

## No Short-Cuts To Salvation – Part 2

By Rico Brown

Continuing our discussion on ‘short-cuts,’ remember Jesus words in John 8:24. According to John 3:16 action is required on our part. We know those on Pentecost were saved by faith, for Peter had told them to “know assuredly” that Jesus was the promised “Christ” or “Messiah.”

Christ was preached publicly, setting Him forth as the risen Lord and Savior. That gospel gives the terms for all to obey. And those who “received the word were baptized” and thus saved (Acts 2:41). Paul wrote of his joy in Romans 1:16. The apostle Paul assured the saints that it is the gospel “by which ye are saved” (1 Corinthians 15:2). And James wrote, “Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:21).

Notice that the people on Pentecost asked, “What shall we do?” (Acts 2:37) They recognized that there was something for them to do in order to be saved. If you continue to read in Acts 2, you find that Peter told them: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you” (Acts 2:38). Man cannot be saved by works of merit or works of the law, but we must be saved by works of obedience. As it is said of Jesus, “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered” (Hebrews 5:8). And James wrote of works of obedience, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?...Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone...Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” (James 2:14, 17, 24). Surely no man is above his Lord Jesus Christ, who said, “I must work the works of him that sent me” (John 9:4).

After the apostle Peter had told those people on Pentecost what to do, only those who obeyed were saved. Those who refused to obey did not receive remission of sins. God has always demanded obedience as seen in 1 Samuel 15:22. When the apostle Paul wrote of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, he gave us a very vivid picture in Romans 6:3-4. We cannot obey the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but can obey the FORM of that teaching as recorded in Romans 6:16-18.

Those on Pentecost were told, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). No arguments. They were told what to do, and they did it. It was and still is that simple. Remember that Jesus said, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16:16) Peter wrote of the salvation of Noah in the ark, “The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 3:21).

Those people who became Christians 2000 years ago knew the place and importance of baptism. When the Lord sent Ananias to Saul, he told him what to do. (Acts 22:16) Were those on Pentecost saved by baptism? Yes! Were they saved by baptism only? Of course not! No more than they were saved by faith only, or by grace only. God saved them from their sins by His grace which was extended to them through the gospel, and their response to His command to be baptized was part of that “salvation by grace through faith.”