

# FULTON COUNTY GOSPEL NEWS

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## THE FIRST GOSPEL SERMON Orbie Robbins — Elizabeth, Ark.

The book of Acts, sometimes called the book of conversions, is the only book in all the Bible containing concrete examples as to how people became Christians. Before our Lord ascended to heaven, He gave His apostles the Great Commission. The gospel was to be preached in all the world to every creature, beginning at Jerusalem. Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16; Luke 24:47-48.

The first chapter of Acts contains the record of Jesus' final instructions to His apostles. They were not to leave Jerusalem but wait for the promise of the Father. Acts 1:4-5.

He then was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. They, true to the command, returned to Jerusalem. Thus, Jesus is in heaven. The apostles are in Jerusalem waiting for the signal to begin executing the commission. The second chapter of Acts is the principle basis for this study and contains the first sermon of the commission. In order to get the greatest good out of this study, let us outline the chapter.

I. The time of these happenings. Verse 1 says "and when the day of Pentecost was fully come." Thus, the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ is the day of the occasion of this first gospel sermon.

In fulfillment of the promise to them, the Holy Spirit now came and the apostles began to speak with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance. Acts 2:2-3.

II. The audience, made up of Jews who were devout men out of every nation under heaven.

III. The effect of this strange happening on the audience. Verses 6-13. They were amazed and marvelled and said, "Behold, are not all these which speak Galileans? and how hear

we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born."—"And they were all amazed, and were in doubt saying one to another, what meaneth this? Others mocking said these men are full of new wine."

IV. The preacher: The apostle Peter. Before we refer to the sermon, consider his authority and his qualifications. In Mt. 16, Peter confessed that Christ was the Son of the Living God. Then Jesus in answering him said, "I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shalt be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shalt be loosed in heaven." Furthermore, Jesus in giving the commission, (the record says Mt. 28:18-20) gave it to Peter and the rest of the apostles, promising; Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Surely, then, Peter was not lacking in authority. As to qualifications, he was guided by the Holy Spirit as Jesus had promised. John 14:26; John 16:13; Acts 2:1-4. If any mistakes were made in this sermon under consideration, then they must be charged to the Holy Spirit and not to Peter.

V. The sermon as preached by Peter. The first thing he did was to answer the charges of drunkenness made against them by applying a prophecy of Joel to this very event. Joel 2:28. He then immediately turned to his text; Jesus of Nazareth. He showed them how they had crucified the Son of God. How he was buried, arose again, and had ascended. The climax was, "Therefore, let all the house of Isarel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:22-36.

VI. The effect of the sermon on the audience. Verse 37. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in

their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles. Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They believed now and are deeply disturbed over the sin of this innocent man's blood upon them. Convicted of sin, they simply wanted to know what to do to find forgiveness.

VII. Peter's answer to them. "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 you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call, and with many other words did he testify and exhort saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Acts 2:38-40.

VIII. The result of the sermon. Acts 2:41. About 3000 redeemed. The story of their conversion is complete.

Now, let's review the order of their conversion. First: Peter preached Christ to them. Second: They believed what he preached. Third: As believers in Christ, as God's Son, they asked a question. "What shall we do?" Fourth: In answer to this question that came from sincere hearts that now believe and desire remission of their sins, they are told to **repent and be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ for, or in order to obtain, the pardon of their sins.

Some questions to you! Did Peter give them the right answer? Would you give the same answer today? Was he true to the commission given him? If his answer was correct, then, what is wrong with it now? What is the reason the same thing practiced today will not save us, if it does not?

The only difference between people now and then is faith. When

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Editors: Clovis Ragsdale and  
Boyd E. Morgan

EDITORIAL

An advertisement in the Poplar Bluff, Mo. newspaper advertised that the church of God there was to have a baptismal service. It was to be an old fashioned river baptismal service. I have the clipping. The ad further says, quote, "We have no church membership to offer you. We believe, teach, and practice that a Christian experience makes you a member of the body of Christ, which is the New Testament Church, I Cor. 12:13 also verse 18, Col. 1:18" unquote.

You may well wonder why I would mention such a thing. Well, the thing has set me to wondering too. I know what they mean by 'a Christian experience'. They mean a direct operation from God by the Holy Spirit. Now the ad takes pains to make it plain that the water (river) baptism is not to make church members. I Cor. 12:13 is abused to mislead someone into believing that Holy Spirit baptism makes one a member of the New Testament church. It teaches no such thing. Holy Spirit baptism was never to make church members. But this church that calls themselves the church of God teaches that water baptism does not save. Now since they also teach that water baptism does make one a member of the church, I wonder what they teach water baptism does do. Perhaps one of them will be persuaded by this to write me and give me chapter and verse telling me just what water baptism does do. All I could see that it could do for them would be to provide them entertainment. Why not at all? Why have an old-fashioned

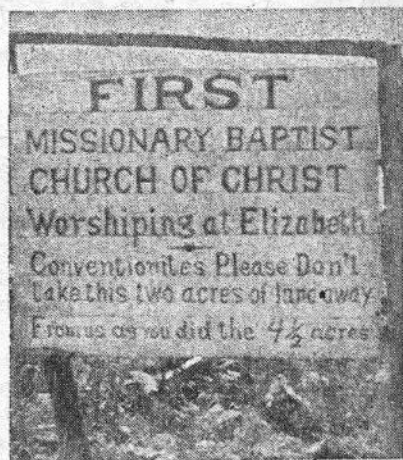
river baptism that is entirely non-essential to getting to heaven?

Now I Cor. 12:13 does not teach that Holy Spirit baptism puts us into the church, all this notwithstanding. It merely teaches that as different spiritual gifts were given during the apostolic period prior to the completion of the New Testament and given to direct Christians in the absence of the 'perfect law', no one should count himself above another since the same Holy Spirit that gave every one of them the gift they received also directed every one to be baptized in water which put them into the church. In fact the revised version renders I Cor. 12:13 "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit." The thought is that though different in race or condition, all had become parts of one body by baptism, and that this was done under the direction of one Spirit. Note the revised rendering, For 'in one Spirit.' Hence, in following the Spirit's teaching Jesus said (John 6:63) "It is the Spirit that quickeneth. The words that I speak unto you they are Spirit and they are life."

Jesus said in Mt. 28:19 "Go ye, teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Who was to baptize? Ye—The apostles then. Today whosoever goes, who teaches. Why baptize? "Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:15-16. How do the saved become church members? "and the Lord added to the church daily such as were being saved." Acts 2:47. The Lord takes care of that matter. The Holy Spirit guides and teaches, but the Lord adds to the church. Better be careful about teaching or preaching or accepting the idea that Holy Spirit baptism adds to the church. The Spirit taught and teaches a sinner to be baptized—not with the Spirit itself—but in water. Then the Spirit teaches that the Lord adds to the church. The Holy Spirit does not teach, "We believe, teach, and

practice that a Christian experience makes you a member of the body of Christ, which is the New Testament church." Somebody and something else teaches that. Chapter and verse please. The Spirit of error teaches it. 'Try the Spirits,' say the book. But the book does teach how to get into Christ. Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3-4. It teaches what kind of baptism saves, too. Teaches it very plainly. I Peter 3:20-21. Tells us about the water so plainly, we have to be misdirected and helped to not see the truth.

—Boyd E. Morgan



The above picture is one taken of a sign prominently displayed in Elizabeth, Ark. We love our friends who are in error and rejoice that they have learned a portion of the truth regarding the term designating our Saviour's church.

We now suggest that they be entirely scriptural as regards this term and remove from this sign the portion of the name that is not found in the Bible.

SURPRISE

When you get to heaven  
You will likely view,  
Many folks whose presence there  
Will be a shock to you.  
But keep very quiet,  
Do not even stare,  
Doubtless there'll be many folks  
Surprised to see you there.  
—Encourage Via Lawrence Light

The best angle from which to approach a problem is the try-angle.

## WE KNOW

Marion Farley — Dallas 17, Texas

To know is to perceive with the mind.

Job in Job 19:25 says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." We too, like Job, can say the same of our Redeemer. We have not seen him in person, but we have heard of him through the Word of God. It is fitting we sing the song containing this vital and soul stirring truth.

Jesus said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free." Jno. 8:32. The truth will still make men free, but they must know it before it will free them from sin. Even though it has been nearly 2,000 years since Christ made this statement, we can know, through His gospel, what to do to be saved from our sins.

A passage that to the Christian is full of comfort, is 1 Cor. 15:58 where Paul says, "Therefore, my beloved brethern, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

Even though in this life we have many undertakings where much time and labor is involved, and which only time will reveal the results, and over which things we have shown much anxiety, the Lord has taught us that if we remain "steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," that we are to know, (or be assured) that our labor is "not in vain," but that we will surely receive the reward promised to the faithful even eternal life.

When the great apostle Paul's life had about come to an end, he was prompted to pen these words, "Wherefore I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles, for the which cause I also suffer these things, nevertheless, I am not ashamed for 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." 2 Tim. 1:11-12. We also have this blessed assurance, that he will keep that that we have "committed unto him."

In the fourth chapter we can see

how this knowledge strengthened him in his few remaining days, verses 6, 7 and 8, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

These assurances can only come to those who know the Lord and are willing to spend and be spent in service to Him from whom all blessings flow.

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

If Jesus stood before you right now and said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved?"

If Jesus Christ grasped your hand and said, "If ye love me ye will keep my commandments?"

If the Christ stood in your presence and said, "He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me?"

These and many other teachings of Christ are no less true today than they were when spoken; and it is as if he were before your very eyes as he speaks through the New Testament

—Selected

## SHORTS

You will find that people:

Who say "I can't learn very much about the Bible," seldom attend classes.

Who say: "I can't understand the Bible," seldom study the Bible.

Who say: "I see nothing in religion," know little or nothing about religion.

Who say; "I can't give," usually have money for other things.

Who criticize their brother or sister for doing are usually doing little themselves.

Who love the Lord, prove their love by their works.

—Bulletin, Midway Church, Mesquite, Texas

## NEWS

Good news from Camp. The inside of the building has been sealed with celotex and a good pine floor has been laid. A Butane system has been installed. All labor was donated. The brethern did the work at night together with some interested folks who were not members. Not as many members turned out as hoped, but those who did turn out stayed with the work until done, even though it meant past midnight a couple of times. The Camp brethern owe a little more than \$300 at this writing. A few contributions are coming in this week. Word came to us that \$37 was received last week, but we have not received word as to who has given it as yet. Bro. Amos McCord has added \$3 to this amount and Bro. and Sister E. M. Harrell \$1. Last month Bro. Henry Harber of Seminole, Okla. sent the church a check for \$50. Faith, labor, and money combined glorifies God.

## INSULT

A lady with one of her ears applied To an open keyhole, heard inside, Two female gossips in converse free The subject engaging them was she. "I think," said one, "my husband too, That she's a prying, spying, eaves-dropping minx!"

As soon as no more of it she could hear,

The lady, indignant, removed her ear.

"I will not stay," she said with a pout,

"To hear my character lied about."

Some folks have more of their think-so's than of the Lord's say-so's in their religion.

Read your Bible every day—and obey it.

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PAPER

Minnie McNairn, \$1; Amos McCord, \$1; Brother (name withheld) \$4; Sister Edgar Frazier, \$1; Millard Hester, Pocahontas, Ark., \$1.

Your Sunday and your weekly self are like halves of a round-trip ticket, not good if detached.

## THE WISDOM OF GOD

vs

## THE INTELLIGENCE OF MAN

Albert L. Porterfield - Poplar Bluff

If we are to know assuredly that there is a way to salvation, to whom must we go? Is it POSSIBLE, that through the years, MAN has become so intelligent as to provide a way to gain eternal life without the guidance of the One who made him? Giving all due respect and just consideration to the ever growing intelligence of man, I have YET to see ONE who can match the performance of God in creating the world — of CHRIST healing the sick, the blind, the lame! Men work great wonders through new discoveries of drugs, medicines, etc., toward prolonging human lives. THIS requires TIME — God's way was INSTANTANEOUS at the spoken word or manifestation of faith NO MAN has ever accomplished THAT FEAT nor will he ever!

Yet there are those who by their very acts and teachings, would place their own intellectual capacities above the CREATOR of us all! Surely, A God wise enough to place in order all the wonderful, indescribable handiworks of nature, had also intelligence enough to draft laws, rules and regulations whereby His creations must be governed.

Supposedly wise men, through the introductions of sundry and varied doctrines and notions toward what one must do to "be saved," have given us NOTHING but CHAOTIC confusion plus hundreds of divided denominations.

God's plea is for unity. We can have it ONLY through the ACCEPTANCE of His divine COMMANDS as HE has given them and without alterations!

### "FOR THIS WE PLEAD"

Lowell Blasingame — Grenada, Miss.

Our plea is for the sound speech of the New Testament. Tit. 2:8. Paul admonished two young preachers to use sound doctrine and to preach the word. Tit. 2:1; Tim. 4:2. Peter commands us to speak as the oracles

of God speak. I Pet. 4:11.

Much of the sound speech of the New Testament has been corrupted. We often hear the expressions; 'my', 'your' or 'our church'. The church belongs to Christ, Mt. 16:18, not to us. We pervert the sound speech of the Word when we leave the impression that it is ours. Another corruption of the oracles of God is the expression 'join the church'. The Lord adds the saved, Acts 2:47, to the church. Those who preached the gospel were called ministers or evangelists, I Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 4:5, but never were they called 'Reverend', 'Father', 'Doctor', or the 'pastor' of the church. Such expressions are corruptions of the sound speech of the Bible. Disciples were taught to do religion, Jas. 1:27, but no inspired man ever spoke of 'getting religion'. The first day of the week was a day of worship, Acts 20:7, and was called the Lord's day, Rev. 1:10, but never was it called 'the Christian Sabbath.'

We plead for men to cease to pervert the way of the Lord and return with us to the sound doctrine of the New Testament. Will you examine our plea?

## The First Gospel Sermon

Continued from page 1

Peter told those people what to do, they did it. No arguing about baptism being non-essential. They that gladly received his word were baptized. Will you?

### YOUTH AND CHRISTIANITY

By Clovis Ragsdale

Although young people seldom realize it, the habits and attitudes of our early years generally form our character for the remainder of our lives. This is why youth needs to think seriously about God and His teachings. Studying the Bible is a habit that we should form very early in life. If we form a routine in our lives which includes time for study and meditation on spiritual

matters, the chances are good that we will live close to God all the years of our lives. A youth spent in sin and with an indifferent attitude toward religion makes it harder in later years, to change to serving the Lord. Very young people who attend worship services every Sunday, and who are serious in their intentions, ever become worldly or weak in later years. Youth needs to develop a strong opposition to the sins which are most tempting, such as jealousy, envy, fornication, revelry, etc. The attitude we form early in life will determine if we are able to say no to these many temptations.

Our attitude toward others is very important in Christian living, too. Jesus Christ introduced a new rule to the world. In His advice to a rich young ruler in Matt. 19:19 He stated "Honor thy father and mother and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." In the sermon on the Mount Christ said "ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy, but I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."

We need to train ourselves to love all mankind. Love is the most important single thing in living for God. Paul stated in his letter to the church at Corinth, 'but now abideth faith, hope, and love, these three, but the greatest of these is love. I Cor. 13:13.

The happiest people in the world are those who heed the advice of Jesus and give of their time to helping others. All of us have experienced in small ways the feelings we get when we help some one. The joy we receive from helping others is one of the finer things of life. Thus we realize what Jesus meant when he said it is more blessed to give than to receive. Developing the proper love for all will be easier if we begin early in life.