

HE TOUCHED ME

Your Weekly Devotional

May 31, 2026

JESUS CALLS US

“Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins”

Acts 2:38

Peter offered further proof that “God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” This drew notable reaction. We perceive the crowd as having believed Peter and accepting his interpretation of events as true.

This terrified them, thus their plea, “what shall we do?”

At this point, Peter gives two stipulations and promises two blessings. They must repent and be baptized, and they will receive the forgiveness of sin and experience the Holy Spirit. As Lord, Jesus demands repentance and baptism, which is an outward expression of allegiance to him. As Savior, he offers the unmerited gift of forgiveness. And there is no separation of the Lordship of Christ from his role as Savior here.

Some have understood the statement as implying that baptism is a necessary for salvation. But, as some scholars point out, that interpretation may read too much into that text. In the home of Cornelius those present received the Spirit and spoke in tongues before they were baptized.

A New Testament scholar named F.F. Bruce says, “It is against the whole genius of biblical religion to suppose that the outward rite would have any value except insofar as it was accompanied by the work of grace within.” He points to the similar situation in Acts 3:19, where the blotting out of the peoples’ sins is the direct consequence of their repenting and turning to God...nothing is said about baptism, although it is no doubt implied. Take note, however, that the idea of an unbaptized believer does not seem to be in the New Testament.

A further word about the importance of Baptism. The apostle Paul later explained that to “be baptized” was to be “buried” with Jesus into death so that we too may live a new life. He noted that “all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ”. There is nothing miraculous about the waters of baptism, rather, baptism is God’s chosen time when regeneration and renewal happen. Therefore, baptism is not a human work of merit: it is a work of God.

“Unto you, and to your children,” God’s message was offered to the people of that generation and to their descendants. The Messiah’s kingdom was to be an everlasting kingdom. “And for all who are far off” – the promise was not only to Jews who worshiped God, but also to Gentiles who were far from Him and His people. They too could be redeemed if they would repent and be baptized.

“For all whom the Lord will call”—God extended His call and offered His promise to everyone and that includes you and me. The blessings of the Messiah’s kingdom will be available only to those who respond to His call.

So, what happened to Peter at that first Pentecost can happen to us. On the night of the crucifixion, it was Peter. He followed afar off and warmed himself by the fire. Then it was Peter, when he failed to live up to his boast and denied his Lord and got into trouble. But on the day of Pentecost, it was Peter empowered by the Holy Spirit to courageous witness. We are told that what happened to Peter happened to all the disciples. And, indeed, it can happen to us today. So be it!

