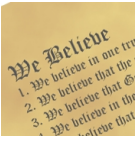


Repentance (Acts 2)

Written by Ben Winslett

Saturday, 27 August 2011 09:17 - Last Updated Friday, 28 October 2011 13:32



*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 2:38***

Notice in this text that Peter tells these Jewish brethren to repent. Sounds familiar, doesn't it? The gospel ministry is to call upon men to repent. However, there may be an element of this missing to our understanding.

Unlike many who have heard the command to repent of grievous sins such as drunkenness or fornication, these men were described earlier in this chapter as "Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven" (Acts 2:5). This word "devout" means holy and pious (faithful).

What is the significance of this? Well, for starters, these men were not unregenerate. Rather, they were worshipers of Jehovah God (albeit in ignorance). Their lifestyle was one of holy behavior. They were, indeed, devout men. Holy men. Pious Men. Faithful men. So, we should ask, of what were they called upon to repent? Where was repentance needed?

Peter called upon them to repent in a religious sense! Their lifestyles were holy. They were believers in Jehovah God. They were faithful. But, their religious views were not according to the Will of God. In short, they were called upon by Peter, if they indeed believed in Jesus as he just preached, to believe the truth ABOUT Jesus and to follow Him in truth.

They needed to embrace salvation by the Finished Work of Jesus Christ. They needed to

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repent of Judaism and follow Christ in the order of New Testament worship. They needed to be baptized in His precious name and unite with His church. They needed to remain under the tutelage of the ministry of Christ. They needed to let go of their insistence of obtaining personal righteousness through their own works and merit.

I once was told that preachers should preach only against "legitimate sins" like fornication, but should not be so insistent on doctrinal purity. Would that idea be consistent with Peter's call to repentance in Acts 2? No, not in the least. What we believe and how we worship matters. Peter calls upon these good, devout men to repent of their religious errors and follow Christ in His Church.

A word of counsel to the curious inquirer or newcomer to the truth. To follow Christ and remain satisfied in His Kingdom, repentance is needed. One can no more serve to Masters than he can serve Christ under two forms of religion. As Elijah said, "why halt ye between two opinions?" If you find religion that appears to mirror the worship and doctrine of the Church in the Book of Acts, then by all means pursue it with tenacity. Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand!

*Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship... - **Acts 2:41-42***