

Heritage Christian Community Baptist Church Bible Study
Acts 2:22-47 The Promised Holy Spirit, Peter's Sermon, The First Church
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As we peer deeper into the sermon of Peter in Jerusalem, we should be careful to remember that he is preaching during the reign of the Roman government. After the ascension of Christ and the now present Holy Spirit living in these disciples for the first time, those who are looking on need answers to what they have heard and see. The onlookers who are amazed by what they hear are now asking the question, “What do we do with this?” They have come to Jerusalem ritualistically to fulfill their Jewish duty at the Pentecost Feast but are now experiencing from the outside the sound of the promised Holy Spirit. The 120 disciples are experiencing the promised Holy Spirit within them and seeing the effects of His impartation happening around them. The suddenness of His presence and power has an immediate impact on the Jews in Jerusalem. Peter now stands to preach to those who have been impacted by the move of the Spirit. After the prophetic portion of his sermon, Peter makes plain the error of the Jews who crucified Jesus and explains to them that He is the Messiah. But despite their error, they can still be engrafted into the body of Christian believers and receive the Holy Spirit. Peter's preaching on the Good News of Jesus Christ caused thousands to become united by the desire to be informed about Jesus, and on this belief, the first church was born.

Peter's Sermon (vv22-28):

²²“Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know— ²³Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; ²⁴whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. ²⁵For David says concerning Him:

‘I foresaw the Lord always before my face,
For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.
²⁶Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad;
Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.
²⁷For You will not leave my soul in Hades,
Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
²⁸You have made known to me the ways of life;
You will make me full of joy in Your presence.’

Peter makes clear in this sermon that those who are currently in Jerusalem are familiar with the miracles, signs, and wonders that Jesus did and that they were all performed to accredit Jesus Christ to the office of Messiah. This meaning He was appointed by God and not merely a man speaking of Himself falsely proclaiming to be God. Peter would mention Jesus' origin to remind those who are in Jerusalem for the feast that they have known this same Jesus of Nazareth since

his early years. Peter is explaining, because of your familiarity with Him, you failed to recognize His deity. With this, you gave one of your own over to Roman government to be crucified. You took the One God delivered to you as the Messiah, after being in awe and benefiting from His miracles, and declared that He should die. But Jesus had already declared, “I am the resurrection and the life”(John 11:25). Therefore, it was not possible for Him to remain in the grave if He is the source that gives meaning to rising from death and giving life. This portion of Peter’s speech established the guilt of the Jewish crowd, put them under conviction, and so led them to repentance and faith.¹ In doing so, God performed the greatest miracle of overcoming the grave and fulfilled David’s Psalms 16:8–11(vv25-28).

Peter uses the prophetic word of David to express God’s planned resurrection. As David used parallelism for comfort that God would be with him in death, Peter is expressing that God would raise Jesus from the grave. God would not allow the Holy One (Luke 4:34) to see corruption (held by demons in death). Therefore, those who will receive Jesus as the Messiah and Savior will not be left alone in the world of corruption but will be given the newness of life through Jesus Christ. Peter is preaching that this Christ gives causes those to rejoice who will seek His face. His presence is eminent and beneficial to those who follow Him. His followers have abundant life and are not left to the looming sorrow of the world.

Q1. How did God use man’s freedom of choice in His plan for resurrection to benefit humanity?

A:

Q2. How did Peter show evidence of prophecy in these verses and how did it effect David then and us now?

A:

Q3. What is meant by David/Peter referring to Jesus as the Holy One?

A:

Peter’s Explanation (vv29-39):

²⁹“Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. ³⁰ Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, ³¹ he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. ³² This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. ³³ Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

³⁴ “For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself:

“The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at My right hand,

³⁵ Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.” ’

¹ Polhill, John B. 1992. *Acts*. Vol. 26. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

³⁶ “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

³⁸ Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

Peter now speaks of the Davidic writing which was familiar to the Jews of the Way who would have known David’s writings. Peter is reminding the listeners of His sermon that David knew of a time to come and the Savior coming in the time. Being that David’s tomb was nearby to Jerusalem, his words were prophetic in that he was speaking of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection and not his own. Behind the oath referred to in v. 30 stands Nathan’s prophecy (Ps 132:11; 2 Sam 7:12–13) that God would establish an eternal kingdom with one of David’s descendants, a prophecy that had come to be understood messianically.² While David would foresee the Messianic resurrection, Peter is now preaching that he saw the Messiah’s death and resurrection from the grave. God kept this promise in Jesus, David’s descendant, whose reign would not end (Luke 1:32–33).³ Peter is preaching that these 120 disciples were directly impacted by Jesus’ life and are eyewitnesses of His resurrection. They have received with power, the manifestation of the promise of the Holy Spirit made by God through Jesus Christ. Now that Jesus had risen and ascended, Peter preaches that Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on His disciples. Just as the disciples experienced Jesus’ miracles on Earth, the surrounding Jews have now witnessed the miraculous effects of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on these disciples.

Peter continues to use familiar Old Testament text to explain current happenings. He uses a Psalm of David (Psalms 110:1) to explain the ascension of Christ, which was God speaking to Jesus to “*Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.*” This psalm of David shows that David was aware that someone far greater than himself would fulfill God’s promises to him of an everlasting kingdom, someone who was simultaneously distinct from Yahweh and yet also David’s Lord.⁴ This Psalm showed the authority of Jesus and His equality with God the Father as Lord over all. The power Jesus possess gives power over all kingdoms and enemies both now and forever. Peter exclaims that it is this Jesus whom you have crucified, who is now risen and now called to the right hand of the throne of God. It is this Jesus whom you will call on to be saved. This Jesus will give power to all believers over all the enemies of the Earth by His Spirit and will reign forever.

Using the Word of God, the prophetic word from David, and the present miracles before them, Peter’s preaching penetrated the hearts of the Jewish crowd. They recognized their responsibility in rejecting/crucifying the Messiah, which caused them to ask for a new direction. Peter’s response becomes the concomitant for conversion (repent, forgiveness of sins, receipt of the Holy Spirit and baptism). Peter exclaims that despite the rejection of the Messiah through

² Polhill, John B. 1992. *Acts*. Vol. 26. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

³ Barry, John D., Douglas Mangum, Derek R. Brown, Michael S. Heiser, Miles Custis, Elliot Ritzema, Matthew M. Whitehead, Michael R. Grigoni, and David Bomar. 2012, 2016. *Faithlife Study Bible*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

⁴ Barry, John D., Douglas Mangum, Derek R. Brown, Michael S. Heiser, Miles Custis, Elliot Ritzema, Matthew M. Whitehead, Michael R. Grigoni, and David Bomar. 2012, 2016. *Faithlife Study Bible*.

crucifixion, your turn of action (repent) is to acknowledge the error of your ways and simply accept Him as Savior. The change of mind with knowledge of His divinity causes a change of heart to experience the outpouring of His Spirit. Peter concluded his appeal with the promise of Joel 2:32 (cf. v. 21): “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”⁵ This promise was not just for the believers on the Day of Pentecost, but to succeeding generations to come. These new converts would evangelize and make proselytes of Gentiles (non-Jewish culture) “who are afar off.” Both Jews and gentiles alike will be drawn to God to receive the Spirit of God.

Q4: Why do you think Peter used familiar Davidic writings to preach his sermon?

A:

Q5: How does Jesus’ kingdom reign forever over all the enemies of the Earth?

A: Open:

Q6: What is your level of confidence with evangelism and sharing your testimony with unbelievers?

A: (Open)

The First Church: (vv40-47)

⁴⁰ *And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”* ⁴¹ *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.* ⁴² *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.* ⁴³ *Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.* ⁴⁴ *Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,* ⁴⁵ *and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.*

⁴⁶ *So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,* ⁴⁷ *praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.*

Peter went on preaching and shared with the Jews that some will continue to reject the crucified Jesus as Messiah, despite His teachings and miracles. Peter preached that they should separate themselves as being identified as Christians. With the good news of Jesus Christ, there would be a multitude who believed and joined the family of Christ who were baptized. The new converts adopted the life of the Apostles and the religiosity of Christianity. There were four elements of their discipline:

1. Teaching of the Apostles – The resurrection of Christ, OT scriptures and their testimony of His teachings and their conversion
2. Fellowship - (koinōnia) – Joint participation in sharing of goods and meals as a community

⁵ Polhill, John B. 1992. *Acts*. Vol. 26. The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.

3. Breaking of Bread – Communion to commemorate the fellowship of Christ’s suffering
4. Prayers – Keeping the prayer hours of Judaism in the temple and sharing in prayer in their homes

As a result of this new foundation and discipline, these new disciples gained a reverent honor of God. They were together and in unity with one another. This was evidence of the Power of God at work. Where the power of God is at work, miracles and signs of His presence are also evidenced.

This family of believers were united, ensuring no one went without. Those who had great possessions sold their goods and gave so that others who were without would have plenty. The joy of fellowship was evident as they shared one to another, just as Jesus did as He taught His disciples. Fellowship in the temple for worship and sharing meals in their homes brought about a unity which led to Spiritual growth through teaching. They were together talking about who God is and who Jesus was to them. This display of the Christian community showed their love for one another and gave them favor among unbelievers who witnessed their fellowship. As God worked in their fellowship, He also drew the unbelievers to them for conversion. Therefore, the Holy Spirit in them drew others to God and the church by their fellowship.

Q7: How do you participate in fellowship of your church?

A: (Open)

Q8: What Spiritual disciplines can you improve upon as a Christian?

(Daily reading of the Word, consistency of prayer, Understanding and participation in communion, etc..)

A: (Open)

Q9: What have you learned from this lesson?

A: (Open)