

Question: "What do Acts 2: 38 and Acts 3: 19 have in common?"

The apostle Peter's statements in Acts 2:38 and 3:19 carry a sense of urgency because they pertain to the salvation of man. His words, spoken on two separate occasions, parallel one another – meaning they emphasize the same basic point of doctrine. They are designed to instruct the lost as to what God requires them to do to be saved. Peter charged his fellow Jews with murdering the Son of God (Acts 2:23, 36). And although they committed the vile deed in ignorance, God still held them accountable for it (Acts 3:17).

Acts 2: 38 – *Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

Acts 3: 19 – *"Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord."*

Today we will carefully examine Acts 2:38; we will consider Acts 3:19 in our next article.

Acts 2:38 is a small but vital part of Peter's presentation of the gospel of Christ. In the verse, he stated that God commands repentance. **Repentance** is from a compound Greek word (metanoeo). "Meta, after, (implying change); noeo, to perceive. Repentance is a turning from sin with a desire to do God's will. It is brought about by godly sorrow, and results in a change of behavior (see 2 Co 7:9, 11; Mt 21:28-29).

The second command of God stated by Peter in Acts 2:38 is that of baptism. "And be baptized..." is in the passive voice indicating baptism is something that was to be administered to them. **Water baptism** is essential to obtaining God's forgiveness (Ro 6:3-5; Co 2:12). Peter said "every one of you." Repentance and baptism are universal and apply to all responsible individuals who hear and believe the gospel (Acts 2:22-36).

"In the name of Jesus Christ..." indicates the authority behind the commands to repent and be baptized. Jesus Christ is the authority behind those commands (Co 3:17). Jesus taught repentance and baptism (Lk 24:47; Mk 16:16). Hence, these requirements are by his authority or in his name.

"For the remission of sins..." This expression states the one purpose of baptism when accompanied by repentance. Jesus shed his blood for the remission of sins (Mt 26:28). Therefore, through water baptism preceded by repentance God grants "the remission of sins."

[Consider carefully the definition and explanation of the word "For (eis)" by recognized authorities: (1) Arndt And Gingrich, – "to denote purpose in order to, to: ...for forgiveness of sins, so that sins might be forgiven Mt 26:28; cf. Mk 1:4; Lk 3:3; Ac 2:38..." (2) Thayer, "...to obtain the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38..." (Lexicon, p. 94).]

"...And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." The gift that the Holy Spirit gives is the second benefit of repentance and baptism. It involves God's promise to Abraham that "in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen 12:3). Paul later wrote, "that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith" (Ga 3: 14). Whether you understand this gift to be the Holy Spirit Himself or eternal salvation, it is a universal gift for all who repent and are baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:39).

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