

Becoming God's Child

Since the beginning of time, **God has desired** a close, special, intimate, personal, one on one, relationship with mankind.

Each evening God himself walked and talked with **Adam & Eve** in the Garden of Eden - until Adam & Eve's SIN separated them. Sin created a huge gulf or chasm between God and man. But God knew this would happen, so He set in motion His plan to bring salvation to mankind.

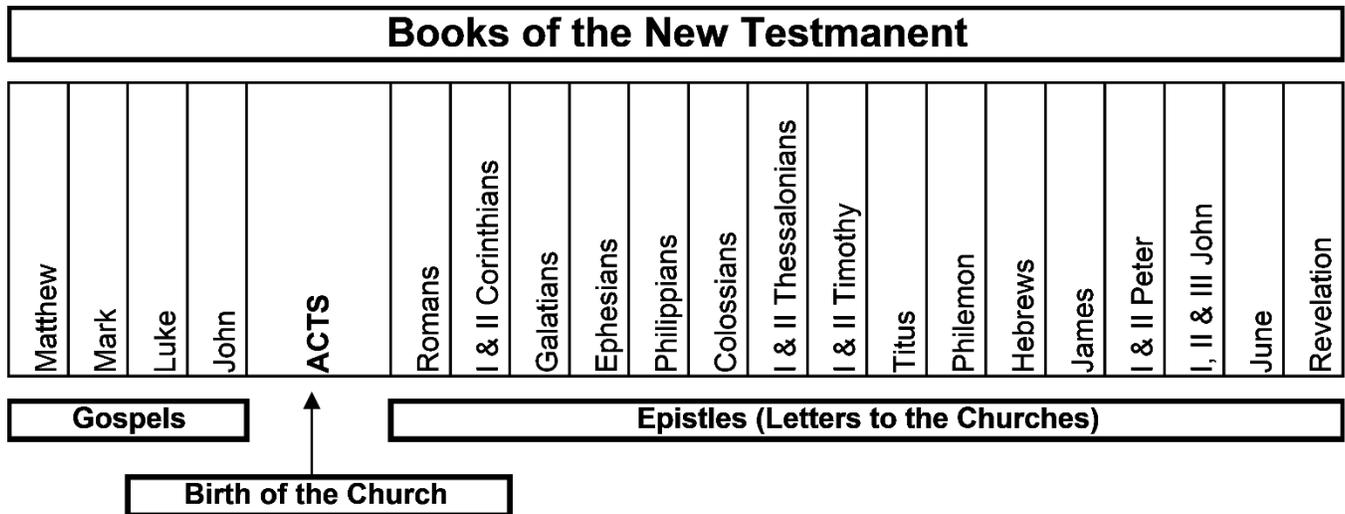
In the meantime, God gave the pattern and instructions for a **tabernacle** – a portable tent - that served as a place where God could meet with man. The people were required to bring sacrifices for their sins, and God would roll their sins ahead for a year. God would only meet with one man (the high priest) once a year.

Solomon, and later King Herod, built **temples** in which the people could worship God. Still, God observed their sacrifices and offerings, but did not have the personal relationship with man that He desired.

Then God “robed himself in flesh”, and became a man named JESUS. For 33 years, he lived among us – a perfect, sinless man. **Now He was living “with” us**, but not “within” us! He gave Himself as the sinless sacrifice for our sins when He was crucified on the cross. His death on the cross, and the blood that He shed, built a bridge across the chasm created by sin. Now, man could have his sins forgiven. Jesus was then buried, rose from the dead, and some days later, ascended back into heaven.

Fifty days later on the “Day of Pentecost”, God poured out His Spirit on the 120 believers waiting in an Upper Room in Jerusalem. NOW, God himself could live within man and commune with man – anytime, anywhere, about anything... And with anyone that would invite Him in!!

Where do we find the plan of salvation for the New Testament church?



1. The Gospels

The first four books are called “The Gospels”. In them, we find four men’s accounts of:
 Jesus’ birth
 Jesus’ ministry and miracles
 Jesus’ death
 Jesus’ burial
 Jesus’ resurrection

There is no mention of the church in these books.

2. Acts

This book documents **the birth of the church** on the Day of Pentecost. God poured out His Spirit on the waiting believers, and then through them, reached the world with the gospel.

3. Epistles

These were letters written to saints (believers) and churches that had already experienced the plan of salvation.

Let’s examine the book of Acts:

- Chapter 1 – Jesus told the disciples to wait in an upper room until His power would come upon them.
- Chapter 2 – Here is the account of the first outpouring of the Holy Ghost. 120 people were filled with the Holy Ghost (including Jesus’ mother). Peter stood up to explain to the curious crowd what had happened. In his preaching he recounted a quick history lesson and then explained to them that they had crucified the Messiah. They were convicted, and cried out, “What shall we do?” **Peter answered with a three step plan of salvation:**

1. Repent,
2. and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins
3. and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

This plan of salvation was experienced by 3,000 additional believers on the day of Pentecost, and then the gospel spread to other Jews, Samaritans, and then to the Gentiles.

Let's examine three accounts given in the book of Acts that illustrate this plan of salvation experienced by the early church:

Note in each story:

How they were baptized (*italicized and bold*) and

What happened when they received the Holy Ghost (bold)

Acts Chapter 2

1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

3 And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

*4 **And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance***

* * *

37 Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

*38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and **be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.***

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call.

40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.

*41 **Then they that gladly received his word were baptized:** and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

Acts Chapter 10

1 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band,

2 A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.

3 He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius.

4 And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God.

5 And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter:

* * *

44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.
45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out **the gift of the Holy Ghost**.
46 **For they heard them speak with tongues**, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,
47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?
48 **And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord**. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Acts Chapter 19

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,
2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.
3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.
4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.
5 When they heard this, **they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus**.
6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, **the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues**, and prophesied.

YOU can experience your own personal Pentecost!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent,...” (Acts 2:38)

Repent:

- means to turn away from sin, and turn toward God
- to turn from sin...to feel regret or contrition, to change one's mind (Webster)
- to go the opposite direction – away from sin, and toward God

John preached repentance:

- “...**Repent** ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” Matthew 3:2”
- “John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of **repentance** for the remission of sins.” Mark 1:4

Jesus preached repentance:

- “...except ye **repent**, ye shall all likewise perish.” Luke 13:3
- “And that **repentance** and remission of sins should be preached in his (Jesus) name among all nations...” Luke 24:47

Peter preached repentance:

- “Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:38
- “**Repent** ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.” Acts 3:19
- “The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to **repentance.**” II Peter 3:9

Paul preached repentance:

- “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to **repent:**” Acts 17:30

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,...” (Acts 2:38)

Baptism is necessary for salvation:

- “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; ...” Mark 16:16
- “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us...” I Pet. 3:21

Baptism must be in Jesus Name:

- “Neither is there salvation in any other: **for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**” Acts 4:12
- And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” Colossians 3:17

The disciples baptized everyone in Jesus Name:

- “(For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: **only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.**)” (Acts 8:16)
- “**And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.**” (Acts 10:48)
- “When they heard this, **they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.**” (Acts 19:7)
- “And now why tarriest thou? **arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.**” Acts 22:16

When you are baptized in Jesus Name, your sins are remitted, forgiven, washed away, never to be remembered against you!

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:38)

The Holy Ghost is for everyone:

- “For the promise (of receiving the Holy Ghost) is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” Acts 2:39

The Holy Ghost is a necessary part of the plan of salvation:

- Jesus said “...*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, **Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit**, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God*” (John 3:5). This is speaking of water baptism and the baptism of the Holy Ghost.
- Peter said, “...***ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.***” Acts 2:38
- Paul said, “*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. **Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.***” Romans 8:9

Speaking with tongues is the consistent evidence that each one received the Holy Ghost.

- **The Apostles & Mary (the mother of Jesus)**
“*And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James [the son] of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas [the brother] of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren....**And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.***” Acts 1:13,14, 2:4
- **Cornelius and his household**
“*While Peter yet spake these words, **the Holy Ghost fell on all them...For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.***” Acts 10:44,46
- **Disciples of John the Baptist**
“*And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, **the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.***” Acts 19:6
- **Paul** - “*I thank my God, **I speak with tongues more than ye all:***” I Corinthians 14:18

In summary,

The scripture reveals 3 facets of salvation:

Repentance

Remission of sins in Jesus Name Baptism

Receiving the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in tongues

Paul called this “**the Gospel**”! “*Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel...how that Christ died for our sins...and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day...*” I Corinthians 1:1,3,4

We experience the gospel when we’ve experienced the plan of salvation:

Jesus died; We die in repentance

Jesus was buried; We are “buried in baptism”

Jesus rose again; We receive the Holy Ghost & new life!

When you have experienced repentance, baptism in Jesus Name and the infilling of the Holy Ghost, you have been born into the family of God. Jesus is now your Father, and you are His child.

Paul wrote it this way:

“...as God hath said, *I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, *and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters...*” II Corinthians 6:16,18

You are a CHILD OF GOD!

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