

## INTRODUCTION TO ACTS 2:37-47

### Book of Acts Structure

- I. Jesus promises power for witness to the nations 1:1-11
- II. The apostles witness in Jerusalem & Judea 1:12–6:7
  - A. **The church in Jerusalem is planted 1:12–2:47**
    - 1. The Lord chooses a twelfth apostle 1:12-30
    - 2. Jews are baptized in the Holy Spirit 2:1-13
    - 3. Peter preaches the gospel to Israelites 2:14-36
    - 4. **The apostles plant churches in Jerusalem 2:37-47**
      - a. **Seven commands of Jesus for evangelism 2:37-41**
      - b. **Seven commands of Jesus for discipleship 2:42-43**
      - c. **Seven commands of Jesus for body life 2:44-47**
  - B. The church in Jerusalem expands 3:1–6:7
- III. Believers witness in Judea & Samaria 6:8–9:31
- IV. The apostles witness to Gentiles 9:32–14:31
- V. The Jerusalem church council & counsel 15:1-16:5
- VI. Paul preaches the gospel to the Greeks 16:6–19:20
- VII. Paul preaches the gospel to the Romans 21:15–28:31

### 4. The apostles plant churches in Jerusalem 2:37-47

QUERY: What means or methods did Jesus specify, when he ordered his apostles to make disciples in every nation?

“Make disciples of all the nations,

- baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
- teaching them to follow all that I commanded you” (Matthew 28:18-20).

THESIS: The apostles made disciples within new, little churches. Multiplication of tiny churches remains the best proven way of making disciples in every human society.

#### a. Seven commands of Jesus for evangelism 2:37-41

<sup>37</sup> *Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what are we to do?”*

QUERY: What must Christians do in order to bring others under conviction of their need to be saved? “[Jesus] ordered us to preach to the people, and to testify solemnly ... that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins” (Acts 10:42-43).

<sup>38</sup> *Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far away, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.”*

DEFINITION: *Metanoēō*. (1) Classical: “change one’s mind”; (2) Biblical: “feel remorse, repent, be converted”.

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NOTE: Acts 2:38. "Repent (plural) ... be baptized (singular) ... for the forgiveness of your (plural) sins." It is repentance, not baptism, that secures the forgiveness of sins. "Repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away" (Acts 3:19).

FORMULA: *Baptizomai*. Be baptized / baptize oneself (middle or passive voice imperative verb).

### Prepositions:

- unto (*eis*) = (a) result: forgiveness, become one body; or (b) identity: Moses (1 Cor. 10:2), Christ (Gal. 3:27).
- in (*en*) = medium: water, Spirit
- upon (*epi*) = authority: Name of Lord Jesus
- over (*hyper*) = benefit: "for" the dead
- by (*hypo*) = baptizer: John, Christ

NOTE: Nine of ten whom you baptize immediately will remain faithful to Christ.

NOTE: "Along that path from Siloam to the temple, and especially along the southern slope of the temple, were as many as 500 mikva'ot." *Scott McNight, ChristianityToday.com, Feb. 18, 2020.*

QUERY: What are two immediate benefits for those who repent and get baptized in (calling upon) Jesus' Name?

- God will forgive you everything you ever did.
- God will give to you his Holy Spirit.

QUERY: What was that "gift of the Holy Spirit"?

### Theories:

- Personal forgiveness, new life, salvation.
- Brought into union with Christ or the church.
- Speaking in non-learned languages.
- The Holy Spirit is Himself the Gift that God gives. (Genitive of apposition)

QUERY: Was repentance only for Jews, and faith alone for Gentiles? "God ... now commands all men everywhere to repent!" Acts 17:30

QUERY: Who receive the Holy Spirit?

- Every repentant Jew and their children.
- As many as the Lord will call, even Gentiles.

NOTE: After Jews, Gentiles and John's disciples were "baptized in the Holy Spirit", every new believer receives the Holy Spirit, and may be "filled with the Spirit" repeatedly.

***<sup>40</sup> And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on urging them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" <sup>41</sup> So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.***

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QUERY: How would we make disciples of 3000 new believers? In the same way that the apostles did so: Plant 300 tiny churches gathering in homes for instruction, mutual love, prayer and communion. Let the clergy serve mainly as trainers and coaches of new leaders as commanded in 2 Timothy 2:1-2.

QUERY: What are seven commandments from Jesus that are implemented in 2:27-41?

1. "Whoever has ears, let them hear." *Matthew 11:15*
2. "Repent and believe the good news!" *Mark 1:15*
3. "Go and make disciples ... baptizing them." *Matthew 28:19*
4. "If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven." *John 20:23*
5. "Receive the Holy Spirit." *John 20:22*
6. "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem." *Acts 1:8*
7. If they obeyed my teaching [Greek: word], they will obey yours also. *John 15:20*

### b. Seven commands of Jesus for discipleship 2:42-43

***<sup>42</sup> They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, [+and] to the breaking of bread and to prayer. <sup>43</sup> Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.***

NOTE: "Came fear ... and signs came." Same verb in poetic parallel. Where there is profound respect for God, there he performs wonders.

QUERY: What are seven commandments from Jesus that are implemented in 2:42-43?

8. "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples." *John 8:31*
9. "Teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." *Matthew 28:20*
10. "A new command I give you: Love one another." *John 13:34*
11. He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." *Luke 22:19*
12. "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete." *John 16:24*
13. "Tell them how much the lord has done for you." ... And all the people were amazed. *Mark 5:19-20*
14. "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons." *Matthew 10:8*

***<sup>44</sup> And all the believers were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup> and they would sell their property and possessions and share them with all, to the extent that anyone had need.***

NOTE: Only verse that calls Christians "believers." Otherwise, disciples or saints.

QUERY: Were the early Christians practicing socialism, communism or... what?

- They retained ownership of their private property (Acts 5:4),
- selling some of it and giving to support the poor.

QUERY: Since they were all Jewish and would not disobey the Torah, what did the Torah forbid their selling off?

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- Leviticus 25:23-31 forbade permanent sale of family land.
- Thus, it was those who owned fields and goods (plural) who would sell off their excess.

### c. Seven commands of Jesus for body life 2:46-47

<sup>46</sup> ***Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, <sup>47a</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people.***

NOTE: "Continuing" and "breaking bread" = Acts 2:42.

QUERY: What were they doing at the temple?

- Not holding church services (4th century).
- Learning from the apostles.
- Sharing about Jesus with other Jews.
- Gaining favour with all the people.

QUERY: What are seven commandments from Jesus that are implemented in 2:44-47?

15. "You believe in God; believe also in me." *John 14:1*
16. "Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." *Matthew 18:20*
17. "Sell your possessions and give to the poor." *Matthew 19:21*
18. "Give, and it will be given to you." *Luke 6:38*
19. "Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town." *Luke 9:4*
20. "Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven." *Matthew 5:12*
21. Love the Lord your God ." *Mark 12:30*

<sup>47b</sup> ***And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.***

QUERY: If we, together, implemented these commandments of Jesus, then what could we reasonably expect the Lord to do in our midst?

- The Lord will bring folk to us to be saved.
- The Lord will add to our numbers daily.
- The Lord will multiply our churches.

### Next Study

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**VI.** Paul preaches the gospel to the Greeks 16:6–19:20

**VII.** Paul preaches the gospel to the Romans 21:15–28:31