
BIBLE TALK

The question this week is: **What was the assignment of the apostles?**

I invite your attention to:

Acts 1:1-3

¹ The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,
² until the day in which **He** was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit **had given commandments to the apostles** whom He had chosen,
³ to whom He also presented Himself alive **after His suffering** by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Verse 2 of of this passage tells us that before Jesus went back into heaven He "*gave commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen.*" What were those commandments? Furthermore, it is specifically stated that the commandments were given "*after His suffering*" – meaning after the Lord's death.

Before the His death the Lord had given many commandments to many different people.

- He gave a commandment to Noah to build an ark (Gen 6).
- He gave a commandment to offer animal sacrifices (Lev 1).
- He gave a commandment to worship in the city of Jerusalem (Dt 12).

When the Lord gave new commandments, these new commandments superseded any old commandments that were previously given.

Luke 22:35-36

³⁵ And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, knapsack, and sandals, did you lack anything?" So they said, "Nothing."

³⁶ Then He said to them, "**But now**, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

Previously the Lord told the apostles to go forth preaching with no money bag. "But now" things are different. Now the Lord is giving a new command which supercedes any old command.

Listen to what Jesus commanded these apostles just before He ascended into heaven:

Matthew 28:19-20

¹⁹ "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

²⁰ "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Here is what Jesus commanded those apostles to do. They were to go forth into all the nations of all the world and make disciples. How were they to make disciples?

- By baptizing (immersing) people in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and then,
- They were to teach these people to "*observe all things which Jesus commanded.*"

Mark 16:15-16

¹⁵ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

¹⁶ "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

In this account we see essentially the very same instructions. Jesus told the apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel. When they preached the gospel they were required to preach that only those who believe and are baptized will be saved.

Luke 24:46-47

⁴⁶ Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

⁴⁷ "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

According to this, Jesus told these apostles to to preach "repentance and remission of sins."

Now, the entire point of the Book of Acts is showing us that the apostles went forth and did exactly what Jesus commanded them. That's why the book is entitled "*The Acts of the Apostles.*" In other words, the Book of Acts tells us the actions of the apostles.

- The Book tells that the apostles went into all the nations of the world preaching.
- It tells that when they preached they taught men and women must believe in Jesus, repent of their sins, and be baptized in order to be saved.
- It tells that after people became disciples by being baptized, they were then obligated to keep all the commandments which the Lord Jesus gave.

In Acts 2 the Jews on Pentecost were told to:

Acts 2:38

³⁸ ... "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins ...

In Acts 8 the Samaritans heard Philip preach and the record says:

Acts 8:12

¹² ... both men and women were baptized.

Later in this same chapter an Ethiopian eunuch was converted:

Acts 8:36-38

³⁶ Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"

³⁷ Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

³⁸ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

Throughout the Book of Acts this same scenario repeats itself.

- In Acts 10 the gentiles were commanded to be baptized.
- In Acts 16 people in the city of Philippi were required to be baptized.
- In Acts 18 people in the city of Corinth were required to be baptized.
- In Acts 19 people in the city of Ephesus were required to be baptized.

The point is: The apostles received a command from the Lord Jesus to go preach to all the nations of the world. They were supposed to preach that people should believe in Jesus, repent of their sins, and be baptized by immersion for the remission of sins. After these people were baptized they were to be taught and encouraged to obey all the commandments of Jesus. This is exactly what we see happening throughout the Book of Acts! This is a book showing us that the apostles obeyed the Lord and did exactly what He commanded them to do.

If someone should argue that baptism is not necessary for salvation because the "thief on the cross" was not required to be baptized, just remember that Jesus gave commandments to His disciples AFTER His death (Acts 1:1-3). The commandments He gave now required something which had not been previously commanded. In order to be saved NOW, baptism in water for the remission of sins is required. There is no such thing as an unbaptized saved person after the death of Jesus.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. We invite you to visit our website www.WillOfTheLord.com. There you may download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on **Bible Talk**.