Who are these people?*

Acts 20:6-7 (6) And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came unto them to Troas in five days; where we abode seven days.
(7) And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.
Who are these people? Whence is their origin? To answer these questions we will have to go back in time. Back to a particular Pentecost where emancipation from 'oppression of sin' finally became a reality. Backward in time to the eleven as they began preaching the gospel of Christ as the Spirit gave them utterance. Howbeit the Apostles were received with amazement, distaste and even aggressively ridiculed, but not detoured from the purpose at hand. That wonderful event is recorded in;
Acts 2:36-42,46-47 (36) Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.
(37) 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.
(39) 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.
(40) And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.
(41) Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

(42) And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.
(46) And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,
(47) Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.
On this Pentecost, the Apostles were united in a spectacle. The spectacle of the gospel resembling 'swarms of butterflies,' from earthy to beautiful winged creatures. They and we must get wings or die, But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; (Isaiah 40:31). *The salvation from the Lord had burst forth like new wine out of the wine press. The Apostles came preaching the metamorphosis of sinners to disciples bursting forth from the cocoon of baptism. When they, upon hearing the Apostle's speech, were convinced of their wrong doing concerning Christ and their own salvation, they cried out "what must we do?" I can only imagine the horror these people felt as they realized the man they had condemned to die was the Son of God. Peter's answer was plain and simple, Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins. Then the people that gladly received the word, were baptized, and the Lord added them to the Church. From that time forward baptized believers, disciples of Christ, have received a new name, Christians. It was baptized believers who were continuing in the doctrine set forth by the Apostles of fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers. With this bit of information we can reset our sights on the disciples at Troas for a moment, who were doing no more or no less than following the Apostle's doctrine of fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers on the first day of each week. From whence is the doctrine they follow? An early Christian writer penned a repose that is true even unto our generation. A repose that he garnered from the gospel of Christ that is the power of God unto salvation.*

Tertullian (204 A.D.) wrote: "The church of Christ composed of baptized believers, does meet each Lord's day to partake of the Lord's Supper." *This description of the Church penned by Tertullian, is as accurate now as it was when written.*
Tertullian penned the actual reality of the doctrine the disciples were following.
Tertullian penned the name and benefactor, "The Church of Christ," as recorded in Romans 16:16.
Tertullian penned the membership composition, "baptized believers," which first came about in Acts 2:38-47.
Tertullian penned the exact meeting time for the Church, "the first day of the week," as seen in Acts 20:7 and 1Corinthians 16:2.
Tertullian penned the reason the Church came together, "to partake of the Lord's Supper," as stated in Acts:20:7.
Jesus said; I will build my Church, *and beginning on the day of Pentecost following His resurrection, people were being added, by the thousands I might add. Who are these people? They are "such as should be saved." This poses a serious situation, the unsaved?*
I propose to address this situation by the word of God, who is none other than Jesus Christ our Lord, who is the author and finisher of our faith. A faith that must come by hearing the word of God. Turn your Bibles to;
Mark 16:14-20 (14) Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.
(15) And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
(16) **He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved**; but he that believeth not shall be damned.
(17) And **these signs** shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues.

(18) They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.
(19) So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.
(20) And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word **with signs** following. Amen.
Who are the saved that were being added to the Church? According to the word of Jesus it is, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. *Therefore it is the baptized believers who are being added to the Church by the Lord. One does not join, nor is voted on, but it is an addition process of the Lord upon completion of one's obedient faith. What does that consist of? Belief-Acts 8:37, Faith- Hebrews 11:6, Repentance-2Cor 7:10, Confession-Acts 8:37, Baptism-Acts 10:47-48. This is confirmed by Luke;* But when **they believed** Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, **they were baptized**, both men and women (Acts 8:12). *This is not the only confirmation, throughout the book of Acts, we find faithful believers repenting, confessing and submitting to baptism according to the word for remission of sins.* And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? (1Pe 4:18). *Before his death, Christ promised He would build His Church. He kept that promise as evidenced by the obedient faithful that were being added to it by the Lord. But where is the promise? Turn to;*
Matthew 16:15-18 (15) He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?
(16) And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.
(17) And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

(18) And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock **I will build my church**; and **the gates of hell shall not prevail against it**.

There is a saying that one does not have to belong to the Church in order to go to heaven. Why would Christ have suffered the burden of the cross if His Church were so unimportant? Christ prayed that cup of suffering and death might pass from Him, listen to His words; O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt (Matt 26:39). *The result of His obedience is, the gates of hell did not prevail against **His Church**. For everything outside His Church, the gates of hell will prevail upon and devour. This is a serious situation. If you have undergone metamorphosis from sin to life;* Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you (James 4:7). *If you have not undergone salvation metamorphosis I plead with you to;* Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat (Matt 7:13). *The importance of the Church cannot be overstated;* And he is the **head of the body, the church**: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence (Col 1:18). *So you see, Christ is the Saviour of the body which is the Church. Are you willing to submit to a man's view of the Church, that it is unnecessary? Or would you rather submit yourselves therefore to God's will, be baptized for remission of sins and translated into the Kingdom of God's dear Son. Just as the firery furnice did not prevail against the three Hebrew children, neither will the the gates of hell prevail against the Church. That's a promise. There are two gates available in this life from which to choose. One is wide, the other is strait, please turn to;*

Matthew 7:13-14 (13) Enter ye in at the **strait gate**: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

(14) Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.
The reason there be few that find it is not because it is difficult to locate, like searching for a needle in a haystack. The necessitating factor of locating the way of the Lord, is faith that cometh by hearing the word of God. The reason it is overlooked would be man's own arrogance or philosophy. Entrance at the Strait gate is an interesting concept because of the spelling, S-T-R-A-I-T. Strait is a nautical term pertaining to navigation and the sea.
*Meanings of **Strait**; **(1)** "narrow, confined space or place," specifically of bodies of water.*
***(2)** A narrow waterway joining two larger bodies of water. The Strait of Gibraltar, for example.*
***(3)** Strict, as in requirements or principles.*
Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith and it is He that has spoken the commandments that leadeth unto life, enter ye in at the strait gate. *All three descriptions of strait would be applicable, meaning the strait gate is the gate of baptism. All spiritual blessings are in Christ, and in Christ you must be;* For as many of you as have been **baptized into Christ** have put on Christ (Gal 3:27). *The philosophy of man is displayed in belief systems such as "faith only," "membership in the Church is not required" or "baptism is not necessary," all of which result in,* few there be that find it. *But what is meant by man's philosophy? I do not mean man's philosophy as an offensive epithet, but only as an excruciating opinion. For instance:*
James H. Moon around the turn of the 20th century (1902) wrote: {"Matthew's version is generally adduced to support water baptism. We cannot assume that in Matthew, our Saviour's words are quoted verbatim, while Mark, Luke, John and Peter are all in error or less reliable."} *I declare to you an excruciating opinion! Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Peter were all speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit. How*

could they be wrong? That is nonsensical and dangerous. I cannot help but wonder, what kind of argument can stand up against a nonsensical statement? For the perpetrator, perhaps none. For the baptized believer, the word of God is sufficient. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Galatians 1:9). *For the believer who has entered in by the strait gate and added to the Church of Christ by the Lord, the pathway was narrow which leadeth unto life because strict are the requirements. Not that the requirements are too hard to bare, but that close conformity to the principles of God's word is required, which is our reasonable service. Turn to;*

Romans 12:1-5 (1) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is **your reasonable service**.
(2) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
(3) For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.
(4) For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:
(5) So we, being many, are **one body in Christ**, and every one members one of another.

1Corithians 15:1-4 (1) Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;
(2) By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.
(3) For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

(4) And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:
1Corinthians 11:23-25 (23) For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:
(24) And when he had given thanks, he **brake it**, and said, Take, eat: **this is my body, which is broken for you**: this do in remembrance of me.
(25) After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.
Who are these people? Just Christians! Members of His body, the Church. Salute one another with an holy kiss. The **churches of Christ** salute you (Romans 16:16). *When Paul penned the name, Churches of Christ, this was to signify all the congregations of the one Church. Listen to this;*
1Corinthians 12:12-14 (12) For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.
(13) **For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body**, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.
(14) For the body is not one member, but many.
Revelation 1:10-11 (10) I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,
(11) Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.
What does it mean, seven Churches which are in Asia? It means seven congregations, one was located in Ephesus, one in Smyrna, one in Pergamos, one in Thyatira, one in Sardis, one in Philadelphia and one in Laodicea. One Church, several locations. Who are these people? Just Christians. People

that entered in by the strait gate. Turn your Bibles to;
John 3:1-5 (1) There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:
(2) The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.
(3) Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
(4) Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?
(5) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
What would be the water and the spirit Jesus is referring to? Many the answer tho not without difficulty. The only reliable answer is the word of God itself. Remember the words Jesus said; The words I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. *Why would He say that? Many believe a person can be saved before and without being baptized in water. And even tho many may be baptized later, they believe baptism is only an acknowledgement of accepting Christ. Have they ever considered the consequence?*
Who can be born again without being baptized? However, being born again is contingent upon being obedient to the ordinance of baptism, (John 3:5).
Who can enter the Kingdom of Heaven without being baptized? However, entering the Kingdom is contingent upon being obedient to the ordinance of baptism, (1Corinthians 12:13).
Who can receive salvation without being baptized? However, receiving salvation is contingent upon being obedient to the ordinance of baptism, (1 Pet 3:21).
Who can receive the gift of the Holy Ghost without baptism? However, receiving the gift is contingent upon being obedient

to the ordinance of baptism, (Acts 2:38).
Who can put on Christ without baptism? However, putting on Christ is contingent upon being obedient to the ordinance of baptism, (Galatians 3:27). Now turn to;
Matthew 28:18-20 (18) And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.
(19) Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
(20) Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
Can there be a mightier power than ALL POWER? All power in Christ must be accepted by faith that cometh by hearing the gospel. Therefore, Faith in Christ is the effect of belief in the gospel, and the ordinance of baptism is the effect of faith; so, only those who first believe the testimony of God, and by faith repent of their sins, and by faith confess Jesus is the Son of God, and by faith are baptized into Him for remission of sins, have the full and explicit testimony of pardon. God, having chosen and announced this method, one can believe it and live, or deny it and die. Do you believe? Then come and obey. For other reasons you may request prayer, in either case come while we persuade with song.

This message approved by
Jack Warford
a minister for Christ

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WATER BAPTISM
A PAGAN AND JEWISH RITE, BUT NOT CHRISTIAN
PROVEN BY SCRIPTURE AND HISTORY
CONFIRMED BY THE LIVES OF SAINTS WHO
WERE NEVER BAPTIZED WITH WATER
By James H. Moon
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[Pg 1]
"The Commission"

Did Christ command his disciples to baptize with water?

Let us search the New Testament and see what it says.

We find the four evangelists and Peter each render Christ's command to his apostles in very different language.

Matthew's version[1] is generally adduced to support water baptism.

We cannot assume that in Matthew, our Saviour's words are quoted verbatim, while Mark, Luke, John and Peter are all in error or less reliable, particularly as this part of Matthew claims for itself to have been written a long time after, as appears by the statement that "This saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."[2]

Seven different accounts of the "apostolic commission" are given in the New

Testament.[3]

Did not each of these writers express in his own language what he understood to be Christ's command to his disciples and will not these seven different records all agree in substance if genuine?

Let us seek that interpretation which harmonizes them all and not pin our faith to the popular conception of one version alone.

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We will turn first to the one only recorded allusion which our Saviour ever made to water baptism.[4]

We here find that he commanded his apostles not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father which, said he, ye have heard of me; for John truly baptised with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence.

Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth.[5]

These are given as the last words of our Saviour before his ascension. He speaks of John's baptism as the water baptism of the past, and of Holy Spirit baptism as the baptism of the future. By this Holy Spirit baptism his apostles are to receive power to become his [Pg 3]witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth. There is nothing whatever which implies a command to baptize with water. This whole context militates against the belief that Christ ever gave such command.[6]

This version of the "apostolic commission" stands prominent and is worthy of double consideration because it is sustained by the testimony of Peter,[7] who remembered these words of our Lord, and quoted from them as being fulfilled when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the household of Cornelius as he preached.[8]

According to John's account of the commission, Christ said to his apostles, "As my Father hath sent Me even so send I you," and we read that He was sent to baptize with the Holy Spirit. Again, He commanded them to feed his lambs and feed his sheep.[9]

John never intimates that they were sent to baptize with water.

Had Christ commanded his disciples to baptize all nations with water, John would certainly have known it, and could not have failed to report a command of such [Pg 4]world-wide application, John's silence is further evidence that no such command was given.

There can be no baptism in the commission other than the baptism of the Holy Spirit according to John's record as we have it.

According to Luke[10]: Christ commanded his apostles to preach among all nations repentance and remission of sin in his name, after they should be endued with power from on high.

Luke does not mention baptism, only as power from on high. Nothing which even suggests a command to baptize with water.

If such command was given Luke surely knew it. He tells us about Christ's own baptism of the Holy Spirit and his command to preach among all nations;[11] why does he not tell us about this command to baptize these nations with water? Is it not plainly because there was no such command?

According to foot-note in our revised version,[12] and other authorities, the two oldest known copies of Mark's record omit the twelve last verses, and another [Pg 5]ancient manuscript, lately found, also omits them and states that they were by Aristion the elder. As the authenticity of the account of the commission in Mark's record is questioned, we omit comment, altho' we see nothing to conflict with the other six versions.

According to Matthew Christ commanded his disciples to go, teach all nations, baptizing them (not in the name, but) into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.[13]

No water is mentioned. He commanded them to baptize into the Divinity, not in water.

This harmonizes all the evangelists with both Peter and Paul.

If we reject this view and assume that in Matthew[14] water baptism is intended to be understood, then we are compelled to believe that this interpretation of Matthew, with its formula for baptism, was conceived after the apostles' time; was unknown to them, and is a human conception and not a correct rendering of the teachings of Jesus. Because with water introduced, it stands alone and is out of harmony with the whole of Christ's teachings [Pg 6]upon other occasions, and because it conflicts with all our other six versions of the commission; and because (as we read), the apostles and first Christians

never did baptize with the formula prescribed in Matthew, which is conclusive evidence that to their understandings Christ never commanded them to do so. And again, because the apostles and first Christians did continue to baptize with water, sometimes without formula but mostly in the name of Jesus Lord or Christ. This they would not have done in defiance of Christ's command to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Upon these and many other grounds we claim that Christ never did command his disciples to baptize with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, nor in any way whatever.[15]

According to Peter's account of the commission, Christ commanded his apostles to preach to the people. He mentions no command to baptize.[16]

Peter did preach to the people and the Holy Spirit fell upon them as it had fallen upon others of them in the beginning, at Pentecost.[17] Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he said "John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

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Here Peter[18] was made instrumental in baptizing with the Holy Spirit through Gospel preaching, and he recognized this to be the same baptism which his Lord[19] had promised should supercede John's water baptism[20] and the same as that with which they were filled eight years before, in the beginning at Pentecost, and the Pentecost baptism[21] he said was that which the prophet Joel foretold should be poured out upon all flesh; upon sons and daughters,[22] servants and handmaidens, and that they should prophecy.

Can anything be plainer than that this Pentecost baptism[23] and that the baptism which was poured out upon the household of Cornelius as Peter preached[24], and the baptism which our Lord promised in the place of John's water baptism and the baptism which Joel foretold should be poured out upon all flesh are all one and the same baptism, and does it not follow that this is the baptism of the commission, the one baptism of the Gospel, and [Pg 8]that this is Christian baptism and that there is no water in it?[25]

Because Peter and others continued to baptize with water is no evidence to the contrary. They continued their old Jewish customs generally. They pronounced it necessary to abstain from certain meats. They insisted that Paul should adhere to circumcision. They refused to eat with Gentiles. With such Jewish proclivities how could they at once abandon water baptism?[26]

Some evidently realized that John's water baptism had ended at Pentecost, but they were not prepared to drop it entirely, so sought to perpetuate it by

repeating the words, "In the name of Jesus, Lord or Christ." They claimed no divine authority for using this formula and the disciples of water baptism in our day mostly discard it.[27]

Baptism with the formula, "In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit"[28] is not to be considered in connection with the apostles and first Christians, as they never mention it and evidently never practised it. Such formula was unknown at that time. It came in as an after[Pg 9]thought; a human invention of later date.

The great diversity in the form of expression used by each of the evangelists and Peter in defining Christ's commission to his apostles is positive evidence that they understood him to prescribe no formula for baptism and it is confirmation that no formula was given that they and the first Christians for ages adhered to no one set form of words when baptizing with water.

"In His name," as Christ is quoted by Luke, and in substance by Mark, John and Peter, always implies in, into or with his Spirit or power, and not a common given name which mortals may utter. In this name or power Christ commanded his apostles to preach.[29]

"Into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit," as in Matthew[30] alone Christ's command is interpreted, has the same implication and not a mere name or formula which human lips may sound. To repeat these words in connection with baptism is to substitute the voice of man for the power of God.