

The Acts of the Apostles

[Wed. Jul. 2, 2014] Acts Series, Acts 8:14-25 - Craig A. Thurman Chapter 8

Last session we learned that great persecution arose in the day of Stephen's martyrdom. The religious leaders of Judaism began to attack the church (the only one in existence at the time, which was at Jerusalem, [that is, they attacked her membership this time, instead of her leadership, the apostles]) and the flood-gate of trouble was opened. As a result of this persecution, and we believe this was of the Lord, the disciples (the membership) were scattered throughout Judaea and Samaria, even to very distant places: Cyrene (present day Shahat, North Africa [about 350 mi. east of Benghazi, Libya]; northward into Phenice (Phoenicia), the coastal area that includes Tyre and Sidon [and called the Province of Syria which reaches down almost to Caesarea; and Cyprus the island just off the coast of Syria in the Mediterranean Sea (11.19). So the diaspora of the saints of the church of Jerusalem was very thorough.

Let's consider Philip before we move on into the rest of this chapter. Philip, the deacon of this church, was one of those that was scattered because of this persecution and went down into Samaria, and specifically to the city of Samaria. Philip preached Christ there, as Stephen had done in (at least) Jerusalem, probably going to the synagogues. Immediately we should notice how that Philip is not an ordained minister, a pastor (as we commonly refer to this church officer.) Clearly, he is not one of the twelve, and we certainly have no way of knowing whether he was one of the 70 that our Lord Jesus had sent out during his earthly ministry to go before Him to prepare the cities for his coming. (Lk.10.1)

Some, in defense of church constitution (organizing churches), make a case for the necessity of apostolic and/or pastoral authority. But what we have here is the seemingly inexplicable organization of a number of churches in Judaea, Samaria, and into Cilicia beyond Syria. (15.23, 41) Developing a system or superimposing traditions does not answer the problem, but rather create more difficulties, and unnecessarily hinders fellowship between other churches of like faith and practice by drawing lines in the sand of opinion. However, a proper, thorough, and honest reading of the Scriptures shows us that a member of the church of Jerusalem went out, preached Christ, baptized believers, and likely instructed them in the Word of God.

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First, at this place, it is necessary to insert this thought: the church, not a special class of men (preachers only), but the membership has the commission to preach the gospel to every creature, baptize, and teach those who follow Christ. (I know that there are some, even among the Baptist churches that reject this, and obviously the pseudo-religious organizations reject this as well.) But how do we explain a man like Philip going out and doing what he did without superimposing our predispositions upon the Word of God, except that the Scriptures be allowed to speak for themselves? And if when they do speak freely shouldn't we find that this pattern is true in other places as well? I believe so. How can we explain the fact that a number of churches have begun in Israel, all the way up into Cilicia except that the membership knew to do what they did and started new churches? (Gen.15.23, 41, How and when did these churches originate?) Can we build a doctrine church constitution on the supposition of some ministerial alliance? Where is that pattern established in Scripture? Again, what facts do we have that we can use to build a case, support a doctrine, for biblical, church constitution? The membership was scattered and churches sprang up; they are recognized as churches and they function as churches. It appears that the membership can, at will (and someone cries out, 'spiritual anarchy!'), go and begin other churches when another baptized believer will join with them.

Let's consider what we apply in our regard for fellowshipping other churches: We fellowship with other Baptist churches. We consider what they teach and what they do. After we have considered that we make a decision as to whether or not we have enough in common in the work of the gospel so that we can be an edification to one another in our fellowship with them. There is not a single church that we can research to the inth degree and confirm whether their 'chain' rattles all of the way back to the church which was at Jerusalem. We mostly take into account the fact that they are Baptist, examine their doctrine, and learn their practice. In some instances, where we did fellowship with some and do no longer, we almost, as it were, defaulted to abstain from them. Outside of Baptist churches, and that is restricted severely, this membership has not ventured. As a church, we have no fellowship with the Catholic or Protestants, nor do we recognize them as the true churches of Jesus Christ. (That is not to say that in these pseudo-religious institutions there are not those that are true believers of Christ in them. But institutionally, doctrinally and practically

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they fail to meet the true standard of the Word of God to qualify as the churches of Jesus Christ.

Next, does what Philip did by preaching Christ, baptizing, and making disciples automatically start a church? Normally yes. But the Samaritan church sets a unique for not only being the second-ever established church, but also the first church recorded in Scripture beyond Judaea. (Acts 1.8) This occasion is witnessed by the apostles. After this, only one other time does such an apostolic witness occur, and it will be at the establishment of the first-ever Gentile church that is in Caesarea. (chapter 10) It should be noted that this peculiar witness, only of the Samaritan church and the Caesarean church, is never repeated again. From this point forward, we have a consistent pattern established that preaching Christ, baptizing those converts, and making disciples results in the establishment of true N.T. churches.

We witness in our reading tonight the beginning of a N. T. church.

14 ¶ Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received

δέδεκται, 3p, perf, ind of δέχομαι, they received; nearly always translated with the English word *receive*. And those instances where it is not, it is certainly understood; i.e.. Lk.2.28 the children must have been delivered to our Lord, and He *received* them; *accepted* in 2Co.8.17; most often what is *received* shows a willfulness on the part of the recipient.

Clearly, the emphasis is not on the **taking**, but rather on *receiving* that which is *given*. When some speak of receiving Christ as Lord and Savior they emphasize the act of choice to take Him, when in reality Christ is *gifted* to them. That the Spirit of God has done a work of grace by regenerating them is revealed in their new and free disposition which makes them willing recipients. **It is not the act of taking Christ, it is the act of being able to receive Christ which is the consistent teaching of Scriptures.**

Joh 3:27 John answered and said, A man can receive (root λαμβάνω) nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

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Even Jn.1.12, though this is the Greek λαμβάνω, Notice how the emphasis is on the *receiving*. Christians, ignorant, unlearned, and extremely biased have not grasped the truth of Scriptures concerning the incapacitated power of the natural man to make **any** spiritual decision at all, even to receive Christ. But for the grace of God to His elect **none** can receive Christ and enjoy the free forgiveness of sins that was by Him at Calvary. (Ps. 110.3)

Brethren, faith is a spiritual fruit, repentance is a spiritual fruit, salvation is a free gift. As the natural life is a gift received, so especially so is the *gift* of eternal life. Let me ask you, 'Have you believed in Jesus Christ? Do you know him as your sin-bearer? Turn from your sinful manner of life and believe the Word of God concerning Jesus Christ and you shall be saved! Be baptized and follow Christ all the way until the time of His glorious return.

the word of God, they sent

ἀπέστειλαν, 3p pl, aor 1, ind, act of ἀποστέλλω, ἀπο forth + στέλλω avoid, withdraw; meaning *to send forth* (Mt.2.16); *to send away*(Mk. 12.3); from this we have ἀπόστολος, apostle.

unto them Peter and John:

15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive

λάβωσι (ν), 3p pl, aor. 2, **subj**, act of λαμβάνω, KJV *receive 133, take 104*; This verb tense, λάβωσιν, is found in 1Co.9.25 *to obtain* a corruptible crown; He. 9.15 *might receive* the promise of eternal life.

the Holy Ghost:

16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

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We have, with our previous lessons, seen the biblical order of events as: hearing of the gospel, faith, baptism, gathering, and now the habitation of the Holy Spirit = church constitution or the making of a N. T. church.

Why hadn't the Holy Spirit come upon this group of gathered baptized believers yet? Was it because Stephen lacked proper ordination? We have absolutely no proof that specially ordained men were required to establish churches. Was it because the Jerusalem church needed to give their approval? Much like some would call a mother or sister church. But we don't see that pattern established in Scripture either (unless we do a lot of presupposing with the apostle Paul in his missionary journeys.) The Jerusalem church knew nothing beforehand of the organization of the Caesarean church. The only biblical reason that I can cite for this is that the church (that is, the saints at Jerusalem, **all of whom were Jews**) needed to know that their Lord was moving from the Jerusalem church and out **into** other churches, now this one in the city of Samaria. They needed to understand this movement to be able to grasp the work of God beginning at Jerusalem was moving into all the earth. This Samaritan episode is never repeated again in Samaria; as well as in Jerusalem or Judaea. There is no practical application for us in this act. We read it. We witness it. It is a fact. And it needs not be done again. In other words this is not an established practice for churches to do.

From this text we certainly have evidence that the Holy Spirit does not join himself to every believer disassociated with His N. T. church. Had every believer in Christ received the Holy Spirit why didn't they have Him from Pentecost? How come when one comes to Christ they do not automatically receive the Holy Spirit in this function? If that teaching is true that should have been the case with every believer that comes to Christ. But the fact is, it isn't true, and that doesn't happen.

17 Then laid they

they laid, ἐπέτιθουν, 3p pl, imperf, act of ἐπιτίθημι, KJV put, lay, ordain, make.

their hands on ἐπὶ them,

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We believe and teach the doctrine that the true churches of Jesus Christ are only and always local in their entity or existence and function. This proves the truth of that teaching even more. These two apostles had a certain people in mind when they laid their hands on them. These baptized believers had a recognizable association one to another. Otherwise, why not just say that they laid their hand on all that believed? Because that is not what they did.

and they received

ἐλάμβαναν, 3p pl, imperf, act of λαμβάνω

the Holy Ghost.

We can gather together any number of people together and never have a church. We can gather believers into one place and not have a church. We can gather baptized believers into one place and still not have a church. But when we gather a group of baptized believers for the purposes of Jesus Christ the Spirit of God will be present with them. They are the N. T. church.

If we assembled with some members of this church, and some members of two other churches, are we a church? Some uninformed or misinformed think so. Has this group of believers an association of agreement between them? They haven't the same pastors, the same building, the same bank account, the same binding decisions. They might be agree together about the same work of the ministry, recognize that they each represent a church, but are they a church? No. Why? They are not subjected to one another and accountable to one another in the ministry of Christ unless they have made a voluntary agreement to begin being a body themselves. These three groups having come together in this way haven't *all things common*. They only have *all things common* in the church where they are members. To think otherwise is impossible, presumptuous, and offensive if we actually practiced such an attitude. I would not dare enter into another church that we fellowship with and assume that they should either support me as they do their pastor. I would not stand by and watch another church

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come into our building and appropriate to themselves our property. So the whole notion of universal and even close churches is an illusion.

What made this group of baptized believers a N. T. church in the city of Samaria is the fact that the Holy Spirit bless them with His presence. They had become an habitation of God by the Spirit.

Eph 2:22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

18 And when Simon saw (gazed)

θεασάμενος, nom, sing, masc, part. aor 1; θεάομαι; **in every case we could say that this verb means to view something as a spectator would** (Mt.6.1; 11.7; 22.11;23.5 ... Acts 1.11 ... *why stand ye **gazing** into heaven; 21.27 when they **saw** him in the temple; 22.9 And they that were with me **saw** indeed the light*); The Greek θεατρίζομαι, translated as *gazing stock*; or the Greek θέατρον, from which we have the English word *theater*.

While it is difficult to be dogmatic about the genuine experience of grace in Simon's heart. He is not actually said to have *heard* with the *hearing* the gospel of Jesus Christ as it is noted of the people in the city. (Acts 8.6) And now we have an interesting word, root θεάομαι, used to describe his gazing at what the apostles had done in the laying on of their hands, and after which the Holy Spirit came upon these gathered believers.

that through διὰ laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,

χρήματα, nom and acc pl of χηῖμα, KJV also *riches* (Mk.10.23 shall they that have *riches* enter; Acts 4.27 and brought the *money*, and laid it at. LXX 2Chron. 1.12 *riches*; Pv. 17.16 *Why has the fool wealth?* (cf. vs.20 *money*))

First of all, what an insult to the apostles it must have been for someone to think that they are in the service of Christ for *money* or to get *rich*. Listening to a dear brother ordained to serve as a deacon in this church a few weeks ago said this: 'It doesn't matter whether or not I am ordained to

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serve as a deacon, I will continue doing what I do.’ Brethren, that is a genuine servant’s heart. Serving because the Lord has put it in our hearts is a manner of life. No amount of money can buy that spirit, and no amount of money can put it there!

The servants of Christ freely give in their service because they have freely received. The gifts of God are just that: freely given. (Read 2Ki.5.14, 15) No saint should ever boast against another for having this or that gift. And helping one another is not a business transaction. We should not profit from it, and those we help should not be obliged for it ... in the least bit. When it is all said and done, those who render a service to **help** another shouldn’t operate from compulsion, but from love; and those who receive the help should not become debtors for that service in the least. (I’m talking about people that need help. They can’t do for themselves. When was the last time that we helped someone? Did we attach ‘strings’ to our service, then don’t count that. When was the last time we helped someone without any thought of receiving anything in return? In other words when have we *lent to the Lord*?

*Pr 19:17 He that hath pity upon the poor **lendeth unto the LORD**; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*

Be guarded against the spirit of a Gehazi. Elishah had healed Naaman, a Syrian captain, of leprosy, and for this Naaman wanted to bless him with gifts of substance, but he refused. Gehazi thought otherwise, though, and sought to capitalized on Elishah’s generosity. (Read 2Ki.5.20-27)

Mt.10.1 ¶ And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

...

5 ¶ These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

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*8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils:
freely ye have received, freely give.*

1Co 4:7 For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?

19 Saying, Give

δότε, 2p pl, aor 2, imper, act of δίδωμι, You give ...

me

καμοι, (καί ἐμοί), κάγω, contracted

also this power,

ἐξουσίαν, *authority* to do this that you have done ...

that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive λαμβάνη the Holy Ghost.

Is this what these two apostles were doing? Were they conferring power from the Jerusalem church to this group of people in order to make them another church? Is there such a thing, such an authority that the church wields. Jesus stated very clearly that,

*Mt.28. 18 And **Jesus** came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given **unto me** in heaven and in earth.*

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

There is not a single word in this that says anything about conferring power on any one. But many preachers read this Scripture like this: All power is given unto **YOU**, (But Christ said, All power is given unto me ...) Go ye

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therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: [and then after the minister has gone to seminary, after the believers have satisfied a particular standard of doctrinal tests, met every associational credential, paid off their building loan from our missionary loan account, dotted every 'i', and crossed every 't' then give them the blessed Holy Spirit.] and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. (Biblical church organization is not so difficult. It is far more simple than many realize.)

There are only three instances where the Holy Spirit was given in this manner: here, and Acts 19. Acts 19 does not say that Paul gave them the Holy Spirit through his laying on of the hands, but rather the Scripture states that *And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came upon them ...*

It is the Heavenly Father who gives the Holy Spirit.

Lu 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever ... (Thus Pentecost)

Lu 11:13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Ac 2:17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith **God**, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams ...

...

*33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having **received of the Father** the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.*

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*1Co 5:4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, **with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ** ...*

Ga 4:6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

1Co 12:11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man [within the N. T. church membership] severally as he will.

20 But Peter said unto him, Thy money

ἀργύριον, KJV, money, pieces of silver, silver.

Simon, who doubtless had amassed great wealth through his previously wicked exploits in the trickery of sorcery sees an opportunity for personal gain the same through this the faith of Jesus Christ. The abuse of the gospel in this way is a very wicked practice and warrants strong condemnation from those of the true faith of Christ.

*2co.12.14 Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: **for I seek not yours, but you:** for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*

15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.

16 But be it so, I did not burden you: nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile.

*17 **Did I make a gain of you** by any of them whom I sent unto you?*

*18 I desired Titus, and with him I sent a brother. **Did Titus make a gain of you?** walked we not in the same spirit? walked we not in the same steps?*

perish

ἀπώλειαν, acc sing of ἀπώλεια;

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*Mt 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to **destruction**, and many there be which go in thereat ...*

*Mt 26:8 But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this **waste**?*

*Joh 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of **perdition**; that the scripture might be fulfilled.*

*Ac 25:16 To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to **die**, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.*

*2Pe 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in **damnable** heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift **destruction**.*

*2Pe 2:2 And many shall follow their **pernicious ways**; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.*

*2Pe 2:3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their **damnation** slumbereth not.*

with thee,

These are some of the most severe words in Scripture. Sometimes there may be an instance where, if it is a professed believer of Christ, the thought is so degenerated that it calls for a swift and decisive blow.

Tit 1:13 This witness is true. [Of the Crecians] Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith ...

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1Ti 5:19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. [And when it becomes necessary, when their sin is public and warrants such a rebuke, this for the good of the body ...]

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. (No member of the Lord's church is above being disciplined, but in the public displays of her officers sins, if not chastened sharply a lethargic spirit may set in where fervency should be.

*because thou **hast thought***

ἐνόμισας, 2p sing, aor 1, ind, act of νομίζω (νόμος)

*Mt 5:17 **Think** not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.*

*Mt 20:10 But when the first came, they **supposed** that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.*

*Ac 7:25 For he **supposed** his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them: but they understood not.*

*Ac 16:13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer **was wont** to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither.*

This thought of Simon's was an old thought in a new wrapping. Now that he professed Christ he brought back up, as if it were proper, in a false and self-confidence, this thought to have power and influence over the people.

that the gift of God

The gift of the Spirit appears to have special reference to those who constitute a member of a N. T. church. If there is any objection to this it would be likely for some Scripture like:

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*Ac 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.***

However, in view of many other Scriptures it would be my conclusion that the gift of the Spirit belongs to saints alone. That is, those who will walk in a church relationship. Consider these references which pertain to locally assembled disciples of Jesus Christ:

First, the apostles, alone had receive the Spirit of God for their ministry:

Joh 20:22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

The apostles, it would be hard to deny, had a much broader scope of service than a local church; but rather, they being the foundation of the church/es, had a care over all of the churches wherever they were. No other servants of Christ had that sphere of operation. NO ONE!

Second, the Spirit of God came upon those who associated with the first Jewish church at Jerusalem:

Ac 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.

Third, the Spirit of God came upon the first Samaritan church in Samaria:

Ac 8:15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost ...

Fourth, the Spirit of came upon the first gentile church at Caesarea: And, at the establishment of the church of Gentiles:

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Ac 10:45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.

And fifth, the Spirit of God came upon the Ephesian disciples in Acts 19:

Ac 19:6 And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

But for the very first instance when the apostles had received the gift of the Holy Spirit for their special service to the church, every single instance involves a N.T. church relationship. Believers at large are an anomaly in Scripture. Believers should, as God directs, serve the Lord in His church. To reiterate: it would be a mistake for anyone of the believers of Jesus Christ to consider this gift apart from a N.T. church relationship. There just isn't any biblical support to justify that notion.

may be purchased (gotten, acquired)

*κτᾶσθαι, pres inf of κτάομαι, Mt.10.9 **Provide** neither gold nor silver; Lk.18.12 of all I **possess**; Acts 1.18 **purchased** a field with the reward; Acts 22.28 With a great sum **obtained** I; 1Thes.4.4 how **to possess** his vessel in sanctification*

with διὰ money. χρημάτων (cf. vs.18)

21 Thou hast neither part μερίς nor lot κληρος in ἐν this matter λόγῳ: for thy heart is not right εὐθεία in the sight ἐνώπιον of God.

22 Repent μετανόησον therefore of this thy wickedness κακίας,

Is repenting (μετανοέω, a change of mind) such a strange idea to a Christian? All who truly come to Christ must repent, turn from their previous course in sin and turn to Jesus Christ as the only hope of eternal life. But after this, there are many other instances where repentance is necessary. Peter needed to be converted after his betrayal of the Lord. That sin and offense must be addressed by Peter before he can go on in fellowship and service with Christ. (Lk.22.32) Ananias and Sapphira should have repented. (Acts 5.1-10) Again, Peter in his dissimulation with the

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gentiles needed to be repented of. (Gal.2.11) It is understood that the children of God need to repent for their actions. (2Ti.2.25) The Corinthian church needed to repent for their misbehavior as a church. (2Co.7.9) The Corinthian fornicator needed to repent of his sin before he could be restored to fellowship with the church (1Co.5.1-5); and did (2Co.2.6-8) Five of the seven churches in Revelation are called upon to repent. (Re.2.5, 16, 22; 3.3, 19)

and pray δεήθητι τοῦ Θεοῦ God (petition of God), if perhaps the thought

ἐπίνοια, ἐπι upon, or as a basis + νοῦς KJV *mind, understanding*; the very basis of this thought might be forgiven. That he might be able to get down to the very root or foundation of this thinking, where it is has lodged and upon which his expression is based; he must acknowledge the error of his thought and change his mind concerning it, and ask for cleansing from this sin, not just in the form of his expression, but for its conception in the heart as well. That represents true repentance. Repentance isn't just amending our actions, it is changing our thinking to agree with God. If repentance were only a change in the outward, then we are only suppressing the true feelings of the heart. (Call it hypocrisy or deceit. Mt.3.6,7; 7.15; 23.25) But when repentance reaches the mind, sin is rooted out and then we are prepared for asking forgiveness of God, and shall receive it. (Mt.15.18, 19; 23.26; Eph.6.6; 1Jn.1.9)

of thine heart may be forgiven

That is, left or removed from your account before God.

ἀφεθήσεταιί, 3p sing, fut, ind, pass of ἀφίημι; ἀφεθήσεται is used 13 times in the N. T. (Mt.12.31 *shall be forgiven*, 32; Mk.3.28 *shall be forgiven*; Lk.12.10 *shall be forgiven*; 17.34-36 **shall be left**; Lk. 21.6 **shall be left**; Acts 8.22 *may be forgiven*; Ja.5.15 *shall be forgiven*)

thee.

23 For I perceive

ὁρῶ

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Mr 8:24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking.

Somewhat of a difficult passage here. The Greek varies depending on who you use for a basis of the KJV. The last phrase *I see men as trees walking*:

J. P. Green Sr. Interlinear Bible:

βλέπω τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ὡς δένδρα περιπατοῦντας.

Online Bible Program:

βλέπω τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ὅτι ὡς δένδρα ὁρῶ περιπατοῦντας.

George Ricker Berry's N. T. Interlinear:

βλέπω τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ὅτι ὡς δένδρα ὁρῶ περιπατοῦντας.

And the KJV doesn't translate the verb. It would probably translate like this:

I see men walking as trees; I see (as in perceive) walking! I can be that the KJV translators simply saw the verb represented by βλέπω and left it. We see no doctrine affected in any event.

that thou art in εἰς the gall

χολήν, acc sing of χολή; only used twice in the N.T.

Perhaps with the Greek preposition εἰς it means that he has *reached* to this place [unto the gall of bitterness].

*Mt 27:34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with **gall**: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.*

In the LXX:

Deu. 29.18 *Lest there be among you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart has turned aside from the Lord your God, having*

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gone to serve the gods of these nations; lest there be in you a root springing up with gall χολή (KJV bears gall; margin poisonous herb) and bitterness πικρία. (KJV wormwood) Notice the similarity of this with He. 12.15.

*Job 16.14 (KJV 13) They surrounded me with spears, aiming at my reins: without sparing me they poured out my **gall** upon the ground.*

Job 20.14 ... the gall of an asp is in his belly.

Ps.68.21 (KJV 69.21) They gave me also gall for my food ...

*Pv.5.4 more bitter than **gall**;*

of bitterness,

πικρίας, gen sing of πικρία, always in KJV bitterness 4; πικρός KJV bitter 2.

The bitterest poison.

and in the bond

σύνδεσμον, acc sing of σύνδεσμος, συνδέω; literally meaning bound together. See Phl.1.7, 13 where δεσμός is translated bond/s.

The grace of God, if He has truly worked in your life can make a change from this untoward behavior as a Christian. But if not, sin is too much for one without Christ to be loosed. This is the very essence of the gospel: Jesus Christ died to save His people from their sins. If there were any other way to be delivered from the bondage of sin Jesus would not have needed to die. But it takes the shedding of the blood of God (Acts 20.28) the Son to deliver from the condemnation of sin. And Christians are given the victory over sin in the daily life through the power of the Spirit of God.

1Jo 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

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of iniquity ἀδικίας.

Or, unrighteousness

24 Then answered Simon, and said, Pray δεήθητε ye to the Lord for me ὑπὲρ, that none of these things which ye have spoken εἰρήκατε come upon ἐπὶ me.

This presents the mind of an uninformed Christian. The revelation of the mind of God in the Word of God, the N. T., was not in hand as yet. These saints were highly dependent on the extra-biblical revelation of God through prophets and gifts of tongues and interpretations. He could and should, yes, and in the final analysis must pray to God himself and, as child of God, plead for forgiveness, cleansing for his sin. (1Jn.1.9) He doesn't need forgiveness in the sense of deliverance from the judgment due for sin. Christ paid that price. (Ro.5.8; He.10.10) But he needs cleansing from the practical, daily affects that sin had on him and be set right in his thinking to agree with God. (Jn.13.7-10; 1Jn. 8)

25 And they, when they had testified

διαμαρτυράνμενοι, nom, pl, masc, part, aor 1 of διαμαρτύρομαι, διὰ by, through + μαρτύρομαι the act of witnessing, (Acts 20.26 *take to record*; Gal.5.3 *testify*; Eph.4.17 *testify*)

Peter and John's presence was to witness the things that had been reportedly taking place. (vs.14 The 12 apostles sent two of their own number; Peter and John) After confirming that Jesus Christ had been received in this city and area, they also ...

and preached

λαλήσαντες, nom, pl, masc, part, aor 1, act of λαλέω, to speak; same verb is used in 14.25

Ac 14:25 And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia ...

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(cf. Sun. Jun. 22, 2014, Philippians Series, [audio] [.pdf, vs.16])

There are five Gr. verbs used to describe the act of *preaching*. They are: (Considering this only in light of the four gospels:) λαλέω (tell or talk; all four gospels); κηρύσσω (to cry; Matthew, Mark, & Luke); διαγγέλλω (to tell thoroughly; Luke); εὐαγγελίζω (to announce well; verb, Matthew & Luke; noun Matthew & Mark); and here; καταγγέλλω (to announce according to; never used until Acts 4.2; It seems that in order for this word to become proper the gospel itself must become settled. **One cannot preach *according to the gospel until the gospel itself is revealed.***)

The act of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ can be spoken λαλέω; it can be proclaimed loudly κηρύσσω; it should be a thorough διαγγέλλω and good report εὐαγγελίζω; and it must agree with the truth of the Word of God καταγγέλλω. But that is not all. **The proper vessels of the Lord, the human instrumentality that the Lord uses, that will be blessed in this work, must preach from motivations of *good will* and sincerely.** (1Thes.4.4)

the word λόγον of the Lord, returned ὑπέστρεψαν to εἰς Jerusalem, and preached the gospel

εὐηγγελίσαντο, 3p pl, aor 1, ind, mid of εὐαγγελίζω; only place that this form of the verb is used in all of the N.T.

in many villages of the Samaritans.

In conclusion, while the flood-gate of persecution had been opened at the martyrdom of Stephen, the Lord Himself has begun to open the door of the gospel of Jesus Christ to those beyond. By this persecution the saints are rushing into new areas and telling others about Jesus Christ. And what we see here in this text is the origination of the first church recorded in Scripture since Jerusalem. In the next chapter we shall see that there are many churches established. How they were organized we have no information. Do we think that this lays down a pattern for establishing churches? No. Of all of the churches that are organized there are only three that record the manifestation of the Holy Spirit coming upon them. This is significant! This occurrence was upon the church at Jerusalem, the

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church in the city of Samaria, and finally upon the gentiles in Caesarea. Otherwise this does not occur again. What does it take to organize a church? Two to three gathered baptized believers whose goal is to live the Great Commission is that church of Jesus Christ!