

The Promise is Yours

All have sinned and fall short of God's glorious ideal (Romans 3:23). The result of this sin is death-both physical and spiritual (Romans 6:23). The Bible plainly teaches that the man who has sin in his life cannot possibly enter into heaven (Hebrews 12:4).

The Word of God tells us that without the shedding of blood man is hopelessly lost (Hebrews 9:19-26). God, in looking down upon earth, found there was no one good enough to die for the sins of the world that we might have eternal life. So, God came to earth Himself - in the fleshly form of a man called Jesus - to die for the sins of the world. The Scriptures refer to Jesus as "Emmanuel" or "God with us" (Matthew 1:21-23; Isaiah 9:6; I Timothy 3:16).

As a man Jesus was tempted just as we are tempted, yet He remained free from sin (Hebrews 4:15). He came that we might have eternal life, preaching and commanding men to repent. His message declared that unless a man was born of the water (water baptism) and the Spirit (infilling of the Holy Spirit) he could not enter into the Kingdom of God (John 3:5).

As a ransom for all, Jesus died on the Cross. Although He was tempted in the same ways we are tempted, He did remain without sin, and was thus a worthy sacrifice for the sins of the world. Because of the shedding of Jesus' blood, there is remission of sin for everyone who follows the plan of salvation.

After His death on the Cross, Jesus was laid in a tomb. On the third day, however, He arose just as it had been prophesied (Luke 24:46). After His resurrection, Jesus spent forty days with His disciples, instructing them in the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. Shortly before ascending back into heaven, Jesus assured His followers that He would soon send them the promise of the Father, which was the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49).

On the Day of Pentecost the baptism of the Holy Spirit was given to a group of approximately 120 disciples who were waiting in the Upper Room. As they waited, tongues like as of fire appeared and rested upon each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues (languages they had never learned) as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1-4).

The sound coming from the Upper Room drew quite a crowd of curious onlookers who began to ask each other, "What does this mean?" The Apostle Peter, after preaching to the crowd for a few moments, unfolded unto them the plan of salvation: "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 Ghost. "He went on to tell them. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:38,39).

The message Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost was heeded by about 3,000 believers, and is still in effect today. There is still saving power in the message of repentance, water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, and the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

In repentance one turns from his sins, with a faith that Jesus paid the price on Calvary for all sins. In so doing, he crucifies the "old self" with Christ (Romans 6:6). When one is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, he is buried with Christ (Romans 6:3).

Then, as the Spirit of God enters, the believers begins to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. Every procedure (Acts 2:4; 8:14-20; 10:44-48; 19:1-6).

The Bible tells us that if the Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is dwelling in us, we have the promise of eternal life with Him (Romans 8:9-11). We are told: "The dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:16,17).

Yes, the promise is yours. *T. B.*

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