

Acts 2.42-3.26

Ancient Family Photo

Jesus DIED – ROSE – MET Disciples – TAUGHT 40 Days – ASCENDED

120 Followers WAITED 10 Days – SPIRIT Fell – PETER Preached – 3000!

Whew! FEEL TIRED! STOP for a Minute – BREATH, REFLECT, PICTURE!

Luke > SNAPSHOT of that GROUP > NOT YET called a CHURCH

Earliest Mtgs of FOLLOWERS of the WAY PRINCIPLES to GUIDE All Churches

Learning / Loving / Worshipping / Witnessing

1. Learning

a. Word Alive > POURING Out of SPIRIT > Preaching of WORD

v. 42 "they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching"

Church FORMED AROUND Apostolic SERMON - BIBLICAL MESSAGE

UNUSUAL Phenomenon in City of JERUSALEM

SOUND Mighty Wind / SIGHT of Flaming Tongues / SPEECH of Many Lands

v. 4 all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit

Crowd asked WHAT DOES it MEAN? > Peter gives ANSWER in SCRIPTURE....

v. 16 This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel...

v. 25 David said about him...

SPIRIT OF GOD IS THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

When he, the *Spirit of truth*, comes, he will *guide you into all truth*. John 16.13

The Holy Spirit opened a school in Jerusalem that day; its teachers were the apostles whom Jesus had appointed; and there were 3000 pupils in the kindergarten.

John Stott

PATTERN OF WORSHIP BASED ON JEWISH SYNAGOGUE

"Synagogue" meant **"a place of assembly"** LOCAL CENTER OF WORSHIP

EMPHASIZED: Confession of Faith, Prayer, Word of God

Jesus: "The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life" John 6.63

Want to be FILLED with SPIRIT of GOD? > Must READ the WORD of GOD

Want UNDERSTAND WORD of GOD? Must be FILLED with SPIRIT of God

b. Word of Apostles - OFFICIAL SPOKESMEN OF CHRIST

v. 42 they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching

APOSTOLIC Preaching > THIS is THAT > Now is the TIME, Fulfillment

Role of APOSTLES is COMPLETED > We have their Greatest MIRACLE N.T.

LIFE-GIVING Words of SPIRIT-INSPIRED NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus: "The Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to *you*"

John 16.15

WHO is THE **YOU??** **APOSTLES** - WHERE DO WE FIND IT ?? **The N.T.**

In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the *mystery of Christ*, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been *revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.* Ephesians 3.4,5

SPIRIT of God leads the PEOPLE of God through the WORD of God

Today the apostolic doctrine is in the Scriptures.

R.C. Sproul

As the LORD commanded his servant Moses, so Moses commanded Joshua, and Joshua did it; he left nothing undone of all that the LORD commanded Moses.

Joshua 11.15

Joshua did not SHAKE FIST at God and say 'You must speak to me DIRECTLY!'

'Thank You God for giving me your Clear, Living Word thru your Servant Moses!'

c. Word Announced Broadcast from Studio of Jerusalem TV, COZY COUCHES?

Peter could have INTERVIEWED Healed Man > TESTIMONIAL Service

Instead Peter PREACHES JESUS the HEALER – Right on STREET!!

EAGER APOSTLES: Every Gathered Crowd is OPPORTUNITY to PREACH

1) Deflects Glory – NOT Surprising Crowd gives Credit to MEN they SEE

vs. 11,12 While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us *as if by our own power or godliness* we had made this man walk?"

POWER > People think POWER comes from INSTRUMENT of Healing

GODLINESS > Healers are HOLY MEN, Miracles from THEIR PIETY

Attention POINTED to OMNIPOTENT God > ETERNAL, COVENANT God

v. 13 The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers

JESUS is v. 14 ...the Holy and Righteous One...

Jesus who HEALED while on EARTH > Continues to HEAL from HEAVEN

v. 16 By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

“The Acts of the Exalted Jesus done in the Power of the Holy Spirit through His Apostolic Church”

2) Declares Jesus > Apostle to JEWS, Much OT THINKING about JESUS

WHOLE OT Bears Witness to JESUS and the CHURCH > FULFILLMENT

a) Titles - Real Man: v. 6 Jesus Christ of Nazareth

Life Giver: v. 15 the author of life

Living One: v. 15 God raised him from the dead.

Object of Faith: v. 16 By faith in the name of Jesus

Source of Faith: v. 16 faith that comes through him

Healer: v. 16 Him that has given this complete healing to him

Messiah: v. 20 the Christ, who has been appointed for you - even Jesus

Ruler in Heaven: v. 21 He must remain in heaven

b) Testimonies

Isaiah: v. 13 his servant Jesus > Wrote 4 SONGS of the SERVANT – Jesus

David: v. 14 the Holy and Righteous One > EXTOLLED Him in Many Psalms

Moses: v. 22 For Moses said, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you.

Abraham: v. 24 He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.'

ABRAHAM > Jesus is TRUE SEED brings BLESSING to the NATIONS

Samuel: v. 24 all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days

SAMUEL > 1st to Speak of DAVID'S KINGDOM Fulfilled in JESUS

All Prophets: v. 18 God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer.

God: v. 13 The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers has glorified his servant Jesus

d. Word Attested v. 43 many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles
MIRACLES of God are connected to MESSAGE of God

NEW Message – Moses – Prophets – Jesus – Apostles > New MIRACLES

MIRACLES in Early Church > CONFIRMATION of Truth of MESSAGE

The things that mark an apostle - signs, wonders and miracles - were done among you with great perseverance. 2 Corinthians 12.12

v. 6 "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."

WALK = He WILL Walk / Today – He CAN (God Able) – If God WILLS

...they came to Paphos...The proconsul, an intelligent man, sent for Barnabas and Saul because *he wanted to hear the word of God*. But Elymas the sorcerer ...opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith. Then...Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked straight at Elymas and said, "You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right!...You are going to be blind..." Immediately mist and darkness came over him, and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. *When the proconsul saw what had happened, he believed, for he was amazed at the teaching about the Lord.* Acts 13.6-12

AMAZING TEACHING > "SIGNS" Validated their Authority

1) Spontaneous **HEALING in BIBLE** > **NEVER Scheduled**

Some Churches > MIRACLE is part of MINISTRY > MIRACLE CENTERS!

NOT "next Wednesday night Apostle Peter will have Healing Service"

TODAY > Holy Spirit HEALING Meetings Scheduled MONTHS in Advance

NEVER in HOSPITAL WARDS > Big Auditorium, Collect BIG OFFERINGS

vs. 9,10 all the people... were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him

WONDER and Amazement NOT SAME as REPENTANCE and FAITH

One thing to be SURPRISED by Jesus > Another to SUBMIT & SERVE Him

MIRACLES can Draw a CROWD > But DON'T Always make CONVERTS

2) Successful – When God WANTS to HEAL He Does! Not Hindered by Us

vs. 9,10 the people... recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging

NOT Actor HIRED for the APOSTLE PETER'S HEALING MINISTRY, INC.

The man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old. Acts 4.22

Spindly LEGS, ANKLES w/ NO STRENGTH > BOUNCING like POGO Stik

vs. 7,8 ...instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

Dr Luke, Physician – Vivid Description – Truly LAME, just as TRULY Walks WHEN God wants to HEAL > HE IS ABLE > Not Limited by Our Limitations

1991 Soviet Union Collapsed > Door OPENED for Gospel > HIDDEN Peoples MESSAGE 1st Time in Villages in Kazakhstan MIRACLES Attested Preaching Last Year Kazakh Bible Completed – Available for Growing Churches / Believers Kazakh Pastor recently told me “We no longer see such miracles in Kazakhstan!” TODAY – No More Apostles – Not Seeking Signs but Studying Scripture

2. Loving

v. 42 they devoted themselves to.... the fellowship : Greek word KOINONIA
120 Believers together 10 Days > Number Multiplies 26 X's – 3,120

Peter to Wife: ‘Honey, I am bringing a few people for Dinner Tonight’ 3000!!

KOINONIA > Favorite word of PAUL > ONLY used ONCE by Luke, HERE

FELLOWSHIP is the HEART of Luke’s FAMILY PHOTO of BELIEVERS

CHURCH Life is MORE Than LISTENING to SERMONS

a. Spiritual Sharing FELLOWSHIP is a TRINITARIAN EXPERIENCE

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and *the fellowship of the Holy Spirit* be with you all. 2 Corinthians 13.14

KOINONIA has HEAVENLY, SPIRITUAL Dimension > Share in the LORD

...our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. 1 John 1.3

b. Sharing our Substance > **Koinonia of their Cash!**

vs. 44,45 All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.

CHURCH BUILT ON SACRIFICE > CROSS < CALLED TO FOLLOW HIM

IF we BELIEVE John 3.16 > We should BEHAVE like FIRST John 3.16

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

1 John 3.16-18

NOT COMMUNISM - WILLING EXPRESSION OF THE LOVE OF GOD

The early Christians shared their possessions, not because they were communists or socialists – not because they were forced to share things – but for a far better reason. They shared their goods because they were generous, and they were generous because they had learned generosity from God. James Boice

MILLIONS of Hungry, Suffering, Dying Christians Today > INDICTMENT!

These BELONG to Jesus > Might BE Jesus > they're Naked, Hungry, Waiting

c. Sharing Ourselves > BELIEVERS Just ENJOYED Being TOGETHER

vs. 46-47 They broke bread in their homes and ate *together with glad and sincere hearts*, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

MORE than SENDING a CHECK or SITTING thru WORSHIP SERVICE

Went BOWLING – Watched FOOTBALL – Snow BOARDING > Hung Out!!

JESUS Moved INTO their LIVES, Brought JOY to EVERY PART of WORLD

The higher we value our personal privacy and freedom from commitments, the shallower our grasp of fellowship will be. Dennis Johnson

NOT MATTER if House BIG Enough, TIDY Enough, Food GOOD Enough
True Hospitality comes before pride. Karen Burton Mains

Family that PRAYS AND PLAYS together STAYS TOGETHER

KOINONIA Not MAINLY Sitting in this ROOM, At TABLE AFTER this Meeting

Encourage One Another SEVEN Days a Week / Not just ONE Day in Seven

Is there a power that can unify the divided nations of the earth without subjugating them? Is there a way of making people one, without at the same time making them all the same? It is precisely that sort of unity which the Holy Spirit brings...Unlike the imperialisms of men, the Spirit had no ambition to homogenize the peoples of the world into a uniform Christian culture.

Roy Clements

3. Worshipping

a. Ceremony > FORMAL Gatherings of Worship

v. 46 Every day they continued to meet together *in the temple courts*.

1) Structure WORSHIP IS TO BE DIGNIFIED - BUT NEVER DULL

TEMPLE > No Longer Offered Sacrifices > FINISHED Work of JESUS

PRACTICAL Need > 3000+ Believers needed LARGE MEETING AREA

Peter and John were going up *to the temple at the time of prayer*... Acts 3.1

DID NOT ABANDON TEMPLE > Calling it 'DEAD' > PATIENT Reformers

NOT ABANDON INSTITUTIONAL, FORMAL, TRADITIONAL CHURCH

Acts: GRADUAL TRANSITION > From TEMPLE to CHURCH

v. 42 They devoted themselves to...the breaking of bread

v. 46 They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,

CEREMONY of BREAKING BREAD (Lord's Supper) w/ DAILY BREAD

Love Feasts COMMON MEAL > Ended by LORD'S SUPPER // Ex. Passover

IN THE TEMPLE AND IN THEIR HOMES

HOME MEETINGS > SPONTANEOUS, FREE, Less UNSTRUCTURED

CHURCH NEEDS BOTH – Structured / Unstructured – Traditional / New

2) Singing > SOMETHING Powerful Happens to Believers > THEY SING!

vs. 46,47 ...with glad and sincere hearts, praising God...

GREAT PROOF of REALITY of GOD'S LIFE-CHANGING WORK

REDEEMED CULTURES > Native Styles, Sounds, Structure of Song > Praise

In Tune / Out of Tune / Grunts / Snorts > JOYFUL NOISES unto the LORD

ONLY Christians REALLY SING > From HEARTS Made NEW by GRACE

Visited Many CULTURES, Diverse CHURCHES > Sing with ONE VOICE!

FELLOWSHIP IN SONG - UNITING OUR VOICES IN PRAISE

SHOULD BE SOLID BIBLICAL, THEOLOGICAL CONTENT IN SONGS

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, with gratitude in your hearts to God
Colossians 3.16

PSALMS Indicate > STYLE was LOUD and BOISTEROUS: Praise God in his sanctuary... with the sounding of the trumpet... with the harp and lyre...with tambourine and dancing...with the strings and flute... with the clash of cymbals, praise him with resounding cymbals. Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.
Psalm 150.1-6

NO DRONES and DIRGES but PEOPLE ALIVE, JOYFUL, PRAISING HIM

Singing is as much the language of holy joy as praying is of holy desire. John Wesley

b. Commitment > LOYAL to GOD and ONE ANOTHER

v. 42 They devoted themselves to... prayer

Devoted to PRAYER – HARD WORK > Engaged, Attention, Concentration

FULFILLMENT of MESSIANIC EXPECTATION - I will bring *them* to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.
Isaiah 56.7

WHEN NEEDED Leadership and GUIDANCE - They prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry..."
Acts 1.24,25

When NEEDED Strength and PROTECTION - They raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them...Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness..."
Acts 4.24-30

The wind and the fire were abnormal, and probably the languages too; the new life and joy, fellowship and worship, freedom, boldness, and power were not. John Stott

1935 BLASIO KIGOSI Christian, School Teacher > RWANDA, Central Africa

Deeply DISCOURAGED: Lack of POWER, JOY, Purpose his Life & Church

Went Away for WEEK of PRAYER & Fasting > EMERGED Changed Man

CONFESSED SINS to ALL he'd Wronged > WIFE, KIDS, COLLEAGUES

TESTIFIED & PREACHED Gospel in SCHOOL > Students, Teachers SAVED

Entire VILLAGE Moved by WORD & SPIRIT > 'abaka' People ON FIRE!

KIGOSI Invited by Northern Neighbors > ANGLICAN Leaders in UGANDA

Called Leaders to REPENTANCE > Holy Spirit Poured Out > REVIVAL

KIGOSI caught FEVER > Within FEW WEEKS of Spirit-filling WAS DEAD!

WORK of God CONTINUES > Up to TODAY > EAST AFRICAN REVIVAL

Longest SUSTAINED REVIVAL in History of Church > touched 100,000's!

START? Christian TIRED of STATUS QUO in OWN LIFE & HIS CHURCH

A GREAT CHURCH > Each MEMBER has SENSE of OWNERSHIP

IF Bright & SUNNY > Blowing SNOW > Battling SNIFFLES: They're There!

Care what goes on? > SS Teachers? Worship? Ushers? Sermon?

You CAN STAY HOME > Great Time w/ God > IT IS NOT CHURCH!

Wherever the pure voice of the Gospel rings out, where people continue to profess the Christian faith, where they listen and benefit from what they hear, there undoubtedly is the church.
John Calvin

LEARNING CHURCH - LOVING CHURCH - WORSHIPPING CHURCH

MANY STOP THERE > COZY, SAFE, INSULATED, ISOLATED

4. Witnessing

a. Message Believers ANNOUNCED Good News & INVITED All to Come

HOLY SPIRIT is MISSIONARY SPIRIT – Birthed MISSIONARY CHURCH

And they were all *filled with the Holy Spirit* and *spoke the word of God boldly.*

Acts 4.31

Risen Jesus sent Church into Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Ends of Earth

b. Model > BODY had MORE than BIG MOUTH > Hands, Hearts, Feet

v. 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

SPIRIT of Jesus > SENSITIVITY of Jesus

BEGGAR was DESPISED > SEEN as OUTCAST, CURSED by GOD

CLOSEST Crippled Beggar Comes to GOD > Sit at GATEWAY of TEMPLE

v. 4 Then Peter said, "Look at us!" > EYE CONTACT with BEGGAR?!

When MOST PEOPLE see BEGGAR > Want to BECOME INVISIBLE

v. 7 Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up

APOSTLE to Jews, Chief Preacher > Pastor of 3000 Member Church > TIME?

Servant of Jesus, NOT Too Big and Important – Show COMPASSION of Jesus

LAME Man Now WHOLE/ BEGGAR made RICH - JOYFUL in Lord's House

c. Mercy

vs. 19,20 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you-even Jesus.

Ancient writing was upon papyrus, and the ink had no acid in it. It therefore did not bite into the papyrus as modern ink does; it simply lay on top of it. To erase the writing a man might take a wet sponge and simply wipe it away. William Barclay

Thus GOD our SAVIOR > Wipes our SLATE Clean with the BLOOD of Christ

ONLY Jesus can LIFT your LOAD of GUILT

WORD that LIFTED Man's PARALYSIS, LIFTS their Burden of SIN

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Acts 2.21

TRUE in FIRST Century and TRUE in TWENTY-FIRST Century

HAVE YOU CALLED ON HIS NAME AND BEEN SAVED??

d. Master > HOW are WE going to DO THIS? **Learn, Love, Worship, Witness**

v. 47 And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

From the STEAMY ENTRAILS of Great FISH – JONAH forced to CONFESS
Salvation comes from the Lord Jonah 2.9

He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. *He saved us* through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously *through Jesus Christ our Savior*. Titus 3.5,6

OF COURSE HE USED PEOPLE - Preach, Praise, Practice their Faith

v. 46 "worship daily" // v. 47 "added daily"

The ORIGINAL CALVINIST > Acknowledged WE MUST do OUR PART
The decline of the church is more due to laziness than wickedness. John Calvin

v. 47 The Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved

1) WE MUST ADD TO THE CHURCH ONLY THOSE WHO ARE SAVED

2) IF YOU ARE SAVED YOU MUST BE ADDED TO THE CHURCH

SALVATION AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP BELONG TOGETHER

DWIGHT L. MOODY - Famous Evangelist - Met DRUNK on Chicago Street

"Hello, Mr. Moody"

"Excuse me sir, do I know you?"

"Don't you remember me, I am one of your converts"

YOU MAY BE ONE of MY CONVERTS, BUT you are NOT ONE OF GOD'S

PENTECOSTAL CHURCH - SPIRIT-FILLED IN ALL RELATIONSHIPS

- To the Apostles / Submission to their Word
- To One Another / Love, Sharing, Caring, Fellowship
- To God / Worship, formal and informal, joyful and reverent
- To the World / Outreach in word and deed, continuous evangelism

Luke Paints Portrait of GREAT CHURCH AT JERUSALEM

GREAT NOT in Money, Buildings, Political Influence, Social Status

GREAT: PRESENCE of RISEN Christ, POWER of Holy Spirit, OBEDIENCE

REACHED THOUSANDS FOR CHRIST IN JERUSALEM

SAW MANY OTHER CHURCHES PLANTED thru out ROMAN WORLD

Acts 2.42-3.26

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many

wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 3.¹ One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon.² Now a man crippled from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts.³ When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money.⁴ Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!"⁵ So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.⁶ Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."⁷ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong.⁸ He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.⁹ When all the people saw him walking and praising God,¹⁰ they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.¹¹ While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished & came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade.¹² When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go.¹⁴ You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you.¹⁵ You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.¹⁶ By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.¹⁷ "Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders.¹⁸ But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer.¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,²⁰ and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus.²¹ He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets.²² For Moses said,

'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. 23 Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.' 24 "Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days. 25 And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, 'Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed.' 26 When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."