited period of time in the first century A.D. One problem with this view is that it violates Luke 16:19-31. Luke 16:26 shows that the spirits of the dead cannot cross the "great gulf;" they cannot even get out of Hades, let alone return to earth where their brethren are! This objection equally applies to theory #5, which is but a variation of # 7.

Conclusion

The question concerning the origin of demons is not an easy one to settle. Surely we would not want to espouse a view or "theory" that would be an outright contradiction of Scripture. We are sure of one thing - demons had an origin even if we cannot explain it.

Our brethren have generally thought views six and seven to be the more plausible explanations of the origin of demons. It seems reasonable to infer that God, in the first century A.D., allowed wicked spirits to temporarily leave the Hadean realm (Tartarus) to indwell some people, affording Jesus, his apostles, and some others the opportunity to exhibit miraculous power over the work of darkness, Satan and demons, in order to confirm the preached word (Mk 16:17-20; Acts 19:11-12; 8:6-8). There is no such demon possession today (Zech 13:1-2).

A careful examination of the Bible will impress one with the fact that there are beings, both good and bad who are just beyond human sight and the other senses of mortal man. Such a study should impress one with the fact that when he has drawn his last breath he will be plunged into that spirit world which awaits those who are alive.

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APPENDIX K-5
A Series On Demonology: Part Four
Some Concluding Observations

1. Demons were knowledgeable spirit beings. They had advance knowledge of the fact that Jesus of Nazareth was the Holy One of God (and they readily admitted it). Demons recognized and addressed Jesus as the “Son of God” and they worshiped him. They also knew that they were under the power and authority of Christ and did not intimate otherwise. Demons did not only know Christ, they always knew themselves, their present location, and their ultimate destiny. They knew that their “time” of “torment” was coming.

2. The question, “Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” showed that demons understood that they were under sentence of punishment to be inflicted at a certain or specified time. This is to say, demons realized they were set for future punishment and they did not want it to come upon them before the “time.” They begged Jesus for “time” and “mercy.”

3. Demons had the ability to carry on intelligent conversations. Scripture indicates that they not only had intelligence, but also desires, fears, and torments.

4. Demons were continually seeking a habitation in human bodies - it seems that they had a peculiar affinity for such. They desired human bodies as places of habitation and as vehicles of action. Demons exhibited no respect for people. They used the minds, bodies, and tongues of the persons they possessed. But demons preferred a habitation of animal bodies (hogs) to no bodies at all.

5. Demons sought out other demons to dwell with them. As in the example of Legion it was possible for one to be “infested” with demons.

6. Men who were possessed with demons were superhumanly strong, as well as fierce and vicious.

7. Men possessed with demons dwelt among the tombs. The demons had an affinity for mortal tenements - graveyards, tombs, and sepulchres.

8. For some reason, unknown to us, demons avoided water - they passed through “waterless” places. Does this indicate that they avoided water because they had a special fear of it? Or does it simply refer to deserted, uninhabited places?

9. Demons entreated Jesus that he would not command them to depart into the “deep” (the abyss). Demons were allowed to go into the swine rather than to be cast into the abyss. Observe that in travel, locomotion or mobility, demons went momentarily from the demoniac into the hogs, existing without a physical body of any type. The hogs, when demon possessed, ran violently into the sea and were drowned.

10. The demoniac who was made whole by Jesus' casting the demons out of him was then in his right mind, subdued, sitting at the feet of Jesus, and desiring to accompany the Lord.

11. When Jesus cast out demons his enemies did not deny the reality of demons: they did not deny the validity of the claim that demons could be exorcised - but, they slurred Jesus and went so far as to attribute to hell, rather than heaven, the power to cast demons out.

12. It seems that some demons were able to offer more resistance than others when they were about to be expelled out of a person. On one occasion, under the Limited Commission, the apostles could not exorcise the demon. Jesus explained to them that "this kind" can come out by nothing, save by prayer!

13. Jesus never failed when exorcising demons. They obeyed him.

14. The apostles had no failures under the Great Commission.

15. Demons could (and did) hurt their victims at the very point in time when they were being cast out. It was not unheard of for a demon to tear a person and leave him "as dead."

16. Demons were not omnipotent, omniscient, nor omnipresent. That is to say - demons were limited. However, scripture indicates that it took great power to exorcise one - the KJV says that it took a "miracle" to cast one out! (Mk 9:38-39).

17. Mary Magdalene (a demon-plagued woman), was cured - and note, she had the privilege of being the first person to see the risen Lord.

18. Demons are associated with false doctrines. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Tim 4:3).

Why did demons possess people in the first century A.D.? (1) God allowed demon possession to occur so that Jesus and certain others whom he appointed could exhibit divine power and authority over the kingdom of darkness and the spirit world. This "amazed" people. (2) Demons were cast out in order to confirm the preached word, the gospel (Mk 16:17,20).

Does demon possession occur today? No! How do we know? Because Zechariah 13:1-2 plainly teaches that the "unclean spirit" would "pass out of the land" after "a fountain" would be opened for sin and uncleanness. Our blessed Lord opened this fountain in the first century A.D. when he died on the cruel cross: "having despoiled the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly triumphing over them in it" (Col 2:15).

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APPENDIX L
PAUL'S ACTIONS IN ACTS 18:18; 21:21-26
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1. Before these incidents recorded in Acts 18 and 21 occurred, the Holy Spirit had moved Paul to reveal the epistles to the Galatians and Romans, in which God said that people were no longer under the “tutor” (the Old Law), they were delivered from it, and they were dead to it (Gal 3:24-25; Rom 7:4-6).
2. Thus, there is no doubt to anyone who believes the Bible that the Old Testament was no longer binding as law when Paul did what is recorded in these two chapters in Acts.
3. Yet, James and the elders advised Paul to do, and Paul did, things that were part of that Old Law.
4. Thus, it certainly appears that James, the elders, and Paul sinned by advising and doing these things.
5. Yet, there is no condemnation given by God through Luke or any other inspired prophet.
6. Why did God not expose as sinful what Paul, James, and the elders did?
7. Peter was rebuked to his face by Paul when his behavior was sinful (Gal 2:11ff). Similarly, God exposed the sins of other key Bible characters on the pages of His word.
8. Why was there no rebuke of Paul, James, and the elders by God, Peter, or other apostles and prophets?
9. Could it be that, although the Law had indeed been nailed to the cross and taken out of the way, the **INFLUENCE** of that Law continued until the destruction of Jerusalem?
10. Is that not what God meant by what He said in 2 Cor 3:11 and Heb 8:13, that is, the Old Law was “passing away,” “becoming obsolete,” “growing old,” and “ready to vanish away?”
11. Certainly, people were bound by the New Testament and had to obey it in order to be saved from their sins.
12. They had to worship God in accordance with that New Testament rather than the Old Law.

13. However, during that transition time, some of the requirements of the Old Law were still being kept by some Christians with Jewish backgrounds.
14. Yet it is clear that these actions were taken as matters of liberty, expediency, or indifference that were **NOT** required for salvation.
15. That was true because no one could be justified or saved by keeping that Old Law (Rom 3:20,28).
16. Thus, Paul and others took those actions, not because they **HAD** to, and not to be **SAVED**, but to avoid being a stumbling block to Christians with Jewish backgrounds and others during this transition period.
17. The Holy Spirit moved Paul to say, “and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law” (1 Cor 9:20).
18. This is how Paul could circumcise Timothy as an indifferent matter (Acts 16:3), but refuse to allow Titus to be circumcised as a matter required for salvation (Gal 2:1-5).
19. We also need to keep in mind that during this transition period, they did not have the complete New Testament. Indeed, even Paul and other inspired apostles and prophets only knew and prophesied “in part” until the “perfect” (completed New Testament) came (1 Cor 13:9-10).
20. Summarizing these Scriptures then, we draw the following conclusions:
 - a. The Old Law was nailed to the cross, taken away, taken out of the way, made obsolete, and replaced by the New Testament of Jesus.
 - b. From the time of the cross on, people were no longer under that Old Testament. They were dead to it, and they were delivered from it.
 - c. However, there appears to have been a transition period from the time of the cross until the destruction of Jerusalem.
 - d. During that time, God described that Old Law as “passing away,” “becoming obsolete,” “growing old,” and “ready to vanish away.”
 - e. Apparently, these phrases refer to the fact that the **INFLUENCE** of that Old Law was gradually diminishing.
 - f. During this transitional period, Paul and other Christians with Jewish backgrounds kept some of the requirements of that Old Law.
 - g. They did not take those actions to be saved or because they were obligated to do so.

- h. Instead, those actions were taken as matters of liberty, expediency, or indifference to avoid being a stumbling block to others, with the ultimate goal of winning their soul for Christ.
- i. This was while the New Testament was being completed part-by-part.