

Acts 2: The Hub of the Bible

The hub, or center of a wheel is very important. Without it there could be no wheel. All the spokes of the wheel come together at the center. It has been said that Christ is like the hub of the wheel. In Christ all come together to form a perfect circle of unity by which the church moves forward in its work of saving souls, helping the needy, and edifying one another in love. Without Christ this cannot happen. In a similar analogy, the second chapter of the book of Acts has been called “the hub of the Bible.” In our lesson today we are going to see why this is true.

In Acts 2 we have the culmination of God’s plan for saving mankind. In this great chapter the beginning of the church of Christ is recorded. The church was in the mind of God long before the Old Law, the Law of Moses, was ever established. It was God’s eternal purpose to save man through the church which Jesus Christ would establish after his death, burial and resurrection. The time of this beginning of the church is right here in Acts 2, on the first Pentecost day following the resurrection of Jesus.

In Acts 1 we read of the ascension of Jesus back to the Father in Heaven. In that same chapter, prior to His ascension, Jesus promised the apostles the power of the Holy Spirit, and He taught clearly that the church, or kingdom, would come when that power came upon the apostles. Here, in Acts 2, we see the fulfillment of that promise, and the fulfillment of God’s plan for saving the world from sin. That plan would be through Christ and His church.

Let us read Acts 2:1-4. *“And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”* The Holy Spirit enabled the apostles to speak languages they had never learned in order to communicate to the Jews gathered there from *“every nation under heaven,”* as the text says. They needed to tell these Jews the good news that Jesus, Whom they crucified, was actually the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God. The purpose of the preaching was to convince them of this fact, to cause them to repent, or turn, from their sins and to come into the church which was being established on that very day.

As they began to speak, the multitude was amazed that these apostles could speak in their different languages. This was a miracle designed to convince the audience that what was spoken by these servants of God was truly from God. All of the multitude did not believe what they heard, but about 3,000 did believe and were added to the church, as we shall soon see.

Of all the preaching done on that day of Pentecost, only part of Peter’s sermon is recorded by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. However, it is designed to produce the same reaction in men who read it today as in those who heard it on the day it was preached. It was a powerful use of the prophecies of the Old Testament, which the Jews claimed to believe. By these prophecies, Peter was able to demonstrate to the honest hearers that day

that Jesus is the Christ, and that they had been a party to His crucifixion. The climax of this great sermon is seen in verse 36, where Peter says, *“Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.”* What was the reaction? Verse 37 tells us: *“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?”*

They were obviously asking what they must do to be saved from their sins, to rid themselves of the awful guilt of crucifying one whom they now knew to be the Son of God. When we see the answer Peter gave to these penitent, sincere believers, we will know what any man must do to be saved from his sins. What did Peter tell them? Then Peter said to 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”* (Acts 2:38). Notice he said *“Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you...unto the remission of your sins.”* They already believed in Jesus, so it was not necessary to tell them to believe. Peter simply took them from where they were and told them what to do to get to where they needed to be. He told them what to do to be saved. From other passages in the New Testament we also see where men confessed their faith in Christ as the Son of God. Therefore, we know that confession was also involved here, even though it is not specifically stated. We must take all of God’s word on any subject, not part of it.

Therefore, we know that a person who desires to be saved from sin must believe the gospel, repent of his sins, confess Christ as Lord, and be baptized for the remission, or forgiveness of his sins. We also know from the Scriptures that baptism is a burial in water, and that no other method may be substituted. Our burial in water is the likeness of Christ’s burial, and only in the burial in water is the blood of Jesus applied from heaven to take away our sins.

Now, how does the church fit into this plan? The answer is seen from this great chapter in Acts—the hub of the Bible. Notice verses 40-47. *“And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation. They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need. And day by day, continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.”*

Those who were being saved from their sins by obeying the apostles’ teaching were being added to the church by the Lord Himself. Thus, we see that when we believe, repent, confess and are baptized into Christ, we are baptized into His spiritual body, the church. He adds us to the church. Can one be a Christian without being in the church which Jesus built? No. When one becomes a Christian he is automatically added to the church, as he is saved from past sins.

It is not a matter of joining the church of one’s own choosing; it is a matter of being joined to the one church

by the Lord when one obeys His commands. How then can denominationalism be approved by God when they teach man-made creeds, doctrines and traditions? We must get back to the hub of the Bible, Acts 2, to see the church of Christ's choice, to which believers were added when they obeyed the good news of salvation.

How important is the church of Christ, about which we read in Acts 2? It is so important that everything before Acts 2 in the Bible points toward its beginning, and everything after Acts 2 looks back to its beginning. It truly is a necessary institution; we must be members of it in order to be saved, and the only way to become members of it is by doing what these 3,000 or so did on Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. Have you done that? You have now heard the gospel. Will you believe as they did? Will you repent of your sins, confess Christ as Lord and Saviour and be buried in baptism for the forgiveness of sins, so the Lord may add you to His church?

We may identify the church of Christ today by looking at the church in the New Testament. Denominationalism does not fit that description. Come away from that man-made religion and come to Christ and His church through simple obedience to His gospel. Seek out a true congregation of people wearing the name church of Christ and practicing the pure religion of the New Testament. Some may wear the name, but we must be certain they are following the pattern for the church as given in the New Testament. We can send you more information on the church. We will be happy to assist you in your further study of these important truths about the church which began on Pentecost long ago, as recorded in Acts 2.



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