



The Acts of the Apostles

The Journey – 2020

Jim Hoffman

The Acts of the Apostles

- Acts 2:23 But God knew what would happen, and his *prearranged* plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him. NLT
- “Prearranged” – what does that mean and what else has God prearranged?
- Predestination and election are both taught in the bible – there is no getting around it.

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- So how does this mesh with what we call “free will”?
- When one is sovereign, omniscient, and allows mortals to make decisions, that one can include in his plans all of the decisions that we will make.
- It is his will that we make decisions and because he allows for that, and knows our decisions in advance, he can roll all of those variables into his plans.

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- On the BIG question of election to salvation we can rest in this – **“no one who wants to be saved will ever be lost”!**
- No one will be in hell saying, “but you don’t understand, I really wanted to be saved, you must have misunderstood me.”
- They might have regrets about rejecting Jesus, but they did not want to be saved in their lifetimes.

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- I am taking my kids to Disney World – I am driving, and I want them to see other things on the way of their choosing.
- Before we go, son #1 tells me he wants to stop in Nashville and son #2 wants to see Myrtle Beach.
- We are going to Disney World, we will get there, but when I take my sons decisions into account, I will be driving an extra 400 miles – no problem, their choices are added to my route and are my will! 😊

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- “So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!”

Messiah has a name – and his name is Jesus!

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- Throughout the O.T. God promised the one who would crush the head of the serpent – He promised it, and promised it, and kept adding clarity to his promise.
- The O.T. saints were saved by believing in One whose name they did not even know – now, Peter proclaims that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah.
- And his words “**pierced their hearts**”. (Acts 2:37)

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- Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. 13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable. NLT
- When the word of God is proclaimed, it (the word) is used by the Holy Spirit to pierce through all the barriers to the heart of men.

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- In all that we do as a church one of our aims is to be the proclamation of the Word of God.
- Rom 1:16 For I am not ashamed of this Good News about Christ. It is the power of God at work, saving everyone who believes— NLT
- Rom 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. NKJV

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“Adjust your doctrine - or just minimize doctrine - to attract the world, and in the very process of attracting them, we lose the radical truth that alone can set them free.”

John Piper

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- Peter's call to the crowds – “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”.
- The baptism here can only be water baptism – We do not receive the gift of the Holy Spirit through “the baptism in the Holy Spirit”, but by faith in Jesus Christ.
- “Be baptized” implies something we do, the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not something we do, it is received, not done.

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- Peter's call to the crowds – “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”.

- Repent
- Turn to God
- Be Baptized in Jesus' Name



Redundant?

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So why do suppose Peter added, “Be Baptized in Jesus’ Name” as a part of his call to believe on Christ?

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Luke 18:22 When Jesus heard this, He said to him, “One thing you still lack; sell all that you possess and distribute it to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

- Perhaps the reason Peter added “be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ” was to add weight and openness to their commitment to Christ.
- Water baptism in Jesus’ name would be no small thing in 1st century Palestine and shouldn’t be today either.

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- When we come to Christ **we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** (gift, dōrea = free gift, a redundant idea)
- No longer will mankind go to the temple to be near God, but now (in the new covenant) every Christian **is** the temple of God.
- Every Christian is given the **Holy Spirit**, and through Him we are given **spiritual gifts**, and **power for ministry.** (1st Cor 12 and Eph 1:18)

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- Having received the Spirit of God we become responsible to cooperate with Him. (He has expectations of us)
- 2nd Timothy 2:20 In a wealthy home some utensils are made of gold and silver, and some are made of wood and clay. The expensive utensils are used for special occasions, and the cheap ones are for everyday use. 21 **If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work. NLT**

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- Acts 2:41 Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.
- The church is born on this particular Pentecost day – we are an entity of almost unbelievable magnitude and power.
- Jesus said told his disciples he was going to build something so powerful that hell itself would wilt as it advances.

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- Matt 16:13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” 14 So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17 Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 **And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. NKJV**

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- Acts 2:42 **All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching**, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. NLT
- This is the mark of an Apostolic Church – that we follow the teachings of the Apostles.
- We, the Assemblies of God, are apostolic in our teaching as all churches should be.

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Within the Assemblies of God, persons are not recognized by the title of apostle or prophet. However, many within the church exercise the ministry function of apostles and prophets.

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- Acts 2:43 A deep sense of awe came over them all, and **the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders.** 44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. NLT
- Just as God authenticated Jesus as the Son of God, so now He will move to authenticate the apostles as his spokesmen with miracles, signs, and wonders.
- The authenticating miracles will continue throughout the new testament but are mentioned less frequently as time passes.

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- Acts 2:45 They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. NLT
- So how do we explain this communal living? Is that the model for the church today?
- They were willing to sell their possessions and give the money away because Jesus had just told them a few weeks ago that he was coming back for them!

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- Some have used this early church model of sharing the resources they had with each other to claim that the bible advocates “socialism” and “communism”.
- Please note the believers in Acts 2 were sharing their wealth voluntary – they were not conscripted by the government to do so.
- The bible teaches that believers should be generous with our resources – voluntarily.

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- Acts 2:46 **They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals** with great joy and generosity— 47 all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved. NLT
- Notice that the first Christians continued to go to the temple each day just as they had for years prior to their conversion. I wonder why?

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- So what does it say to us that they kept going to the old covenant temple?
- I think it says that old habits and practices die slowly – there was nothing sinful about going to the temple as a Christian.
- What we could say however is that was unnecessary and mostly irrelevant – *they were the temple of God!*

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- As we will see from Paul's ministry the Temple became a place for evangelism.
- That is like saying CLA is now a destination site for evangelism – meaning we have lost our way.
- So going to the temple became both a ministry and an offense.

Questions