

08b ACTS

We pick up our study in Acts chapter 2 in verse 38 where Peter says to the assembled Israelites, change your mind and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. If you think about that for a moment, it sounds on the surface like in order to get your sins remitted, you need to be baptized. And after you are baptized, you will receive the gift of the Spirit.

So you repent first, which many would see as a point of salvation, belief in Christ, change your mind, repent, believe the gospel. So you repent, that would be a point of salvation. Then you get dunked in the water for baptism.

And at the point that you receive the water baptism, you have remission of your sins. And after those things have taken place, then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. On the surface, this could be taken that way.

Well, of course, this just wreaks total havoc with all kinds of our understanding in scripture. And part of it has to do with the translation. Let me try to render this a little more literally out of the Greek.

It says in Greek, Petros de pros altos, which in Greek, where we start a sentence with a conjunction, we say and or now, for, but, therefore, we have some word. Well, in Greek, it's what they call a post-positive construction. You have a word, and then you stick in what we would consider to be the first word.

So it says, in Greek, it says Petros de, de. And de is the word but or now. So Peter, but to them, is what it says.

And the verb is, isn't even there. Petros de, now Peter, or but Peter, and then pros altos, to them. And it's implied, he says to them.

Then it says, metanoesate, change your mind. This is an imperative. It's an aorist active imperative, second plural, second person is you, y'all, y'all change your mind, is what he says.

Now, there in some texts is another word here that is in brackets in our text. I don't think it belongs there. So I'm going to leave it out.

Then it says, and baptis theto. And the theta, for those who know Greek, is an indicator of a passive voice. When you want to take an active verb and turn it into the passive, you will take on a theta there in that in that spot.

So instead of baptizo, it's baptis theto. And the theta there makes it a passive. So be baptized, this is an aorist passive imperative.

So you have an aorist active imperative and an aorist passive imperative. The aorist tense doesn't look at something in terms of duration, it doesn't look at it as lasting over time. It's, they used to think of it in terms of a point of time, it would happen as a single thing.

So if you, if you muse on this for a moment, let's say that you have always thought that asparagus was the most awful vegetable there is. But Patty steamed some asparagus, put it in a nice little garnished dish and gave it to you, and you winced a little bit, picked up a piece and ate it, and it really tasted pretty good. And you change your mind about asparagus, and you say, well I used to just hate all asparagus with a passion, but this is not bad.

I've kind of changed my mind about asparagus. Well that's not something you can stretch over, it's not a process that goes over days and weeks. You don't gradually, you don't think back a year later and say, you know I believe my mind has now changed about asparagus.

It's been a long process. I mean when you change your mind about something, it kind of happens. It's a happening.

The aorist tense looks at something, not so much as a point of time, but as a happening. Sometimes it focuses on the beginning of what happened. They began to speak, they began to run.

Sometimes it looks at the happening as a whole. By that, by the way, that first one that looking at the beginning is what they call an ingressive aorist. Looks at as you're ingressing, you're going into it, as you're starting this action.

There's a constative aorist, or constative, and constant state. It looks at the happening as it is happening. There's a culminative aorist.

You can imagine what that is. That's going to focus on the result of the action, the finalization, the completion of it. But in all aorist tenses, you're looking at something not as a process or not as something with duration, but as an entirety.

You're looking at the whole thing. So here, when you have, and it takes on an additional set of meanings when you have it in the imperative, because sometimes commands in Greek are in the present imperative. Now bear with me, because this is important.

If it was a present imperative, it would be, keep on speaking, keep on singing, keep on praying. And sometimes you'll see the Apostle Paul, and he'll give an imperative about prayer. He'll say, keep on praying, keep on praying without ceasing.

It'll be a present imperative. The present means this is a process that you should keep on doing. If it's an aorist imperative, it means start doing something you're not currently

doing.

So you can find some freight in there. There's some implications. When you see the present imperative, what if there's a present imperative and a negative? Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess.

If that's a present imperative, it means you're currently running around being drunk with wine all the time. You need to quit that and start being filled with the Spirit. If you want to be influenced by something, if you want something to take over your being and characterize you, you know, one thing about a drunk, most alcoholics don't realize how soon people know that they have a drinking problem.

They think that they have hidden it. They think that they have disguised it, that people don't know. And what they don't realize is that it's one of the most easily detectable things in the world.

And you know it early. And you know if someone has been drinking, you can tell. It's like a radio transmission that hits you.

Maybe you didn't smell their breath, you didn't see them walk, but they come in and you look at them and you just say, you know what? They've been drinking. Well, it characterizes. And that's why Paul uses that figure.

He says, be not drunk with wine, which is an abuse. It's an excess. He says, don't do that.

If you want to have something that's going to telegraph to people, something that's going to communicate and characterize you, let it be the Holy Spirit. Wouldn't it be neat if in the same way that you can easily detect someone that's been drinking, when you walked into a room, people could easily detect that you were enabled and empowered by the Holy Spirit? That God was dwelling in you to such an extent that you just let off a, like they say, a vibe. It's an emanation.

It's a characteristic. That's what Paul is really saying in that deal. He says, don't be known as a heavy drinker.

Be known as someone who is infused with the Holy Spirit, who is full of the Holy Spirit. That's what ought to telegraph forth. Well, here we have an aorist imperative, and it means you haven't done this yet.

You need to do it. Change your mind and be baptized. These are sort of one-time things.

You don't want to be changing your mind every other day because it keeps flopping back. You know, I used to get in trouble for the back of my hair because I would sleep at night, you know, and you just go into the zone. And when you wake up in the morning,

you slept on your hair and it's sticking up like Dennis the Menace.

And you try to put water on it. I used to keep, Vitalis wouldn't tame it down. And when I was very small, I had a little jar of green stuff that looked like candle wax made by Max Factor.

We called it butch wax. I don't know what his real name was. But the same stuff that you, when you have a crew cut, you stick the front up with.

I don't know if anybody does that anymore. But anyway, sometimes for the cowlick in the back, I had to get that butch wax and really paste it down because it would just, it would stick up. It would keep flopping back up.

Well, when you change your mind, you don't want it to be like an unruly cowlick where you paste it down and then it just flips back up. And you change your mind and it just changes itself back. And you change your mind and it changes back.

This is not a present tense where you have to keep on. You're supposed to do it once and it's supposed to stick. It's supposed to stay.

You flip the switch and it stays flipped. You get, you don't have to, because to change your mind many times, it'll be all the same as getting baptized many times. This is a, in other words, a commitment.

That's why for this reason, for this cause, shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave unto his wife and they too shall be one flesh. It's not like, well, I'm one flesh with this one today and two years from now, I'm going to be one flesh with that one. And a couple of years later, I'll be in one flesh with this one.

And I'm going to keep on committing to keep on changing. It's supposed to be kind of a one-time deal. That's the freight.

That's the baggage that comes with your heiress imperative. Peter says, change your mind and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. He doesn't say in the name of the father and the son of the Holy spirit.

Why? Well, where did we get that? What's our great commission reference? Everybody remembered Matthew 28, 19. What did Jesus say in Matthew 28, 19? Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Is that what he said? It's not.

That's the, that's the spurious passage in Mark 16. Matthew 28, 19 says, as you go, there's only one imperative in all of, of Matthew 28, 19. He doesn't say go into all the world.

It's not an imperative. He says it's a participle. He says, as you are going into all the world, he said, you don't even get a choice.

You're going, you're going. And as you go make disciples of all nations, he does not give them an imperative about teaching and he doesn't give them an imperative about baptizing. They're all participles.

As you go make disciples of all nations, teaching them, baptizing them in the name of the father and son of the Holy spirit and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I've commanded you. So the condition of making disciples is you do it as you're going, you do it with baptizing and you do it with teaching. Well, that's where we get the idea of baptizing in the name of the father and the son of the Holy spirit.

The only place in the whole Bible where it says that here, Peter says, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Why doesn't he include the father and the Holy spirit here? Well, I don't know. Is he being disobedient? I don't know.

I'll tell you what I think. I think that Peter is speaking to this crowd for the first time. They have not yet been taught about the spirit.

This is their first lesson on the spirit. Peter says, you remember Joel 2 23 and 24. This is what was spoken of by the prophet.

Your old men will see visions, young men will dream dreams, your servant girls, this, that and the other. And he's teaching them about the Holy spirit, but and he's teaching them about the Lord Jesus Christ. But maybe they're not ready for a baptism in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy spirit.

Peter is concentrating on Jesus Christ. So he says, the place where you need change of mind, you don't have a quarrel with our, we have a common understanding of the father and we have a common understanding of the spirit. You accept my interpretation of Joel 2 23 and 24.

What you need to change your mind about is Jesus Christ. That's where you need the baptism. That's where you need the identification.

You don't have a quibble with the father and with the Holy Spirit. Now, when they go to the Gentiles who know nothing of the father and nothing of the son and nothing of the spirit, perhaps there's going to be the baptizing in all three names. But here these Jewish people, they know the father and they know the spirit.

They've got the book of Judges. They know about Samson and the Holy Spirit coming on the tabernacle workmen and the rest of it. What they've had trouble with the sticking point is Jesus Christ.

He says, you need to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. That's what you need. Some of these same people in Jerusalem, they have been baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan three or four years earlier.

Remember that? All Jerusalem went out to John baptizing in the Jordan. Now he's saying you need to be baptized. They say, well, hey, John baptized me.

Well, did he baptize you in the name of Jesus Christ? You might have been baptized in the name of the God of Israel. But what about Jesus Christ? So that is my, my guess. It's the best I can do for you because there is no place in Acts that says anything except baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.

All right. Repent, change your mind. Let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

Do you have to be baptized in water for the remission of sins? Well, once again, we go to our Greek already read you the first part, *Petros de pros autos*. Peter said in italics to them, change your minds and be baptized. Each one of you, *Hekostas humone*, each of you.

This is an individual baptism. Now this is a change. When the last dispensation started, when Israel began, you can read about this a couple of different places in the New Testament as well.

They were all baptized into Moses. Remember that Hebrews they were all baptized into Moses going through the sea. But it was a national baptism.

The whole nation went through. Now he says, each of you be baptized. There's not going to be another national baptism like there was with Moses.

Each of you has to make up his own mind. Each of you has to change his own mind. Each of you has to be baptized.

And those words are very important. *Hekostas humone*. Each of you change your mind.

Each of you be baptized. You can't ride someone's coattails. You can't say, well, I'm an American, so I must be a Christian.

You can't say, well, I come from a Christian family, so I must be a Christian. Surely God wouldn't break up a family. He's a God of love.

I'll just kind of hang on to my folks and and ride in each of you, he says. Then it says, *ace* a face and tone how Marty own *ace* E. I. S. Means into or unto faith. And is off the Amy, which means to lose or to forgive.

We saw this earlier on. Tone how Marty on how Martia is sin. This is sins in the plural.

And then it's followed by *humone* your sins with a view toward is the translation here of *ace*. *Ace* means unto looking at something into or unto is what *ace* means. If it was four, we have other perfectly good Greek prepositions.

But this means with a view toward there are untold countless numbers of examples I could give you of this usage. I will give you one that I am most familiar with because I did both my short and my long exegetical papers in seminary on this passage. Turn with me quickly to Ephesians chapter one, beginning at verse 15.

Ephesians 1:15 Paul says to the saints at Ephesus. Actually, these are the Laodiceans, but we won't quibble. Therefore, I also after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you making mention of you in my prayers.

Paul says, ever since I heard that you all have faith in the Lord Jesus and that you have love for one another. I pray for you all the time. That's what he says.

What does he pray? This would be a helpful thing to know, wouldn't it? What does an apostle pray for someone who's faithful and who has love for the brethren? He says, I pray for 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of him. How do you have a spirit that has wisdom? Revelation is church age truth. Wisdom is practical applying type knowledge.

Paul says, I pray for you that you'll have that knowledge in your soul. You'll know that you're in the church age. You'll know all about the ministry of the spirit, your spiritual gift and so on.

Because in verse 18, the eyes of your understanding have already been enlightened. This is a Aorist participle in verse 18. And the Aorist participle always precedes the action of the main verb, which means, he says, I'm praying that God will give you this wise understanding spirit because your eyes have already been opened.

At the point that God saved you, he gave you the potential to understand truth. Your eyes have been opened. The scales have fallen away and you can see if you will just look.

So that you may know what is the hope of his calling? What's the expectation? Why should I bother to pursue being a Christian and pursue faith and love and obedience? What are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints? And what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe? Well, the eyes of your understanding having been enlightened unto, this is *ace ta adenai*, unto the knowledge, unto knowing. And see how they translate? They say, in order that you may know, it is with a view toward you knowing. Why did God give us spiritual perception? Why is it that God sent his Holy Spirit so that you and I can understand scripture? Why did he do that? He had something in view.

He had a goal in view. And *ace* is used here. It says, the eyes of your understanding

having been enlightened with a view toward you knowing what is the hope of his calling.

God gave us this supernatural ability to understand his word because he wants us to be hopeful. He wants us to have an expectation about what we've been called to, the life that we've been called to, the inheritance we've been called to, and the greatness of his power toward us who believe, toward us who are trusting, is what it literally says. Anyway, if you circle that phrase, that you may know, there in verse 18, and right out in the margin, E-I-S, in order that, with a view toward you knowing, is what that means.

Unto, you knowing, is what it literally says. It's the same thing we have here in Acts, when Peter says, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ with a view toward, looking at the goal of remission of sins. Baptism does not bring about remission of sins.

You get baptized because, or they got baptized because they were acknowledging the remission of sins. They say, you know what? God has made it possible for me to be free from my sins. I have died to my old way of life.

I am resurrected to a new way of life. I'm going to get baptized, and the ritual looks at the reality of this forgiveness of sins, this remission of sins, with a view toward. You can almost always translate ace, if it's not a literal use of the word into, like it says, he went into the house, he went into the house, but if it's a concept, it's almost always with a view toward.

So, change your mind, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ with a view toward the remission of sins. It doesn't say to secure the remission of your sins. You're looking at it.

That's what's in view in baptism. And, you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit does not come as a result of the baptism.

It comes as a result of the change of mind. It goes back to the first verb in the sequence. Change your mind, be baptized.

You know how we have kind of the chiasm that we see from time to time. You have an outside element, outside element, inside element, inside element. Well, the outside elements here are change your mind, and you shall receive the gift of the Spirit.

The inside elements are be baptized with a view toward the remission of sins. You see how that works? The baptism doesn't look at the gift of the Holy Spirit. Baptism looks at remission of sin.

Change of mind is going to result in the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise, what promise? How did he start this speech? Verse 15. These are not drunk as you suppose.

It is only the third hour of the day. This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel. Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.

Your young men shall see visions. Your old men shall dream dreams. Men servants and maid servants.

Wonders in heaven. So on. That is the promise.

This is that which was spoken by the prophet. So the promise, that is the promise of the Spirit, is to you and to your children and to all who are afar off as many as the Lord our God will call. Now people, here's another.

Seems like we're hitting all the hard stuff these past couple of weeks. We hit tongues. We had women in the church.

Now we're hitting water baptism and we're hitting the calling. Only the ones who are going to change their minds that God has called. Verse 39.

And we have a little bit more to say about baptism here in a minute. But the promise is to you, to your children, and to all who are afar off. These are categories of people.

You and your children are Israel. Those who are afar off, you can read about this over in Corinthians, those who are afar off are going to be brought near. Those are the Gentiles.

Goes back to the Abrahamic Covenant. God promised Abraham you will be a light to the Gentiles. Through you all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

Those who are afar off are the Samaritans. Those who are afar off are the Greeks and the dwellers in Asia Minor and the rest of these who are non-Israelites. So this is categories.

The promise is to you, this first generation, and to your children, the next generation, and to all who are afar off. These are categories. Jews, present Jews, future Jews, Gentiles.

That's what he's talking about. Now your children is actually going to be sort of a prophetic word here because your children are going to be the Tribulational Saints, the Tribulational Martyrs. The children of these individuals are actually going to be coming to faith in the church age and it's going to be a different type of thing because to you and to your children, to a subsequent generation, who's the next generation of Jews? Well there is neither Jew nor Greek in Christ.

The next generation of Jews is going to be in the 70th week of Daniel. And so the offspring, the descendants, if you will, of these individuals will be in the last seven years of the age of Israel, 70th week of Daniel, which is yet future. But the promise is to them just as it is to these individuals and it's going to be to the Gentiles.

But these are categories and the point here is as many as the Lord our God will call, God is issuing a categorical call. There's a call to category Israel. There's going to be a call to

category future Israel, Tribulational Saints, 144,000 witnesses and so on.

And there's going to be a categorical call to the Gentiles. This is not as many people as the Lord our God will call, this is as many categories as the Lord our God will call. There will be an even yet future one that Peter has not mentioned, which are the millennial choosers, the millennial humans who will grow up in that dispensation and will have to make a choice.

They will receive the call to salvation, to faith in Christ. But he says the promise is to the Jews present, Jews future, and to Gentiles as many as the Lord our God will call. And that is as many different categories.

And this is preparing, this is softening up the Jews, because he just said those who are far off. And all the Jews, hair stands up on the back of their neck. What do you mean to those who are far off? You've already said it's to us and our children.

Who's left when you say those who are far off? He says, look, if God calls them, i.e. the Gentiles, if God calls and issues a promise to them, that's God's prerogative. So don't be getting sore and don't be getting uptight and don't be saying, wait a minute, to the Lord God. If he issues a call to the Gentiles, he's God.

He can call whom he will. Go back and look at your Abrahamic promise. That's kind of what's here in a nutshell.

But in summary, verse 39 is not indicating that God issues an individual call and that there are only certain ones who are called in Romans 8 29 and all the rest of that. It has been misused because it's been taken out of context. The each one is in the change of mind and baptism category up in verse 38.

Categories are in verse 39. As many as the Lord our God will call. Well, what about water baptism? The bottom line here is, what do we think of water baptism today? Is this still a ceremony, a ritual, an activity that we should practice? You remember I had you circle the audience that's being spoken of here and you can continue that all the way through to chapter 10 over and over and over again.

If you look at verse 46 of this chapter, they continue daily with one accord in the temple. Who's allowed in the temple? Jews only. You look at verse 47, praising God, having favor with all the people and the Lord added to the church daily those who are being saved.

The words to the church were added later. They are not there. The Lord added those who were being saved.

It doesn't say to the church in verse 47. Chapter three, verse one, Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer. Peter stands in verse six and says in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.

And all of the rest of this preaching in Solomon's portico all the way down, just read on down through, you will see nothing about Gentiles, nothing about Samaritans, nothing but Jews for the first ten chapters of Acts. Why? Because although we have a change of dispensation at the point of the giving of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, God has not revealed all of it yet. You think about the change of dispensation when Israel comes into being as a nation and you move from the age of the patriarchs to the age of national Israel at the exodus.

There is a change on the day of Passover. I think the age of Israel began on Passover because God called out a people and delivered them and here they are and His presence joins them on that day with the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire. Remember the day began at sundown.

The very next day as they march out, here's the pillar of cloud by day and then that night on the 16th Nisan, 16th Abib, here's the pillar of fire. God's presence is with them in a supernatural way. Here you have rushing mighty wind and you have fire just as you had the cloud and the fire with Israel and I think that the first Passover is day one of the age of Israel.

I think Pentecost is the first day of the church but you notice when they marched out of Egypt, God didn't stop them at the Red Sea and say, well now wait a minute, let me give you the tables of the law, let me give you your national identity, let me tell you everything. They went on still functioning under the patriarchal system, didn't they? When they got to the far side and they danced and sang and praised God, they were still operating in a family priesthood. There was no Levitical designation as of yet.

The Levites were not called out, they weren't sanctified, they weren't ordained. There was no Levitical priesthood for these first few days of the age of Israel. They're still operating under the old system, right? Even though it changed, it takes a while to get the works changed over and get the new information out that's going to come at Sinai.

In the same way, when the church age began, God didn't on that day say, hold the presses, stop everything, don't go to the temple anymore, don't offer any sacrifices, stop observing the feasts, don't worry about circumcision. He didn't throw, it's too much too soon. You have to crawl before you can walk, you have to get oriented before you can start taking in new information, you have to have a frame of reference.

So, Peter doesn't stand up and say, men and brethren, guess what? The Gentiles are in and there's no more Israel. The law is gone. Tear down the temple, we don't need it anymore.

He doesn't say that and they won't say it for weeks and months because they're just not ready for that information. So, what is a part of the holdover from the age of Israel? What age did baptism, water baptism, start up in Israel? What was it originally a sign of?

Walking down into the mikvah and up the other side. Proselyte to Judaism.

Why did John baptize in the Jordan? An Israelite didn't need baptism. It was the foreigner, it was the stranger who joined himself and became a proselyte to Judaism that went through the purification ritual of joining. And so, when John was baptizing in the Jordan, you know what that symbolism was? It is as though I was so far from the will of God that I wasn't even an Israelite.

And I'm coming in and identifying myself anew, afresh. I am now being born into the nation of Israel. I am born into God's plan.

I am born to a fresh commitment to the law, a fresh commitment to the God that the law communicates. So then, why did John baptize Jesus? Because Jesus told him to. Why did Jesus tell him to? Suffer it to be so now, for it is necessary to fulfill all righteousness.

Baptism was a symbol of commitment to the law. What did Jesus say about the law? I've not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. Jesus symbolically identified himself with fulfillment of the law, commitment to the God of the law, total obedience in the same way that these proselytes had once done.

And John the Baptist called the nation themselves to go through. This would be like an American citizen who had burned the flag and tore up their draft card and been a complete, inane, unappreciative American to say, you know what, I'm going to go down and take the citizenship classes. I'm going to go through what somebody from a foreign land goes through and learn about this country and take my pledge and my oath and commit myself as though I had come from overseas because I've come to a fresh appreciation of my country and I want to be a citizen, not just by birth, but by choice.

That's what baptism is about. So now, why does Peter say be baptized? They haven't baptized in months, maybe years, since way back in the early days of Jesus' ministry when the disciples baptized. Now Peter says you can