

## Lesson III.

## THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Jan. 19, 1902

Acts 2 : 37-47—Memory Verses, 37-39.

**Golden Text**—The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.—Acts 2 : 47.



37 Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Pe'ter and to the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?

38 Then Pe'ter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Je'sus 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.

43 And fear came upon every soul : and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common ; 45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need.

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.

## THE LESSON RETOLD

Many of the Jews who were listening to Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost were hearing the true story of Jesus for the first time.

As he spoke to them of Jesus' wonderful miracles, and of His rising again from the dead, after they had put him to death on the cross, his hearers began to be terrified and ashamed. They knew that Peter was speaking the truth and they began to cry out to him and the other apostles, "Men and brethren what shall we do? Will God ever forgive our terrible sin?" Then Peter answered, "If you are willing to repent and become followers of His Son Jesus, God will even now forgive you and will send His Holy Spirit to teach you how to obey Him. This is His message, not only for you who are Jews, but for everybody in the world."

When Peter saw that many of these men

were ready to believe in Jesus, he told them that if they would be among His disciples, they must be baptized as a sign to all who knew them that they now belonged to Jesus Christ.

After they had been further taught by Peter and the other apostles, about three thousand men and women on the same day were baptized, and they, together with the disciples, made up the first Christian church. And the power of the Holy Spirit was among them, and those that were rich sold their goods and divided the money among those who had need. And they spent much of their time in the Temple and in meeting at each other's houses for worship and thanksgiving. Also many signs and wonders were done among them.

When those outside the church saw how happy and contented their friends were,