

This decision to trust Jesus Christ ALONE for your personal salvation was also publicly expressed by an act of believer's "baptism." "Baptism" publicly identified a person as having accepted Jesus Christ and his redemptive work. It was expressed at the time of conversion (a turning to God) or shortly thereafter (Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12, 35-38; 9:17-18; 22:16; 10:43-48; 16:14-15, 30-34; 19:1-6).

God's offer of the forgiveness of sins through Jesus Christ, also included the wonderful gift of the indwelling of His Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. In this way, Jesus' presence will always be with them (Hebrews 13:5). The scriptures that speak of the Holy Spirit's indwelling and filling for empowerment in the book of Acts are: (Acts 1:5, 8; 2:1-4, 18, 33, 38-39; 4:31; 5:32; 6:5; 7:55; 8:14-17; 9:17; 10:43-46; 11:14-18; 15:7-9; 19:1-7).

Would you be willing to accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour and follow Him as Lord? Have you considered crying out to God from your heart, in trusting faith, so that you might receive His wonderful gift of salvation (Acts 2:21; 8:22). Go now directly to God through Jesus Christ, for it is He to whom you must be reconciled (2 Corinthians 5:20).

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(Tract #6 by Don Krow)

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# The Gospel

## (An Explanation)

There are over 32 sermons and discourses preached in the book of "Acts." "Acts" is a historical book in the Bible that describes what the early New Testament disciples actually believed and taught. The word "preach" defined by the dictionary means "to expound upon, especially to urge acceptance of or compliance with."

Please take time to read these sermons and discourses and study their content and response in detail (the apostle Peter, Acts 2:14-41; 3:11-26; 4:8-12; 9:32-35; 9:36-43; 10:34-48; 11:4-18; 15:6-11; the apostles, Acts 5:27-33; Stephen, Acts 7:2-53; Philip, Acts 8:4-17, 26-40; Ananias, Acts 9:1-19; 22:12-16; Saul, Acts 9:19-22; various believers, Acts 11:19-21; Barnabas & Saul (also known as Paul), Acts 13:4-12; 14:1-7, 8-18, 21-22; Paul & Silas, Acts 16:25-34; 17:10-12; and the apostle Paul, Acts 13:16-42; 16:11-15, 25-34; 17:1-9, 22-34; 19:1-7, 8-10; 20:20-21; 24:10-25; 26:1-24; 28:20-30). Through studying the early disciple's messages we discover these revealing facts:

First and most important is that Jesus Christ was crucified for our sins and that He arose the third day from the dead. Jesus said that this event revealed God's great love for you and for me (John 3:16; Romans 5:8). This great act is referred to as "reconciliation." "Reconciliation"

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means to re-establish friendship between God and man. Secondly, it means to settle or resolve the barrier that was caused by sin. "Reconciliation" referred to in scripture is a provision of God's grace. "Grace" is God doing for us in our weakness what we could not do for ourselves (2 Corinthians 12:9).

We must realize that "sin" is the problem that has kept us from a relationship with God. From the Old Testament we see that "sin" is so serious that it demanded punishment by death. Ezekiel 18:20 states, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." The shedding of blood in the Old Testament sacrifices connected this penalty with its worshippers. Because of God's great love, Jesus Christ was sent to die on the cross. HOW SHOULD WE INTERPRET THIS EVENT? This event can only be interpreted as we realize that sin results in death, that is, banishment from God's presence and eternal ruin. The "Good News" is that Christ has taken it upon Himself to bear the penalty of our sins and now offers us "forgiveness." "Forgiveness" is a relationship word, the goal of "forgiveness" is a relationship with God. "Forgiveness" means that God is willing because of Jesus Christ's death upon the cross, to pardon us, that is, to pass over our offenses without punishment and to let them go as if they had never been committed (Hebrews 8:12). There is no condemnation because of Jesus Christ, that is, as believers, we never will have to face judgment for our sins (Romans 4:7-8). The scripture says, it's by God's grace (His favor) we are saved (Ephesians 2:5, 8-9).

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Is there a response that we must make to this wonderful news? Yes. Needing "forgiveness" in any meaningful sense of the word presupposes our guilt (Romans 3:10; 6:23). By studying these early sermons in "Acts" it is revealed that we must "repent" (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 11:18; 13:24; 17:30; 19:4; 20:21; 26:20). "Repentance" is a gift that God grants people who want to be "saved." It is a new attitude, a change of heart that results in one turning to God and away from sin. "Repentance" involves turning from sin to God ... to receive His mercy and grace (Acts 26:18). This response is accompanied by "faith." "Faith" is reaching out to trust God's provision of grace. It involves committing oneself to the Person and redemptive work of Jesus Christ. The Bible says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ [give yourself up to Him, take yourself out of your own keeping and entrust yourself into His keeping] and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31, Amplified Bible).

An example of how one must trust Christ is expressed by the story of a pilot who crashed in the ocean. As he saw a piece of raft wood floating by he really believed that the raft could save him. He finally perished as he saw the raft float away. Even though he believed it could save him, it did not save him. In order for that raft to save him he must throw himself on it, cling to it, rely on and trust himself to it. Saving "faith" is throwing yourself on, clinging to, relying and trusting yourself to Jesus Christ and his saving work for you upon the cross. It is trusting Jesus ALONE for your salvation (Galatians 2:21; 5:4).

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