

It is very difficult for us in the twenty first century to understand the tidal change that took place in the world at the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The beginning of that wave was a Pentecost and the events recorded in Acts. It was not necessary for there to be a twenty-ninth chapter to the book of Acts, and only arrogant men would pretend that they are writing such a chapter.

So far we have seen the ascension of Christ into Heaven, and the transfer of the throne of David and the priesthood and the prophet office into Heaven, deposited in the Person of the Mediator by God the Father, which offices Jesus of Nazareth will perform until all His enemies are made His foot stool. The Acts of the Apostles are the Acts of Jesus Christ from heaven and work of the church from that day until this is still the work of Jesus Christ in Heaven. So you and I mustn't think too much of ourselves and of our opinions and gifts, but it is Christ after all who does the work and overthrows the power of the devil.

A moment ago we read in Acts 10 the events that took place after Peter had his vision of the great sheet let down from heaven, which he rightly interpreted as direction to preach and baptize the Gentiles that sent to him, Cornelius and his people who became the first Gentiles to enter the church. This event was an earthquake to those who knew redemption history to this point, even to those who were familiar with the prophecies concerning the calling of the Gentiles.

The prophecies of the calling of the Gentiles were known to the Jews, but misinterpreted because of their misunderstanding of the kingdom of God. They dreamed of an earthly Jewish kingdom to which the Gentiles would come and serve God by submission to Moses and the law. The Jews would have preeminence and rule the world as the representatives of God. Messiah would rule with a rod of iron. But this was not to be, nor were these the prophecies. In order to see something of this today, and to make of applications to ourselves, for this is a very pertinent and important subject even for our day, for people still get led astray by dreams of a Jewish type kingdom.

So I want to look at some things today: I. The Awful fact of Uncircumcision; II the Glorious Fact of Baptism; II. The Unity of the People of God.

- I. The Awful fact of Uncircumcision. Acts 10:28-9 They were unclean. The uncircumcised were in a most miserable condition before God. I will illustrate with certain Scriptures:
 - A. Eph. 2:10,11: 11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:
 - B. The uncircumcised were not included among the people of God.
 1. Ge 17:14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

2. Isa 52:1 Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.
3. Jer 6:10 To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.
4. Uncircumcision represented uncleanness, hardness of heart, spiritual deadness.
5. Eze 44:9 Thus saith the Lord GOD; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel.
6. Ac 7:51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.
7. Ac 14:16 Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways.
8. Col 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;

II. The Glorious Fact of Baptism

A. The Preaching 10:34-43

B. The Fact: 10:44-46

C. The Sign and Seal: 10:47-48

D. Remarks:

1. Nobody said: they must be circumcised and then baptized. Their circumcision was fulfilled in baptism. The Lord in circumcision had promised something more:
2. And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.
3. This did not take place in Israel; Even when Christ came, their hearts were very hard; they rested only in going through the motions, not yielding to God from the heart.
 - a. Traditions of the fathers
 - b. To be seen of men and the praise of men
 - c. Not unto the Lord, from love to God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength.
4. They became full and complete members of the church of Jesus Christ; vs. 47 and 11:15,16

III. The Unity of the Body of Christ.

A. Acts 15:7-10

B. Colossians 9-15 Baptism is circumcision.

C. 1Peter 1:18-25

Application

1. How rich is the heritage that we have in Christ. This is the reason that we are to honor our mothers and our fathers, because of the heritage that we have in Christ.
2. Our heritage was bought by the labor and sacrifice of a great many people who worked and suffered and endured for the Gospel's sake; From Abel to the present day.

3. The victory that Christ wins is a moral victory over sin and death and hell; it does not come by revolution, but by regeneration and reformation, building upon the past and not warring against it.
4. Humanism hates history and the past and wars against it, and wants to live only in the present.
5. Those who war with their past, have no future; this is the only commandment with promise.
6. The church was not a revolution against Moses; but a renewal and fulfillment based upon Moses and the prophets.