**Acts**

**Acts 2:37-38**

**Verse 37** Acts 2:37 “Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?” NKJV

“When they heard this, they were cut to the heart.” Peter’s words, inspired by the Holy Spirit, pierced their hearts to the extent they were in pain. Note this “pricking” was due to the words of the apostle, not by a direct operation of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit was wielding His Sword, the Word of God, through the preaching of the apostles. (Ephesians 6:17) “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;” NKJV They were convinced of the truthfulness of Peter’s message that Jesus of Nazareth was truly the Messiah, the Son of God, and that they were guilty of killing Him! They were now believers in the Son of God, but they were not yet saved. They still needed to “do” something. This should forever put to rest the false idea that one is saved by “faith alone.” (James 2:17-24) Peter then gave them the remedy for their lost condition.

**Verse 38** Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” NKJV

No doubt there was relief in hearing that there was actually something they could do to be saved. So there was hope. They could be forgiven of the sin of crucifying the Messiah. Furthermore, they could be forgiven of all their sins. (John 1:29) “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” NKJV The first part of the remedy was for them to “repent.” This meant the listeners had to undergo a change of mind and attitude toward their sins. (Revelation 9:20-21) “But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.” NKJV This must result in a changed life. (Acts 26:20) “but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do words befitting repentance.” NKJV This is what makes repentance so difficult for many. They were already sorry for their sins. But this wasn’t repentance.

(II Corinthians 7:10-11) “For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing *of yourselves*, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all *things* you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.” NKJV Note that repenting was something they had to do.

But something else was also necessary for them to be forgiven – the last part of the needed remedy. They had to “be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.” Baptism comes for the Greek word for immersion; a plunging. It is never a sprinkling or pouring! (Acts 8:38-39) “So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.” NKJV But it also included the idea that the one being baptized acknowledged his faith in Jesus as his Lord and Savior. This was probably done as a verbal confession of his new allegiance. (Acts 8:36-37) “Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’ Then Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” NKJV

This all was done “for the forgiveness of sins.” The word translated “for” means motion toward, in order to obtain, so that you may have. This same phrase is used in Matthew 26:27-28. “Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” NKJV His blood was poured out in order for people to be saved, not because they already were! Putting our text Acts 2:38 with Matthew 26:27-28 reveals that Christ’s blood saves us when we repent and are baptized. Our obedience is essential to our salvation. (Hebrews 5:9) “And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.” NKJV

So Peter on this great Daly of Pentecost gave the remedy for them to be saved. But the listeners had to partake of the remedy in order to be saved. [Example: A doctor giving a remedy for an illness to his patient.] Also note the example of Paul in Acts 22:16. “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” NKJV

The final thing Peter said is that the listeners, upon their obedience, would be given the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is not an allusion to every believer possessing miraculous powers, but a promise of God’s presence in their lives.

Bobby Stafford April 5, 2015 [Evening] Acts: Lesson 9 Acts 2:37-38