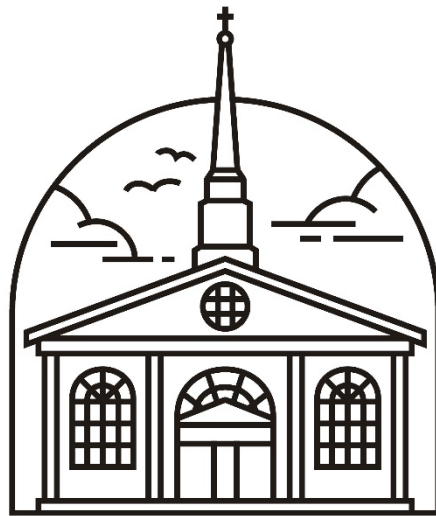


Origin of



the Church

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Lesson Two

The Church of the Apostles

Acts 2:37 – When they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?

Acts 2:38 – 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.

Acts 2:39 – 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.

Acts 2:40 – And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Who afterwards devoutly and charitably converse together; the apostles working many miracles, and God daily increasing his church

Acts 2:41 – Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

Acts 2:42 – And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:43 – And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

Acts 2:44 – And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

Acts 2:45 – And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need.

Acts 2:46 – And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,³

Acts 2:47 – Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

Lesson Notes

(Acts 2:37) – Peter's Apostolic message of repentance to the audience on the day of Pentecost wrought conviction in the hearts of the Jewish men who attended. They questioned one another about their actions after hearing such an undeniable truth.

(Acts 2:38-39) – Peter replies with a warning that offers only one option to those seeking the truth. Every truth-seeker must repent and be baptized. Repentance is turning away from one path and embarking upon an entirely new way of life.

Many Jews had blindly followed the way of temple leaders who denied Jesus was the Messiah. Personal or public denial requires personal and public affirmation. In the same manner that they were willing to publicly dishonor the truth about the Messiah, the new converts must be willing to publicly affirm their acceptance of His identity. The public affirmation would be represented by water baptism, a well-known cleansing ritual of the Jewish practice of that day. Water baptism among the Jews was a signal of returning to the formal practice of their faith. For Jews converting to the belief in Jesus as the Messiah, their baptism would signify repentance, turning away from lies and deception about Him, to reaffirm their commitment to the true tenets of Jewish faith regarding the Messiah.

They are to be baptized in the "name of the Messiah (Jesus Christ) because baptism also signifies the identity of the teacher/teaching principles a person subscribes to.

The gift of the Holy Ghost is guaranteed to all who repent and believe the truth. The Holy Ghost is the presence of God that continues to reside in the believer's life, providing instruction and guidance into all truth. (John 16:15)

The promise is made to the men present at Pentecost and their entire household and children, extending to generations of their seed that were yet afar off.

(Acts 2:40) – *The* Apostle's response includes a challenge to all the heads of households gathered at Pentecost to turn away from the untoward (warped, crooked, perverse) generation among who they presently live.

The culture surrounding the Jews is unhealthy, leaning away from the words of God and turning towards the influence of misleading religious voices. The religious leaders are responsible for the misdirection concerning the identity of the Messiah. The secular culture played little or no role in convincing the populous to disbelieve the Son of God (God actively present on Earth). The crooked, perverse, Pharisees and Sadducees intentionally diverted the populous from the truth to preserve their interest.

Apostle Peter advises them to save themselves from the perverse influence of men. They must take personal action and not rely on vain, misdirected leadership. The challenge was the beginning of self-accountability in the early Church. When the truth has been revealed, all persons who hear the truth are accountable for it.

The results of the twelve apostles' truth declarations on Pentecost appear to be immediate. The devout men who attended the celebration began to speak to one another, overcoming language and hereditary distinctions in their approach to Torah rituals.

God used the miracles performed by the twelve Apostles to add many attractions and increase the number of families and factions added to the Church daily.

(Acts 2:41) – Three thousand new souls were added to the Church, receiving the word of God and revelation concerning the Messiah with great pleasure and delight (gladly). The distinction between enforcing Pharisaical laws intended to become burdensome to the Jewish practitioner is seen in the enthusiastic response of turning away from the control and influence of misguided religious leaders.

(Acts 2:42) – The new souls turning away from burdensome control were not without a desire for truth-based discipline. The converts demonstrated their commitment to a faith in the Messiah revealed to them. They were not responding out of a desire to remove constraints but to an admirable truth that caused them to hunger for a daily routine to practice their faith.

Steadfastly and voluntarily, they continued to live and learn the Apostle's doctrine they received from the teacher Messiah. The joy and discovery of family groups that were physically separated from each other by their tribal ethnicities hungered for fellowship with each other as they broke bread and prayed together.

(Acts 2:43) – The Jewish households were not new to God but a direct connection to God without the formal priest or Rabbi was new to them. Each man and family begin to fear God, having a reverence for Him they had not experienced.

The hunger to learn and reverence for God infused the spiritual atmosphere for the Apostles to demonstrate many signs and wonders.

(Acts 2:44-45) – The impact of God’s presence inspired a unique faith they all shared collectively. Spiritually, they lived and fellowshiped in “common”- “koinos; koinonia” – having the same connection or partnership.

The “koinos” (common) faith was also applied to shared possessions and goods to ensure that every man/person's needs were met.

(Acts 2:46) – The Church interaction did not replace their commitment to temple discipline or Jewish rituals. The same oneness of heart and spirit re-inspired the daily prayers offered in the temple. Learning the truth about the Messiah did not dilute their cultural Jewish faith; instead, their faith was reignited.

The Church and temple rituals continued daily. The new converts continued from house to house in fellowship and learning daily, with gladness (pleasure/desire) and unity in heart and spirit.

(Acts 2:47) – God continued to add to the Church daily because the Church practiced its faith daily. The New Testament Church was not a Sunday meeting church; every day, the believers in the Messiah practiced their faith and lived as witnesses of the Messiah.

God’s favor rested upon the New Testament Church in the same manner His presence rested upon the Church in the wilderness. His blessing and favor led the early church daily as it navigated the challenges and persecutions it would face.