

Children & The Lord's Table

A Position Paper

Christ Fellowship Bible Church

God birthed the Church on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2). The book of Acts is not prescriptive but descriptive in all that it speaks of. That is to say, the narrative events that Luke records should not function as a standard for churches throughout church history. Acts served as a special transition book from the Gospels to the birth, persecution of, and global-spread of the church. Even still, it appears that in the early days of the church, there is a pattern described that other churches would be wise to emulate particularly with reference to hearing the gospel, believing the truth, being baptized, and then partaking in the Lord's Table.

1. The Preaching of the Gospel (Acts 2.37-40)

The Apostle Peter preached on the day of Pentecost and proved that Jesus came from God and performed miracles and wonders and signs and that He was nailed to the cross to die. Three days later, God raised Him up again since it was impossible for Him to be held by death's power. When the crowd heard this sermon, they were pierced to the heart and cried out: "what shall we do?" Peter responded to those inquiring about how to be saved and told them to repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins and that promise of forgiveness of sins to those who repent and then are baptized is for all people whom God would call to Himself. It was with many words that Peter kept on exhorting the people to be saved from the perverse, worldly generation. Thus, salvation comes through hearing the gospel. And how can people hear without a preacher?

2. The Receiving of the Word (Acts 2.41a)

The first verbal in verse 41 speaks of the people who had received Peter's word. He preached the gospel and when people inquired about how to be saved, he told them they must repent of their sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Those who heard the truth received it. The verb speaks of a welcoming of someone or something. It is a warm, kind, friendly, wholehearted acceptance of something. Those who heard the truth believed it and received it. In this specific context, they received the word of the Lord and embraced Jesus, whom they crucified, as Lord and Christ, for salvation.

3. The Baptism of the Believer (Acts 2.41b)

Those who heard the preaching and believed were baptized. Throughout the book of Acts, baptism appears to be an initial step of obedience for those who believe in Christ. Those who heard the preaching, and those who received it, were those who were baptized.

4. The Adding to the Church (Acts 2.41c)

The text states that those who were baptized were added to the church. Luke records that there were about three thousand souls added to the church. In other words, people heard the gospel preached, they received it in saving faith, they demonstrated their faith by being baptized, and then they were added to the church. Someone was counting the people who were added to the church on that day of Pentecost. Those who were baptized were even added *that very same day*. There was the sermon, the receiving of the truth, the baptism, and then joining the church.

5. The Continuing Devotion of Communion (Acts 2.42-47)

Those who had received Peter's word and who were baptized, and who were added to the church were those who continued to devote themselves to four primary activities within the life of the church body: apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. Since communion is a real communing with Jesus Christ and a remembering of His death on the cross, only believers should participate in communion. And the book of Acts portrays baptism as a sort of initial step of obedience in a new believer's life. When a person hears the Word, trusts in Christ, testifies of Christ publicly through water baptism, he then can be added to the church and participate in the full blessings of local church life, including the breaking of bread, which is the Lord's Supper.