

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ

October 10, 2020

Repentance and Freedom

Jesus began his earthly ministry saying, *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach **deliverance** to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at **liberty** them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”* Luke 4:19. In this text, the English words “*deliverance*” and “*liberty*” are both translated from the Greek word “*aphesis*” which means “*freedom.*” Strong’s #859. As we continue through the scripture, this Greek word for freedom (*aphesis*), becomes central to the gospel message which Jesus instructed his disciples to preach to all nations.

After his resurrection, Jesus commissioned his disciples to go “*...into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.*” Mark 16:15. Luke’s record of this great commission says Jesus told the disciples “*...that **repentance and remission of sins** should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*” Luke 24:47. Again, the Greek word “*aphesis*” is used, but although it is translated as “*remission,*” it still means “*freedom.*” Jesus’ instruction was “*that **repentance and freedom from sins** should be preached in his name among all nations.*” This is the fulfillment of the words with which he began his earthly ministry, saying, “*He hath anointed me to **...preach freedom to the captives!***”

On the day of Pentecost after the one hundred and twenty were filled with the Holy Ghost, Peter began to speak and indicted Israel for killing their Messiah. He continued, saying, “...*God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.*” Acts 2:36. The Bible says the people were “...*pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?*” Acts 2:37. The answer echoed the words of Jesus as Peter said, “**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.**” Acts 2:38. The Greek word “*aphesis*,” which means “freedom,” was used and again translated as “*remission*.” Jesus had commanded the disciples to preach **repentance and freedom from sins** in his name, which is exactly what Peter did on the Day of Pentecost.

As this first revival grew, the religious establishment became increasingly alarmed. They arrested the apostles and commanded them not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. When they were again arrested, the high priest asked them, “*Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name?*” Acts 5:28. Peter answered with these words: “*We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.*” Acts 5:29-31. Again the Greek word for freedom, “*aphesis*,” is used, but this time it is translated as “*forgiveness*.” What Peter actually said was that “**God exalted Jesus ...to give repentance to Israel, and freedom from sins!**” Peter was speaking exactly what Jesus

had commanded His disciples to preach to all nations!

Several years later, when Jesus sent him to preach the gospel to gentiles, Peter told Cornelius that Jesus commanded His disciples *“...to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him **shall receive remission of sins.**”* Acts 10:43. This word translated *“remission”* is again the Greek word *“aphesis.”* Peter’s message was consistently *“**repentance and freedom from sins**”* through Jesus Christ. The words of Jesus were fulfilled upon Cornelius and his household that day. For Jesus had promised, *“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”* John 8:32.