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### The Great Salvation (Revised with Supplements)

A. C. Huff

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# The Great Salvation

(Revised with Supplement)

*by*

**A. C. Huff**

**1002 SOUTH 39TH**

*Temple, Texas*



**P R I C E S :**

**Single copy, 25c; 5 for \$1.00**

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1880

# The Great Salvation

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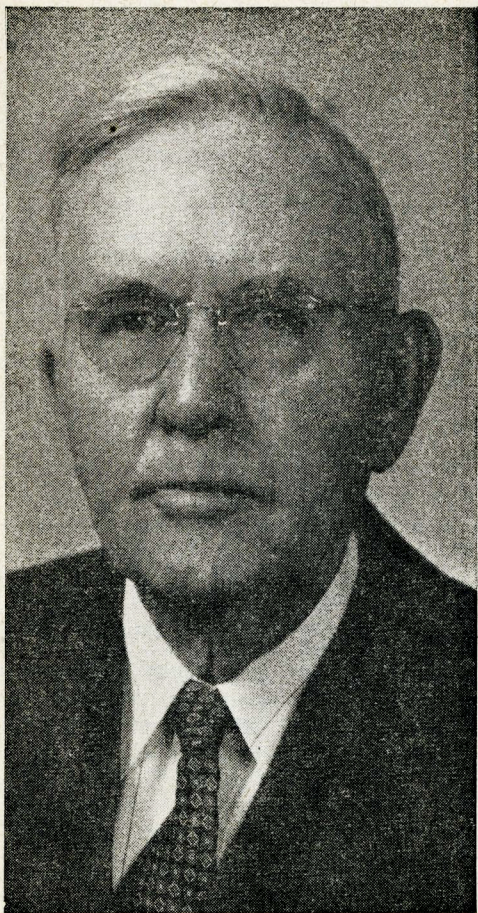
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**DEDICATED**

to my children who are faithful to the  
Lord and to me.



A . C . H U F F

## P R E F A C E

All want to be saved. None of us want to be lost.

There are only two places for us to go when we leave this world—heaven or hell. All who keep the commandments of God will go to heaven. All who do not keep the commandments of God are bound for hell.

The New Testament teaches us what to do to get to heaven.

This booklet is written to help those who want to be saved.

Read it and then pass it on to another poor sinner with the request that he do likewise. If one soul is thus saved I will be satisfied.

—THE AUTHOR.



This booklet has been written for the benefit of both saint and sinner. I hope it will be placed in the hands of many who will learn the truth and obey it and be saved. To induce those who read it to help me to give it a wide circulation, I am pricing it by the hundred so as to reach as many as possible. One copy, 25 cents; five for \$1.00; 100 for ~~\$5.00~~. You can buy them by the hundred and sell them and make enough to pay for your trouble. This would be a good proposition for a boy or girl who wishes to help in the good work and at the same time make some spending money.

## INTRODUCTION

I have no apology to offer for writing this small volume. I know that the world is full of books, and I am thankful for them; but perhaps some lost soul may read my book that would never read the other books. If just one should learn and obey the truth as the result of this book, I will be satisfied and well paid for all the time and expense of printing it. Otherwise this book would never have been written.

This book has been written for the purpose of making the plan of salvation plain and to let the people know our teaching concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the work of the Holy Spirit in the conviction and conversion of sinners, and the New Birth.

## THE GREAT SALVATION

Salvation implies danger. The Israelites were saved from Egyptian bondage when they passed through the Red Sea. They were saved from starvation in the wilderness by the manna and the quail that God gave them. But the greatest of all is salvation from sin and hell through Christ.

"Therefore we should give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which, at the first, began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard them; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will." Heb. 2:1-4.

But what is the great salvation spoken of here? It is the salvation that Jesus began to tell about after the baptism which John preached. Jesus spent three years and a half promulgating the wonderful lessons that we have recorded in the first four books of the New Testament, and these principles were confirmed to us by his apostles, whom he chose and to whom he gave the keys of the kingdom, and told that whatsoever they bound on earth would be bound in heaven; and whatsoever they loosed on earth would be loosed in heaven. Before he left them to go back to heaven, from whence he came,



he told them that he would send them another Comforter, whom the world cannot receive, who would bring all things to their remembrance, and teach them all that he had said to them. "If I go not away the Comforter will not come unto; but, if I go away, I will send him unto you: and when he is come, he will reprove (convict) the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me, of righteousness because I go to my Father, of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged. I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." John 14:15; V 26; 15-26; 16:7-14. This shows that Jesus wanted to make it sure that no mistake was made in executing his will.

He did not execute his will himself, but left that in the hands of his apostles to do after his death. He could not execute his will consistent with the law of a will. "A testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength as long as the testator liveth." Heb. 9:15. So we must come this side of the cross to learn what to do to be saved. What Jesus said to his apostles concerning the keys of the kingdom and Comforter was only a short time before his death. After his death and his resurrection, he said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth is given unto me. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in (into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them

to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Mat. 28:19-20. According to Mark 16:15-16, he said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." According to Luke, he said, "Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Lu. 24:46-47. These words are all said concerning the last words that Jesus spoke to his apostles just before he ascended back to heaven. No two of them are just alike, yet none of them are contradictory of each other. Matthew mentions teaching and baptizing, Mark mentions preaching, believing, and baptism; Luke mentions preaching and repentance and remission of sins. The way to get all that Jesus said is to accept all that all of them said. Let us arrange them as follows:

Mat. 28:19—Teaching; x; x; Baptism.

Mar. 16:15, 16—Preaching; Faith; x; Baptism; Salvation.

Luke 24:46-48 — Preaching; x; Repentance; x.

Thus we have preaching, faith, repentance, baptism, and remission of sins. (x used to mean implied in this diagram.)

It has been argued that as Luke says nothing about baptism, therefore, baptism is not for the remission of sins. According to such logic (?), faith has nothing to do with salvation, for Matthew says nothing about

faith, neither does Mark say anything about repentance. By such false, unreasoning logic, the whole plan of salvation is eliminated, hence there is no salvation. But no one who believes the Bible is willing to accept such a conclusion; but we all believe that repentance and faith are essential to salvation, though a great many say that baptism is non-essential. I wonder how any one can believe that the first two are essential to salvation, and discard the third—baptism. The Bible teaches that baptism is essential as plain as it teaches that faith and repentance are essential. Who can give a logical reason for such teaching?

I think I know why they reject the doctrine of baptism for remission of sins: they have accepted the doctrine of justification by faith only; and if they accept the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins, they must discard the doctrine of justification by faith only.

But does the Bible teach the doctrine of justification by faith only? I have not found it in the Bible, but plenty of it in the doctrines and commandments of men. James plainly says that we are not saved by faith only. Jas. 2:24 says, "Ye see how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only." But the Bible plainly says, "baptism doth also now save us." I Peter 3:21. Why does man deny what is taught in the Bible and believe that which is not taught? Let me admonish you, dear friend, to reject what the Bible does not teach and receive what the Bible teaches. There is nothing to



be gained by following the doctrines of men, but all is loss.

Jesus said of the Jews, who were teaching and practicing the doctrines of men, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Vain means useless. If you cannot find what you teach and practice in the Bible, be sure it is the doctrines of men.

It is also contended that as Jesus did not say, "is not baptized," therefore, baptism has nothing to do with our salvation. It is strange that one who claims to believe the Bible would make such an argument. They seem not to see that they are trying to prove that Jesus did not tell the truth when he said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Surely Jesus would not make such a statement and then in the same breath say that he did not mean what he said. People who make such arguments against the plain truth are hard pressed. Why not just come out with the truth about it, and say that you do not believe the Bible?

After all the efforts of men to destroy the plain truth, Mark 16:16 still reads, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." It is true; and those who deny it will have to face it at the judgment. It is not necessary for Jesus to say, "Is not baptized." The unbeliever cannot be baptized. Unbelief alone condemns him. "He that believeth not is condemned already." John 3:18.

Now let us turn to the work of the apostles and see how they carried out

these orders. Keep in mind that they were promised the Holy Spirit to guide them, which assures us that what they taught and practiced is infallibly safe. Also, as they were given the keys of the kingdom, it is evident that the entrance into the kingdom was not open when Jesus said, "I will give unto you the keys." If it had been open, they would not have needed the keys.

Notwithstanding Jesus had given the apostles the commission to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," he said, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49. Notice that he said, "Beginning at Jerusalem." So the preaching of repentance and remission of sins was to begin at Jerusalem. "Remission of sins IN THE NAME OF JESUS" is the thing emphasized in this statement. Repentance had been preached before that, but not IN THE NAME OF JESUS. When Peter said in Acts 2:38, "repent and be baptized IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST for the remission of your sins," was the first time that any one was ever commanded to do anything in the name of Jesus Christ. Previous to that time, they had asked nothing in the name of Jesus.

They also were told to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. When did they receive this power? "But ye shall receive power after, or "when" (the R.V.), the Holy Spirit is come upon you." Acts 1:8. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were



all of one accord in one place; and suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." So the promise that "you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit shall come upon you" was fulfilled when they received the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." "As the Spirit gave them utterance" shows that they were not speaking of themselves, but the Spirit spoke in them, as Jesus said in Mat. 10-19: "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that shall speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

The multitude was not present when the Holy Spirit came on the apostles; but "When this was noised abroad, the multitude came together." The Holy Spirit did not come direct from heaven and convict and convert those sinners, but it filled the apostles and they spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. This gives no support to the doctrine that in conversion, the Holy Spirit acts on the sinner direct from heaven. The apostles "preached the gospel with the

Holy Spirit sent down from heaven." I Peter 1:12.

This assures us that what the apostles preached and practiced is true. The sermon: Peter stood up with the eleven and explained that this miraculous outpouring of the Holy Spirit from heaven was that Joel had prophesied in Joel 2:28, and they proceeded to preach Christ and him crucified, and in closing his sermon he said, "therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom you have crucified both Lord and Christ." Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" I pause here to note that it was what they heard that pricked them to the heart, not the direct operation of the Spirit on their hearts. What they heard was the words spoken in the apostles—That Christ came into the world and did good among the people; but was crucified by their wicked hands, and was risen from the dead and was seated at the Father's right hand and was made both Lord and Christ. Do not forget that it was the words that they heard that convinced them that they were guilty of crucifying the Son of God, whom they had long looked for to redeem Israel. No wonder they said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They did not ask what they must do to be saved. Perhaps their distress was too great to think of being saved — (was there anything that they could do about it?) They were not only guilty of murder, but they

had killed their only hope of the redemption of Israel. What could they do? No wonder they received the word gladly, when Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins." Acts 2:37, 38. Peter did not say, "All you need to do is pray God and he will forgive you." They already believed when they said, "What shall we do?" So Peter did not need to tell what they had already done. He told them what they had not done. They had not repented, therefore he told them to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins.

We learned from the commission that the gospel was to be preached, men must believe and, repent and be baptized to be saved. So we find that the apostles understood, and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they carried out the commission just as Jesus commanded them.

## BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

As there are so many people who are confused over the baptism of the Holy Spirit, I think it not out of place to pause here and try to clear up some misunderstanding on this subject. Many good, honest and sincere people have been led to believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is all they need to be saved. That naturally interferes with the plan of salvation taught in the Bible. Like many other doctrines not found in the Bible, it stands in the way of thousands of people obeying the gospel. Therefore, I beg your indulgence for a



slight digression from the plan of salvation while we study this question for the benefit of those who love the Truth. Truth is all any one should want on any subject for Jesus said to the Jews, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." Truth is all I want on all these important questions. I am always glad to find that I am wrong; not that I am glad I am wrong, but I am glad to find it out, so I can correct it. It would be too bad to go before the judgment seat of Christ with a false doctrine that would send souls to hell.

We do not read anything about the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament except in prophecy. Joel 2:28. The first mention of it is found in Mat 3:11. In that verse John the Baptist said, "I indeed baptize you with water; but he that cometh after me, whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose, he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire." Some teach that the baptism of fire is associated with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This is a mistake, and while we are on this I wish to observe that John was speaking to a mixed multitude who were attending his baptism. That does not signify that he baptized all who came to his baptism. I have often had great crowds at my baptisms but I baptized only those who presented themselves with proper credentials: Believers in Christ. John had some in his audience that did not bring the proper evidence of repentance, so he rebuked them. He said to them, "Bring forth therefore, fruits meet for repentance: and

think not to say within yourselves we have Abraham to our Father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. (Please notice the connection) "I indeed baptize you (speaking to the same people) in water but he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." I think this ought to be enough to convince the most skeptical that the baptism of fire refers to the final doom of the wicked. So I let it suffice. Before introducing any more evidence, I will observe that Christ is the administrator of the Holy Spirit baptism. Just before Jesus ascended back to heaven, he said to his apostles, "John truly baptized in water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence." Acts 1:5. Notice that Jesus said nothing about his apostles being baptized in fire. This is significant. He did not tell them to pray for it. If they prayed for it there is no record of it. Now turn to the second chapter of Acts with me, please. "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they (the apostles) were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of



fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance." No doubt this is the baptism of the Holy Spirit mentioned by John and referred to by Christ in the first chapter and the fifth verse. I have met many people who claimed that they had been baptized with the Holy Spirit; but I have never met one who would even claim they received it as it is recorded here. Of course if they did not receive it as recorded here, they just did not receive it at all.

The apostles were the ones who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They were the only ones mentioned by the Savior. Matthias was elected to take the place of Judas, who by transgression fell, and was numbered with the eleven apostles. "They and them," pronouns, and apostles is the antecedent of "they," and the fact that the apostles were the only ones who spoke with tongues and the only ones on whom appeared cloven tongues as of fire, leaves all others out of the picture. Also Peter stood up with the eleven, not the one hundred and twenty. This is proof that the one hundred and twenty were not baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Some are led to believe that pouring is baptism, as Joel said, "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh." It was not the pouring of the Spirit that is referred to, but the overwhelming power of the Spirit, that constitutes the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

At the house of Cornelius is another in-

stance of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on them which heard the word. Can any man forbid water that these, should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" Acts 10. But some say that is not proof that they were baptized in the Holy Spirit.

All right, I will try it again. "While Peter yet spake those words, the Holy Spirit fell on them which heard the word." Acts 10:44. Then remembered I the word of the Lord how that he said, "John indeed baptized with (in) water, but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit." Acts 11. This proves that the Gentiles received the baptism of the Holy Spirit as well as the apostles did on Pentecost. Acts 11:16.

## FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Some have been confused over the statement that in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, it is said they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. They decide that every one who was filled with the Holy Spirit was baptized in the Holy Spirit. This surely does not necessarily follow. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit when Mary saluted her. Luke 1:41. Zacharias was also filled with the Holy Spirit. Luke 1:67. There is nothing said about them being baptized with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was in the prophets of old (Neh. 9:31) and nothing was ever said about them being baptized with the Holy Spirit. Why should John say, "He shall baptize you with the

Holy Spirit" if it had been a common occurrence all through the ages? Why did Jesus say, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence," if it was already a common thing and of common knowledge? If it had been occurring all along, why did John say, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit." Jesus said, "He that believeth on me, as the scriptures have said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (This spake he of the Spirit which had not been given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" This no doubt referred to the baptism of the Holy Spirit that was not yet given, while it is plain that the Holy Spirit spoke in the prophets of old, for they spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, yet the Spirit was to come in a way that it had never been manifest before, and for a different purpose: The phenomenon as it was displayed on Pentecost and at the house of Cornelius. It was given to the apostles to qualify them for the work that they were called to do. It was given to the Gentiles to show that God is no respecter of persons. That was the last mention of it.

It, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, had fulfilled its mission and passed away.

### **THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The gift of the Spirit is the Spirit given. There are three distinct gifts of the Spirit mentioned in the scriptures: The baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit given through laying on of the apostles' hands, and the Spirit received through hearing the Word.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit was so



called because it overwhelmed the one who received it and took control of his entire being accompanied by the cloven tongues like as of fire and, they spoke with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. This was a wonderful phenomenon.

If you will read the nineteenth chapter of Exodus, you will see that the giving of the law by Moses was accompanied by wonderful displays of God's power and presence. It was so great that the Children of Israel could not stand to behold the sight.

When the tabernacle was set up, the cloud came down and covered it and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. Ex. 40:34. These were both very important events that are recorded in Jewish history, which served to make a strong impression on the minds of God's chosen people that has never been forgotten. So was the day of Pentecost a very notable day of the Lord, Acts 2:20, and the events of that day will never be erased from the pages of history. It was the birthday of the Church of Christ. The law of Christ was given on that day, and three thousand souls were saved. It was the beginning of the Christian dispensation—the Spirit Age, that has been the greatest dispensation of God's dealing with man that the world has ever known, or ever will know. The Holy Spirit coming suddenly as a strong and mighty wind, and the cloven tongues were evidence of God's presence and power. This had never been seen before but will always be remembered.

The bringing in of the Gentiles was also a very important event, which was marked

by the same phenomenon that occurred on Pentecost. These scenes will likely never be seen any more.

The Spirit given through laying on of the apostles' hands was called the gift of the Holy Spirit, but was given for a different purpose. It was given to confirm the Word that they were preaching. Mar. 16:20. They served as credentials to show the people that God had sent them, as it was in the case of Moses in the land of Egypt.

Those gifts were conferred by the laying on of the apostles' hands. That is why we do not have any miracles today.

But that does not mean that we do not have the Spirit today. We still have the Spirit that is received through the word of God: by the hearing of faith. In Gal. 3:2, Paul says, "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" Jesus says, "The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life." John 6:63. Words are vehicles of thought. They are the means of conveying the Spirit into our hearts. This is demonstrated in the conversion of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost. The apostles spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance, and when they heard, they were pricked in their hearts. Acts 2:36. Thus they received the Spirit through hearing the word. Gal. 3:2.

God has always used words to convey his messages to man. He uses man to speak to man, to teach him what to do, and to rebuke him when he goes wrong. When he did not have a man present to rebuke



Balaam, he rebuked him by the mouth of Balaam's ass. He also spoke to man by angels, but when he issued his laws to man, we note that he did not use angels to speak directly to them, but in the case of the giving of the law by Moses, instead of the angels speaking to the people, he had the angels to give the law to Moses, as his mediator, and by Moses the law was delivered to the people. When Christ wanted man to hear his message of salvation through Christ, He chose man instead of angels, not even letting the Holy Spirit deliver the message direct. But unto man was committed the word of reconciliation. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." II Cor. 4:7.

All things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to-wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassador for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. II Cor. 5:18-20. Even when Saul of Tarsus asked Jesus, "What wilt thou have me to do?" he told him to arise and go into the city and it would be told him what he must do. Acts 9. Ananias was sent to tell him what he must do. He told him to arise and be baptized.

We see from all this that God used words—his words that are Spirit and truth, to tell man what to do to be saved. Why does

man ask for any more? To ask for more is plain that he is not satisfied with God's plan of salvation. That great man, Moses, was not satisfied with God's way, and, instead of speaking to the rock, as God told him to do, he smote it three times and lost Canaan. God called them rebels. We had better be very careful, lest we be called rebels.

## BORN AGAIN

Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, a Pharisee, a grown man, was told that he must be born again to see the kingdom of God.

"There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; the same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him. Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." John 3:2. As to why he came by night, no man knows, so we must not try to find out for it is not revealed. But a study of this man may help us in the study of our subject.

The Pharisees thought they were the people—not like other people. They did not think they needed to repent. They went to John's baptism, thinking that they, being Abraham's seed, did not need to repent; but John knowing their hearts said, "Think not to say within yourselves we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." Very likely Nicodemus had the same idea in his mind when he went to

see the Savior. Jesus did not need to wait for him to ask him any questions; for he knew what was in man, hence he said to him, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This made it plain that Nicodemus being a Jew and a Pharisee would not give him any right to anything in the kingdom of God. This stripped him of all his expectations. Nicodemus said, "How can a man enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?" But Jesus promptly answered, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Evidently Jesus said this to explain what he said, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," in the third verse.

Nicodemus' question shows that he thought Jesus was speaking of the natural or the fleshly birth. He knew he had been born of the flesh, but what confused him was, how could a man enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born. So Jesus informed him, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." In other words, the flesh is born of the flesh, and the Spirit is born of the Spirit. Born of the Spirit is "born again."

But to eliminate baptism from the new birth, it has been said that one is born of water when he is born of his mother, the natural birth of the flesh. But Jesus does not associate born of water with the natural birth. He associates born of water with the new birth, born again, born of water and



of the Spirit. Not born of water, the first birth and born of the Spirit, second birth.

When one is born into this world he has father and mother, not just mother. When one is born again he must have father and mother or the analogy is marred. Yes, when one is born again he is begotten by the Spirit through the Word, and buried with Christ in baptism and emerges from the water to walk in newness of life.

But as a further answer to the theory that man is born of water in the natural birth, there is not a statement in the Word of God that refers to the natural birth, that ever called it a birth of water. Job says, "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble." Job 14:1. Jesus said of John the Baptist, "Verily, verily I say unto you that among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist." There is no place referring to the natural birth that ever said "born of water." This ought to satisfy all lovers of truth that "born of water does not refer to the natural birth.

But to be sure that it is settled, I call attention to the fact that Jesus said to Nicodemus, a grown man, "Ye must be born again."

But there is another theory, of late, that one is born of water in the natural birth, and born of the Spirit when he receives Holy Spirit baptism. That has been answered in the above, too. But I will observe that if that be true then no one has ever been born again except the apostles and the household of Cornelius.

Others teach that, in being born again, the Holy Spirit comes into the sinner's heart direct from heaven and regenerates and thus makes him a new creature, a child of God. We must not lose sight of the fact that in a birth there must be a father and mother. If one is born again by a direct operation of the Spirit without baptism, there would be no mother. But the birth calls for a mother. To prove that theory they quote "the wind bloweth where it listeth (pleases) and thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell from whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." It is often quoted, "so is every one born of the Spirit." But it does not read that way. It reads, "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." But Jesus is not, in this, teaching how one is born of the Spirit, but he is teaching the condition of one who is born of the Spirit. He had already told how one is born again when he said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." That shows how a man is born again. Jesus knew what was in Nicodemus' heart, that he wanted to know whether, after a man is born again, could he understand anything more about the wind than before he was born again. The man who is born again does not know any more about the laws of nature than the unconverted man. Being born again does not change the nature nor the propensities of the flesh. But it changes the unbelief to belief in Chhist, and changes the heart so he loves that which he once hated,

and as the heart controls the actions of the flesh, the spirit restrains the flesh from doing that which is wrong and directs him to do that which is right.

Out of the idea that the Spirit regenerates direct from heaven in answer to prayer, the mourner's bench system of getting religion was developed. So when I was a boy it was a common practice to call sinners to the mourner's bench and sing and pray, and talk to them about their dead mothers and fathers and brothers and sisters and get them excited and their emotions aroused till they would often shout for joy. The shout was considered certain evidence of salvation. From my childhood, I have sought for this practice, and to this good day I have never found anything that looks at all like that in the Bible. Neither is there anything said about getting religion. All of this grew out of a misunderstanding of the teaching of Jesus on the subject of the New Birth. I want you, dear reader, to please turn to the book called The Acts of the Apostles and read carefully and prayerfully every case of conversion and see for yourself that nothing of the kind was ever taught or practiced by the apostles and the early Christians. Religion is something taught and practiced, not something we get. James says, "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions, and keep one's self unspotted from the world." James 1:27.

All who are born of the flesh are begotten of the father and born of their mother. When the scripture speaks of the father the



word "begotten" is used when they speak of the mother the word "Born" is used; when they speak of both the word "Born" is used.

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Have you ever thought of the fact that we have no record of Christ or any of his apostles saying anything about being born again, except in the third chapter of John, until we get to the letters that were written to the Churches and Christians? We do not have any record of any one being told that he must be born again to enter into the kingdom of Christ. On the day of the Pentecost, Peter did not say one word about being born again. The distressed multitude were not told that they must be born again. If he had told them that they must be born again, no doubt but that this would have thrown them into confusion, as it did Nicodemus, and if he had told them that, they likely could not have understood it. Instead of doing that, Peter just told them in plain words what everyone must do to be born again—"Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins." That was so plain that none of them seems to have been confused over what Peter told them to do. All of us can easily understand it, unless some false teacher helps us to not understand. Yes, I say frankly, we cannot fail to understand it without help to misunderstand it.

A little while before Jesus was arrested, he said unto his disciples, "Hitherto have you asked nothing in my name; Ask and ye shall receive that your joy may be full. These things have I spoken unto you in

proverbs: but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father. At that day ye shall ask nothing in my name." John 16:24-26. So Christ was speaking in proverbs (or dark sayings) and perhaps that is why Nicodemus could not understand. But, we are thankful that when the time come to tell us what we must do to be born again, it was made very plain. It is significant that when he told them what they had to do to be born again, that he told them to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins in the name of Jesus Christ. Now I hope I have made this plain enough—and now we can understand why the apostles did not tell sinners to be born again.

But after they did what was necessary to be born again, in writing to them as children of God, they were told that they had been born again: To-wit: Peter says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." In being born of the incorruptible seed, they believed and purified their souls in obeying the truth, which is the word of God. John 17. Remember that Peter was the apostle speaking as the Spirit gave them utterance, said, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins." He also said of the Gentiles, "God put no difference between us (Jews), and them (Gentiles), purifying their hearts by faith." Acts 15:9. "That faith by which their hearts were purified, came by hearing the word of the gospel, and believed." Acts 15:7.

The idea of born again suggests becoming a member of a family. When one is born of the flesh, he becomes a member of the family into which he is born. When I was born I became a member of my father's family. When one is begotten by the Spirit through word of the gospel he becomes a member of the family of God. I have always been proud of my family relation. I have always thought that I had the greatest father and mother in the world. Of course, others do not feel as I do. But that is the way I feel about mine, and all others should feel that way about their fathers and mothers. I pity those who cannot feel that way.

It is great to know that we, as Christians, have the God of heaven for our Father. All who believe that Jesus is the Christ, and have repented of their sins and confessed with the mouth that Jesus is the Son of God, and have been baptized into Christ, buried with Christ in baptism, have become members of the family of God, and should be proud of it. I well remember that the first time I went to the town of Comanche, while walking on the streets, I saw a sign, "J. H. Huff," over a jewelry store. So I decided that I would go in and see if he might be kin to me. When I told him my name he said, "That is a mighty good name, my father wore that name." That impressed me very much. It is a mighty good name because it is the name that my father wore also. I am also impressed that God is my Father in heaven. My father in the flesh has been dead nearly 60 years, but his spirit is with me. I still remember his noble life and



his wonderful counsel that he gave us by the fireside. They are still with me. Our Father in heaven has left his wonderful dealing with the children of men which we, as his children, should honor and obey as long as we live here on the earth that we may enter in through gates into the city of our God, where we shall see his face and adore him and sing his praises throughout all eternity.

John says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the sons of God." The revised version reads, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God, and such we are. Further on John says, "Behold now are we the sons of God (not going to be) and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see him like he is." Wonderful thought. This ought to impress every child of God with the importance of so living that we will not do anything that would bring reproach upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who loved us and died that we might live; and also we should do all in our power to live pure, clean lives in the sight of God and men so that we may not bring reproach upon the name of our Father in heaven who so loved us that He gave His only begotten Son to suffer and bleed and die on the cruel cross of Calvary that whosoever believeth should not perish but have eternal life.

PLEASE CHECK THIS DIAGRAM VERY CAREFULLY. TURN AND READ EACH REFERENCE. LOOK ON THE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS.

THE HARMONY OF THE GREAT COMMISSION AND THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

	Preaching	Faith	Repentance	Confession	Baptism	Salvation
Matt. 28:19,20	Preaching	X	X	X	Baptism	X
Mark 16:15,16	Preaching	Faith	X	X	Baptism	Salvation
Luke 24:46-48	Preaching	X	Repentance	X	X	Remission
John 20:22,23	X	X	X	X	X	Remission
Recapitulation of Great Com.	PREACHING	FAITH	REPENTANCE	X	BAPTISM	REMISSION
Pentecost--Acts 2nd Chp.	Preaching	Faith	Repent	X	Baptized	Remission
Solomon's Porch--Acts 3rd C	Preaching	X	Repent	X	Converted	X
Samaritans--Acts 8:1-25	Preaching	Faith	X	X	Baptized	X
The Eunuch--Acts 8:26-29	Preached	Faith	X	Confession	Baptized	X
Saul--Acts 9:22,23	Preaching	Faith	Repented	X	Baptized	Remission
Cornelius--Acts 10th Chap.	Preached	Faith	Acts 11:18	X	Baptized	X
The Jailor--Acts 16:30-34	Preaching	Faith	X	X	Baptized	Salvation
Athenians--Acts 17th Chap.	Preaching	Believed	Repentance	X	X	X
Corinthians--Acts 13:8	Preaching	Believed	X	X	Baptized	X
Lydia--Acts 16th Chap.	Preached	X	X	X	Baptized	X
12 at Ephesus--Acts 19 C	Preached	Believed	X	X	Baptized	Salvation
Crispus--Acts 18:8; 1 Cor. 1:14	Preaching	Believed	X	X	Baptized	X
RECAPITULATION	PREACHING	FAITH	REPENTANCE	CONFESSION	BAPTISM	SALVATION

Matthew, Mark and Luke all mentioned the conditions of salvation, but John only mentioned forgiveness of sins. But the conditions are plain'y implied, just as they are in the statements by the others where they are not mentioned.

John mentions the fact that they were to receive the Holy Spirit that is not mentioned by Matthew and Mark. But Luke did. (The mention of the Spirit by Luke and John did not refer to the Spirit as received by the world. Jesus said "whom the world cannot receive." But Jesus was speaking to the Apostles, "but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye are endued with power from on high", and according to John he said "Receive you the Holy Spirit, and whosoever sin ye forgive they are forgiven, etc." (Revised V). Both statements make it plain that it was the Spirit—given to the apostles to give them power to bind and loose—forgive sins.

So let us not get the idea that it was the world that was to be endued with power from on high).

But certainly the conditions that are mentioned by the other witnesses are implied in John's testimony, for, the fact that he mentioned forgiveness implies baptism for Peter said, "Repent and be baptised for the remission of sins." Confession is implied for Paul says, "Confession with the mouth is made unto salvation."

Repentance is understood because Jesus said, "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish."

Faith is implied for Jesus said, He that that believeth not shall be damned." Hearing is implied for Paul said, "How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard." So they all have heard, had faith,



confessed, been baptized and had their sins remitted.

All the witnesses are in perfect harmony though they al' did not state it in the same words, neither did any one of them mention all the conditions.

## **STUDY OF THE CONVERSIONS IN ACTS**

But before we begin that study, let us repeat the conditions of salvation mentioned in the commission. The items are as follows: Preaching, faith, repentance, confession and baptism.

So now turn to the second chapter of Acts. In that chapter the gospel was preached by Peter and the eleven, and at the conclusion of Peter's sermon he said, "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assured'y, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. The expression "know assuredly (without a doubt) that God hath made that same Jesus \* \* Lord and Christ," is a command to believe in the strongest terms possible. The result was "Now when they heard this (what Peter had just said) they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren what shall we do?" This shows that they believed what they had heard.

If the doctrine of justification by faith only were true, they were then saved and nothing else was necessary. But Peter certainly did not believe that doctrine, for he said to them "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." verses 37 and 38.

So in this conversion they were told to repent after they believed, But you may

want to know how that can be since John the baptist commanded the peop'le to repent and believe the gospel. In answer to this question I will say that the order of words does not always establish the order in which the things occur. For instance, Paul says (as quoted) if, thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine hart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. But one must believe before he can be saved. But Paul seems to put confession before believe, but in the next breath he reverses the order and says "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." So first he says, "confess and believe, and second he says man believeth with the heart and confesses with the mouth. So we have it confess and believe and believe and confess. Are both statements true? Certainly they are both true. In this one quotation it is proven that the order of words does not prove the order in which a thing occurs.

In Mark 1:15 John the baptist was admonishing the people to repent (turn back) and thus be prepared to believe on Jesus. They were commanded to, and did believe that Jesus is the Christ. Then they were commanded to "repent and be baptized \* \* for the remission of sins." Nothing is said about confession with the mouth the Lord Jesus. But Paul says "We preach that if thou wilt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead thou shalt be saved, for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom. 10: 9, 10.

But the confession is implied where ever

people are said to believe and are baptized, for they were to baptize believers, and the confession was necessary to be sure that they did not baptize unbelievers. More on this later .

There is another thing that is well for us to consider before we pass from this conversion.

The question of which is first, faith or repentance. In this case is a demonstration that faith did and must precede repentance. When the people heard and believed which is shown by them asking what to do. Peter told them to repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Repentance cannot come before faith. No one could confess his sins without believing that he is a sinner. Repentance before faith would not be pleasing to God. Heb. 11:6 Paul says, "For without faith it is impossible to please Him (God) for he that cometh to God must believe he is, that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." If one should or cou'd repent before he believed God would not be pleased. It would cause confusion in heaven, for Jesus says the angels rejoice over the sinner that repents, but God would not be pleased if it should be without faith. So it would be angels rejoicing and God displeased.

In the third chapter of Acts we have the record concerning the conversion of 5,000 men.

Peter preached to them and told them to repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the Lord." So in this case we find that they were commanded to repent and be converted. Nothing is said about faith. Are we to conclude that they did not need to believe just be-



cause faith is not mentioned?

I am sure all Bible students would answer no. Why not, if we are to say that baptism is not necessary because it is not mentioned in Luke 24:46-48? But, as we are agreed that faith is understood in cases where repentance is not mentioned, we must conclude that baptism is understood in cases where it and repentance is mentioned, even so baptism is implied if not mentioned.

In Acts 3:17 Peter did not say repent and be baptized as he did on Pentecost. But when the two statements are placed side by side it is plain that baptism and conversion are the same. Thus repent and be converted. Repent and be baptized are used interchangeable. When words are used interchangeably they mean the same thing when thus used. Therefore repent and be baptized and repent and be converted mean the same thing in these two passages.

Peter could not have taught baptism for remission of sins on the day of Pentecost and fail to teach the same thing at Solomon's porch without stultifying himself. He was speaking as the Spirit gave him utterance in both sermons and surely the Spirit would not have contradicted himself. Besides Jesus said, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." So it is quite evident that baptism for the remission of sins was preceded by faith and repentance.

In every case of conversion in the Acts of the Apostles this rule will apply.

The conversion on the day of Pentecost is a model (pattern) that all the other conversions can and must be measured by or else the whole book is a bundle of contradictions. The Apostles were guided by the

Holy Spirit and if they had not taught the same thing everywhere and all the time then the Holy Spirit could be justly accused of crossing himself and would therefore be unworthy of our confidence and respect. But they taught the same doctrine everywhere and all the time.

Jesus prayed that the Apostles might be one and also that all who believed on him through their word might be one, as he and the Father are one. John 17th chapter.

The church at Jerusalem "were all of one heart and one soul, and they continued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine." Acts 2:42; 4:32.

Paul beseeched the church at Corinth to all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among them, but that they be joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment, and that they were carnal in not so doing. So if Peter and the other apostles and evangelists did not preach the same thing they were not one as Jesus prayed for.

### **THE GOSPEL CHAIN**

The gospel chain is so linked together that if any one link of the chain is wanting or broken the chain is ruined. The chain is:

**HEARING—FAITH—REPENTANCE  
CONFESSION—BAPTISM—REMIS-  
SION OF SINS**

If either one of these links is wanting in the chain or broken, it cannot be the gospel chain.

Let us see if the first link, hearing, is wanting there can be no faith for faith comes by hearing the word of God. Rom. 10:17: "How can they believe on him of whom they have not heard"—no hearing no faith. Rom. 10:13.

The next link is faith. We all believe that faith is essential to salvation. This link left out would make void every other link in the chain.

The next link is repentance. We all also agree as Jesus said "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." So it cannot be left out of the chain.

The next is confession. Paul says it is unto salvation. We cannot omit it either.

Next is baptism. Can we leave it out? It is commanded just as plain as any of the other links. If you insist on leaving out baptism we can eliminate all the other links by the same argument that is used to eliminate baptism.

The next link is salvation, remission of sins. We conclude as follows: No hearing, no faith, no faith, no repentance, no repentance no confession, no confession, no baptism; no baptism, no remission of sins, no remission of sins, no heaven.

But eternal punishment in hell of fire and brimstone forever and ever.

### **Punishment of the Wicked**

Jesus said, "He that believeth not shall be damned."—Mark 16:16.

"You that are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, in flaming fire, taking vengeance them that know not God and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power."—2 Thess. 1:7-8.

"The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it begin at us what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God; for if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall



the sinner and the ungodly appear?"—1 Peter 4:17, 18.

"These shall go away into everlasting (eternal) but the righteous into life eternal.—Matt. 25:46.

"But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and idolaters and all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone."—Rev. 21:8.

Now, Dear Reader, will you please review the contents of this book, and take your Bible and read every reference, and see if you can find wherein any mistake has been made. If you find any, please write me, and kindly let me know where it is, that I may know and correct it. If you find it according to the Word, please let me admonish you to obey the truth without delay. I am interested in the salvation of your soul. The angels in heaven are anxiously waiting your decision. If you neglect this great salvation that is offered you, there is no escape for you. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." God loves you and Christ died for you. Will you turn him away? It is not what I have written that is going to judge you at the judgment, but what Jesus has said. All the prayers in the world will not save you without obedience to the gospel. II Thess. 1:7-8, I Peter 4:17-18.



