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ACTS 2:38 – PART 2

If you did not read my article from yesterday (4-14-21) then you should read it before proceeding with this one today as it sets the necessary background for Acts 2:38. ([Click here](#) to read)

Peter was responding to the question of the crowd in Acts 2:37, ***“What shall we do”*** to be saved? His answer is in Acts 2:38, ***“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”*** This verse has caused controversy and division. It has brought about some misconstrued doctrines found mostly in a very small segment of the multitude of Pentecostals called “Apostolic Pentecostals” or “Oneness Pentecostals” or “Jesus Only” people. They believe they have an exclusive “lock” on truth such that if you do not believe exactly as they do, then you are not saved nor can be saved. What are these beliefs of theirs?

One such doctrine is called the “oneness” doctrine where they believe that “Jesus only” is true God Almighty. They deny the trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. They derive this largely from Peter’s word in Acts 2:38 to baptize in “Jesus” name. They disclaim Jesus’ own words in Matthew 28:19 where He said, ***“Go ye therefore...baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.”***

They make two claims about this verse. (Matt. 28:19). One is that it was not part of the original scripture and that Matthew 18:18-20 was added by “church fathers” later on to support their doctrine of the Godhead (Trinity). Secondly, they show that it says, “the name of” and not “the names of” the three. They say that “Jesus” is the name of the Father, “Jesus” is the name of the Son, and “Jesus” is the name of the Holy Ghost. They could also point to John 10:30 where Jesus said, ***“I and my Father are one,”*** applying a misunderstood interpretation to that.

They also claim that water baptism, as commanded by Peter, is necessary for salvation: no water baptism, no salvation. They even insist that if you were baptized in “the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,” then you are not even saved, and you must be re-baptised in the “name of Jesus” only. They miss the point that water baptism is a public act of confession that you have chosen Jesus as your Savior and symbolically identify with His death and burial (going under the water) and His resurrection (coming up out of the water.) This is only for people who have already been born again, and not the actual act of being born again.

They also believe Peter’s reference in Acts 2:38 to “the gift of the Holy Ghost” referred not to the impartation of the Holy Ghost that is received at salvation. Instead, they believe that this “gift” referred to in Acts 2:38 is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that was received by the 120 at Pentecost when they all began to speak with tongues. Although it is possible that a few of the 3,000 converts on that day might have spoken on tongues, it is unlikely. They were unsaved, and they were “baptized” by the Holy Ghost unto regeneration (salvation). The Apostolic group

firmly believed that all 3,000 unsaved people immediately spoke in tongues as did the 120, instead of receiving the Holy Ghost at salvation making one born again.

Bottom Line: they believe that if [1] you were not baptized in the name of Jesus only, and [2] if you did not speak in tongues, then you are not saved at all. They say that if you believe Romans 10:9-10 that says, ***“That if thou shalt confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and...believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shall be saved,”*** then you are utterly deceived into thinking you are saved. They claim salvation only comes the way they say it does and all other churches are leading their people to hell. This is a common “cult-like” characteristic called “exclusivity.”

But as for me, (II Timothy 1:12) ***“...I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.”***