

BAPTISMAL REGENERATION

Request: “I seem to run into people who believe that you must be baptized in water in order to be saved based on Acts 2:38. Could you explain what Peter meant in Acts 2:38?”

This is one interpretation of Acts 2:38 that has resulted in a theology known as baptismal regeneration.

There are several denominations that embrace baptismal regeneration such as Roman Catholic, Orthodox Church, Anglo-Catholic, Church of Christ, Mormon, and United Pentecostal Church.

Acts 2:38 is just one of their proof text Scriptures among others: (Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 22:16; Rom.6:3-4; Gal.3:27; Titus 3:5; 1 Pet.3:20-21).

<p>This lesson will study five aspects of Baptismal Regeneration and why it is so prominent in “works based theology” and not so in “grace based theology”.</p>
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1. We will begin by examining four imperative (command) moods found in our lesson text.

(Acts.2:36) know_(ginosko / p.a.impv.3ps) God has made Him both Lord and Christ – this Jesus whom you crucified (stauroo / a.a.ind 2pl)

(Acts.2:37) what shall we do?

(Acts.2:38a) repent (metaneo / a.a.impv.2pl) [to change your mind about the working object of your faith] [i.e. the gospel] (1 Cor.15:1-4; Rom.1:16)

(Acts.2:38b) be baptized (baptizo / a.p.impv.3ps) let each (hekastos / nsm) of you (human / gplm) be baptized in (epi+loc of cause) the name of Jesus Christ [why?] (Matt.28:19; Acts 9:14, 21; Rom.10:10-14) for (eis+acc of cause) [with a view to / with reference to] forgiveness (aphesis / a. singular) of your the sins (ton hamartia / g/pl/f) – and you shall receive (f.m.ind 2pl) the gift (ten dorea) of the Holy Spirit (Matt.3:11; Acts 1:5; 2:33, 39)

(Acts.2:40) be saved (sozo / a.p.impv.2pl) [passive voice of grace] (Eph.2:8-9) from (apo+abl of separation) this perverse (tes skolia) generation (tes gena / abl/s/f) (Deut.32:5; Matt.16:4, 17:17; Phil.2:15)

(Acts.2:41) “So then (men oun) [this is underlining], those who had received (hoi apodechomai / a.m.ptc nplm) his word (ton logos) were baptized (baptizo / api3pl); and there were added that day about 3,000 souls.”

When did they begin to baptize women? (Acts 8) [Philip’s ministry to the Samaria] (Acts.8:5, 12-17)

2. John Baptist baptized Jesus but Jesus refused to baptize him or anyone during His ministry (John 1:24-39; 4:2).

Why? John the Baptist gave the answer in Matt.3:11-17.

What did Jesus understand about water baptism that we seem to miss? (Read - Acts 1:5; 2:33; 11:16-18)

3. **Paul seemed to understand this message when he declared that Jesus “did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel” as recorded in 1 Cor.1:14-17.**

Without baptizing the Corinthian believers, Paul claimed to be their “father through the gospel” in 1 Cor.4:15. He mentioned only baptizing three believers (1 Cor.1:15, 16).

When Paul outlines the gospel of “grace salvation” in 1 Cor.15:1-4, he did not mention water baptism as a necessary step. But he did mention believing (1 Cor.15:2; Rom.1:16).

4. **Philip was also responsible for the conversion of the Ethiopian following the evangelism of Samaria (Acts 8:26-40).**

“And **Philip** opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him. And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, ‘Look! Water! **What prevents me from being baptized?**’ And 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.’ And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch; **and he baptized him.**” (Acts 8:35-38; 9:18) [Paul]

Paul to the Philippian jailor: (Acts 16:30-34)

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’ And they said, ‘**Believe in the Lord Jesus**, and you shall be saved, you and your household.’ And immediately he was baptized, he and all his household.”

Paul to the Corinthian Church: (Acts 18:8)

“And many of the Corinthians when they **heard were believing** and being baptized.”

5. **Why were the disciples of John Baptist living Ephesus re-baptized by Paul (Acts 19:1-7)?**

Remember that Acts had four (4) Pentecost’s:

- (ch.2) Jews
- (ch.8) Samaritans
- (ch.10) Gentiles
- (ch.19) Disciples of JB (Acts 1:5; 2:33, 39; Matt.3:11).

The fourth Holy Spirit Pentecost in Book of Acts (Acts 2, 8, 10-11, and 19):

(Acts.19:4-6) “And Paul said, ‘John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to **believe in Him** who was coming after him, that is, **in Jesus**. And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the **Holy Spirit came on them**, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.”

(Acts 2:33) “Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the **promise of the Holy Spirit**, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.” (Matt.3:11)

(Gal.1:9) **Anathema Curse:** “And we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to that, which you received, let him be accursed.”

(Acts 15:1) “And some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, ‘Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

(Acts 15:11) “But we believe that we are **saved through the grace** of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they are also.”

(Eph.2:8-9) “For by **grace you have been saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is a **gift of God; not as a result of works**, that no one should boast.”