

## How Much Did They Know? Analyzing the response to the gospel in Acts 2

Something to think about before we begin:

When you were converted, how much of the doctrine of Christ did you already know? If you were “raised in the church”, you might consider that you already knew quite a bit; if not, then perhaps you did not know much at all. How long after you “obeyed the gospel” did you feel like you knew enough to tell other people what you had done and why you did it?

### **Acts 2:16-35; New Testament Doctrine**

Those who were listening to Peter’s sermon on Pentecost were described as “...**Jews**, devout men from every nation under heaven”. (Acts 2:5) Even though these were men who had been seeking God, in practical terms, how much of *the doctrine of the New Testament* could they possibly have known at the time of their conversion? (cp Acts 2:41)

During his sermon on Pentecost, Peter (under inspiration of the Holy Spirit) quotes directly from three Old Testament scriptures - Joel 2:28-32 (Acts 2:16-21), Psalm 16:8-11 (Acts 2:25-28), and Psalm 110:1 (Acts 2:34-35) - as well as making a clear reference to a fourth, 2 Samuel 7:12-16 (Acts 2:30-31). Even with all of this information, how much of *the doctrine of the New Testament* did those who obeyed the gospel know at the time of their conversion?

It is tempting for us to want to make *teaching the **gospel*** to the lost about teaching *doctrines of the New Testament church*. Based on what the first 3000 converts to the Lord knew at the time of their conversion (cp Acts 2:41), how important do you believe it is that we primarily teach the lost *specific doctrines of the New Testament and the church*?

### **Acts 2:36-41; Jesus, the Christ**

“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain...” [Acts 2:36]

- What **two things** about Jesus does Peter point out as the “certain” conclusion to the Old Testament texts from which he has quoted? (cp Acts 2:16-21, 25-28, 30-31, 34-35)

- What is the initial reaction of those “devout” Jews who heard Peter’s conclusions about Jesus and their involvement in His death? [2:37]

"Brothers, what shall we do?" [Acts 2:37]

- What does their question to the apostles indicate they understood about Peter's conclusions?

"Repent and be baptized every one of you **in the name of Jesus Christ...**" [Acts 2:38]

- Given the "limited" information those on Pentecost had regarding *the doctrine* of the New Testament, what does Peter's response further reveal about **who Jesus is**? [cp Acts 4:12; see also Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 53; *Jeremiah 31:31-34 (Hebrews 8:7-13)*; etc]

"...for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." [Acts 2:38]

- Given the "limited" information those on Pentecost had regarding *the doctrine* of the Holy Spirit ("spiritual gifts", "indwelling", etc), how imperative is it that those who come to Christ must initially have a full understanding of how the Holy Spirit operates?

- Based on Peter's response to them, what could they (and we!) be certain happens when a repentant person is "baptized... in the name of Jesus Christ"?

"For the promise is for... everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." [Acts 2:39]

- In practical terms, what are the limits of the reach of God's promise in Christ Jesus?

"And with many other words... 'Save yourselves from this crooked generation!'" [Acts 2:40]

- What is clearly the overarching message that Peter wished to convey to those who were standing before him accused on Pentecost? [cp 2:21, 38-40]

"So those who received his word were baptized..." [Acts 2:41]

- What does the response of those 3000 souls on Pentecost reveal that they clearly understood regarding the "limited" information they had been given by the apostle Peter? (It is certainly possible that the "many other words" of Peter involved a lot deeper teaching; what I am asking is what can we know for certain that they knew, based on *what we know* was revealed to them.)

**May the Lord help us to TRUST what WE KNOW from Him, and share it with others!!**