

### **Baptism for the Remission of Sins**

(Acts 2:37-38) *Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? {38} Then Peter said unto 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 Ghost.*

(Mark 1:4-5) *{4} John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. {5} And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.*

We notice how the Apostle Peter admonished those who had been *pricked* in their heart upon hearing the Gospel. In Acts 2:38, he stated the hearers should: “(1) Repent, (2) and be baptized *for the remission of sins....*”. We find that John the Baptist conducted himself in the same manner. In Mark 1:4 we learn that John baptized *for the remission of sins*. Other books of the New Testament give more details of how John carried out this practice. If we can learn nothing else at this point, we should be able to learn that the Apostles carrying out the work of the Church taught and practiced the same thing as John the Baptist regarding baptism. The verses mentioned here from the Acts of the Apostles and the Gospel according to Mark harmonize perfectly.

The description of John the Baptist’s practice is clearly explained in Matthew chapter 3. (Mat 3:7-9) *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? {8} Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: {9} 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.*

These verses help us to see what John the Baptist was doing as he baptized *for the remission of sins*. We see that John would NOT baptize for the remission of sins until the subjects could produce “fruits meet for repentance”. John required evidence from candidates before he would baptize them. For these candidates to “come to his baptism” wasn't enough. John referred to them as a “generation of vipers” even though they had enough confidence in the practice of baptism to walk out to the river to receive it. If God

has placed any virtue for the remission of sins in baptism, John was surely hindering that plan by refusing to administer it for any reason. On the other hand, if virtue is found in repentance, John was pointing out that people must find this virtue to be the proper candidate for baptism.

The virtue found in repentance is described for us in the next chapter of The Acts. (Acts 3:19), *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;*

This verse call our attention to the connection between “repentance” and having our sins blotted out. This verse draws a direct line between the two. We repent to have our sins blotted out.

This information helps us to better see the relationship between repentance and baptism. The Apostle Peter called on people to repent before being baptized. John the Baptist required people to have “Fruit meet for repentance” before he would baptize them. So then, according to the scriptures, all must receive the benefits of true repentance before they are scriptural candidates for New Testament baptism. Let’s be careful to rightly divide the word of truth.