

EXPLORING GOD'S WORD TEACHER'S GUIDE: LESSON 8

[Assigned Reading: Acts 1-2]

[Themes to Teach: The Plan of Salvation]

The birth, life, death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ made salvation possible for every person on earth. Yet, the unfortunate reality is that not everyone will be saved. Salvation must be individually received and applied to our lives.

I. JESUS' LAST WORDS AND ASCENSION: (Read Acts 1:3-14)

1. Just before He ascended to heaven, Jesus reminded the disciples to wait for the promise of the Father, which was the baptism of the Holy Ghost.
2. 120 people waited in the Upper Room. This number included, Mary the mother of Jesus, His brothers, and the twelve apostles.

II. THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH: (Read Acts 2:1-6, 12-17)

1. The Church was born on the Day of Pentecost:
 - a. This was the beginning of the New Testament church.
 - b. The Church did not exist until the Day of Pentecost.
 - c. It had been promised by both Jesus and the prophets, but it did not come into existence until people were filled with the Holy Ghost.
2. Pentecost was a Jewish feast known as the Feast of Weeks (Shavuot):
 - a. It was 50 days after Passover.
 - b. It marked the giving of the Law and the Old Covenant at Mt. Sinai.
 - c. God chose this day to give a New Covenant. Not a covenant of laws, but of the Spirit.
3. When the Day of Pentecost came, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with tongues:
 - a. This event fulfilled many Old Testament prophecies: (See Isaiah 28:11-12; Jeremiah 31:31-33; Ezekiel 36:26-27, & Joel 2:28-29)
 - b. This event also fulfilled the promise of Jesus Christ. (Read John 7:37-39)
 - c. This event drew the attention of thousands gathered in Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks.
 - d. Some mocked them, while others were amazed about this supernatural experience and asked Peter two important questions:
 - i. What does this mean? (Read Acts 2:12)
Peter answered this question with the Gospel – the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (Read Acts 2:22-24)
 - ii. What must we do? (Read Acts 2:37)
Peter answered this question with the Plan of Salvation. (Read Acts 2:38-39)

III. PETER PREACHED THE PLAN OF SALVATION: (Read Acts 2:36-29)

The Day of Pentecost was the first opportunity the Apostles had to fulfill the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. How did they do it? What did they preach?

Those listening to Peter heard the Gospel and they believed it. Yet, there was still something for them to do. Peter commanded them to do three things:

1. Repentance: Dying to sin and self. Repentance can be summed up as confession, sorrow and turning from sin.
2. Water Baptism: Burial of the old life with Christ (Read Romans 6:3-4)
 - a. Baptism is done by immersion in water. (Read Acts 8:38)
 - b. Baptism is for the remission of sins. (Read Acts 22:16)
 - c. Baptism was and is to be administered in the name of Jesus Christ.
 - i. This is not a contradiction of the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:19. It is the fulfillment of it.
 - ii. There is only one name that saves us. (Read Acts 4:12)
 - iii. This was the only way New Testament baptism was performed.
 - iv. Peter elevated baptism to an essential part of the plan of salvation. (See also Mark 16:16, 1 Peter 3:20-21)
3. Receive the Holy Ghost: Peter then shared with them God's promise to fill each of them with the Holy Ghost. He then declared that this promise was for everyone. (v.39)

IV. THE INITIAL EVIDENCE OF RECEIVING THE HOLY GHOST:

1. All 120 people spoke in tongues on the Day of Pentecost. (Read Acts 2:4)
2. The Gentiles spoke in tongues when they received the Spirit. (Read Acts 10:44-46)
3. Those in Ephesus spoke in tongues. (Read Acts 19:2-6)
4. Jesus said that these signs would accompany the New Birth. (Read Mark 16:17)
5. Why tongues? Because the tongue is the uncontrollable part of our body. (Read James 3:2-8)

V. THE PURPOSE OF THE HOLY GHOST:

1. The Spirit gives us power: (Read Acts 1:8)
2. The Spirit teaches and guides us: (Read John 14:26)
3. The Spirit imparts the love of God: (Read Romans 5:5)
4. The Spirit gives righteousness, joy, and peace: (Read Romans 14:17)
5. The Spirit gives eternal life: (Read Romans 8:11)