

## Acts 2:22-47 The First Christian Sermon (Part 2)

- A. Jesus is the Long Awaited Messiah of God (22-36)
  - 1. Jesus' Life, Death, and Resurrection Fulfilled the Promise (22-24) – Paul applies Jesus' life and death as the fulfillment of Joels' prophecy
    - a. Jesus' Messiahship was Verified by Miracles (22)
      - i. The Jews had seen and heard of these miracles
      - ii. They were not done in secret
      - iii. Jesus' message and actions were proclaimed throughout the land
      - iv. There was no doubt that Jesus did the signs foretold that the Messiah would do
    - b. Jesus Was Crucified by Lawless Men (23)
      - i. Notice that Peter holds them accountable for their wicked actions
      - ii. Notice also that this was part of God's plan
      - iii. There may have been many in the crowd who had yelled crucify Him
      - iv. All those who did not stand for him are complicit in his death – that means our sin is the cause as well – the most humiliating and shameful death imaginable
    - c. Jesus Was Raised From the Dead (24)
      - i. But God vindicated Jesus' claim and His authority
      - ii. He was raised from the dead
      - iii. Death could not hold Him – He defeated man's greatest enemy – proving that He is who he says he is.
  - 2. Jesus is the Fulfillment of David's Seed (25-31) – He uses the scripture to preach Jesus to the people
    - a. Peter Applies Psalm 16:8-11 to Jesus (25-28)
      - i. Notice that Peter is preaching the scripture here and applying it to Jesus
        - V. 25 Here Peter quotes David's expression of continual reliance on God, being continually aware of His presence
        - V. 26 David was glad and rejoiced in the hope the Lord's presence provides
        - V. 27-28 David knows that his soul won't be abandoned by God because God's Holy one (Jesus) won't be abandoned to the grave.
          - Decay was all too real for Palestinians. They would bury the

bones of their dead in ossuaries after the body decayed.

- This means Jesus was raised from the dead physically and bodily
- David foretold that God would raise Jesus from the dead

b. David Died and Remained Dead (29)

- i. Peter makes sure they know David could not have been speaking of himself – He is dead
- ii. The psalm he quotes is ultimately not about David but a Holy Spirit given prophecy about the Messiah
- iii. The apostles are not testifying about Jesus on their own – the Scripture testifies of him too.

c. David Prophesied of Christ Who Would Fulfill the promise made to him (30-31)

- i. David did not speak of himself but he was a prophet and knew that God promised him a descendent who would reign forever
- ii. Peter is here implying that Jesus ascended to heaven and sat down on the throne of David at the right hand of the Father
- iii. Peter specifically applies Ps. 16:10 to Jesus here
  - The promise was fulfilled in the resurrection

3. Jesus is Both The Lord and The Christ (32-36)

a. The Apostles Are Witnesses to the Resurrection (32)

- i. Jesus is the Messiah of David's prophecy
- ii. The apostles had seen, touched, and ate with Jesus
- iii. They were eyewitnesses to His resurrection

b. The Apostles Received the Spirit From Christ (33)

- i. Jesus did what David could not – he now rules on the heavenly throne
- ii. Jesus received the Spirit of prophecy and it is Jesus who has not distributed the Spirit to the disciples
  - Jesus received the Spirit – this doesn't mean He had no connection with the Spirit in his early ministry
  - He did all His earthly miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit
  - The point is that Jesus sent the Spirit to continue His ministry not as a second blessing.

- Joel's prophecy about the pouring out of the Spirit is fulfilled as Jesus and the Father send the Spirit
  - NOTE: Peter is explaining the audible and visual manifestations of the Spirit in terms of the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus
- c. Jesus Alone is Enthroned at the Father's Right Hand (34-35)
    - i. Peter quotes Psalm 110:1 – David is not referring to himself here but the future Messiah
    - ii. It is Jesus who is seated at the right hand of the Father
  - d. Jesus is Both Lord and Christ (36)
    - i. The Scripture is clear – Jesus is both Lord and Christ
    - ii. Jesus has been exalted by God but he was crucified by wicked men
    - iii. It is this Lord who is exalted at God's right hand who now grant's salvation through His name
- B. Salvation Has Come Through Jesus' Name (37-41)
1. The Command and Promise of the Gospel (37-39)
    - a. The People Are Convicted in their Heart (37)
      - i. The listeners are stunned – Peter just accused them of murdering the Messiah whom God sent to save them
      - ii. They Spirit convicted their hearts as the preaching of Peter went forth
    - b. The Call of God is Given (38a)
      - i. Peter gives two commands – Repent and Be Baptized
        - The crowd was commanded to repent of their sin, as well as their false ritualistic religion and turn to the Savior
          - Even though these people were faced with perhaps the most horrible sin imaginable (crucifying the Lord Jesus) God still offers them mercy if they would repent
        - The crowd was commanded to be baptized in Jesus' name for the forgiveness of sin
    - c. The Promises of God are Offered (38b-39)
      - i. The people are offered the forgiveness of sin
      - ii. The people are offered the gift of the Holy Spirit

**Question 1:** Does this text assert that Baptism is necessary for salvation?

No. Baptism is necessary, but not as a prerequisite for salvation. The word Baptize is actually the un-translated Greek word which means immerse. The Jews knew well the ritual of baptism and washings. They all had to frequently undergo “baptisms” which were purification rituals, and Gentiles were baptized in order to become part of the Jewish community. The Jewish washings or Baptisms were always meant as a symbol of the purification that repentance and animal sacrifices brought to the people of God. It was how an “unclean” person became clean. The emphasis is not on the Baptism in Peter’s command. It is on the name of Jesus. Now, instead of being immersed in water as a Jewish purification rite, they would be purified by the sacrifice and authority of Jesus Christ. Being commanded to be baptized wouldn’t have been a shock to the Jews, but being baptized in the name of Jesus would have been shocking. Baptism was a sign 200 years before Jesus was born. It was a sign when Jesus Himself was baptized, and it is a sign of what has taken place in our hearts now. Baptism here is the demonstration that they are willing to lay aside their unprofitable religious ritual and bind themselves to God’s Messiah.

**Question 2:** Does “for the forgiveness of sins” mean that Baptism is what forgives sin?

The question centers around the ambiguity of the word “for” (εἰς). To be fair, “for the forgiveness of sins” could mean “in order to get the forgiveness of sins” or it could mean “because you have received the forgiveness of sins.” Interpreters who assert one view over another must prove their claim from something they bring to the text. Here, Peter does not systematically spell out the relationship between repentance, baptism, and forgiveness. If we are to interpret Peter rightly, we should look for another Scripture where Peter explains how sins are forgiven and it would be best if we could find one recorded by Luke (the same author who wrote Acts 2:38.) We have such a text. Acts 10:43 is spoken by Peter and recorded by Luke. Peter is preaching to Cornelius and says, “To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” Acts 10:43. This text actually tells us how the remission of sin is gained. This doesn’t mean that Peter failed to mention faith in Acts 2:38, nor does he fail to mention repentance in Acts 10:43. Faith and Repentance are two sides of the same coin. There is no true faith where there is no repentance and there is no true repentance where there is no faith in Christ.

**Question 3:** Does Peter mean that “in the name of Jesus” is the formula which must be spoken at Baptism, rather than “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost” as Jesus taught?

“In the name of...” was a commissioning of Jesus’ authority. To be baptized in his name meant they were being purified by Jesus’ own authority. For example, in Acts 4:7, the religious leaders asked Peter and John, “By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?” They were preaching in the name of Jesus, which means they were doing miracles, and preaching by His authority. For the crowd to be baptized in Jesus’ name meant

1. They publicly acknowledged Jesus as Messiah and Savior
2. they acknowledged that immersion for cleansing is no longer connected with Jewish ritual purity but with the person and work of Jesus
3. They acknowledged the repentant need for salvation by Jesus
4. They acknowledge that Jesus has the power to forgive their sin

iii. The promise is for every generation and even those who are far off (i.e. Gentiles.)

2. Thousands Respond to the Gospel (40-41)
  - a. Peter's Entire Sermon is not recorded (40)
    - i. He spent much time persuading them and preaching Jesus to them.
    - ii. Luke simply records the main point of his sermon
  - b. Peter's Sermon is used to Convert 3000 people (41)
    - i. Notice that those who believed were baptized
    - ii. This is not just a ritual. Only those who repented of their sin and believe the message Peter preached were baptized and only those were added to the church

## II. The Life of the First Christian Community (42-47)

### A. The Church's Practice(42-43)

1. They Continued in the Apostle's Teaching
  - a. Sermons were an integral part of the church from the very beginning.
  - b. Sermons were used for teaching and instruction as well as evangelism.
  - c. They followed the pattern of the Jews who preached every Sabbath in the synagogue
  - d. The Apostles used the OT scripture and expounded them with new eyes as they preached the fulfillment in Jesus Christ
2. They Continued in Fellowship
  - a. They shared their lives with one another
  - b. This is a devotion to the well-being of one another
  - c. Even in the earliest period of the church, Christ produced a love for the brethren in the church
  - d. They even began selling their possessions to help the needy among them
3. They Continued in the Breaking of Bread
  - a. This probably speaks of ordinary meals of fellowship as well as participation in the Lord's supper
  - b. Sharing table fellowship with one another is an important aspect of the early church – it demonstrates a unity in community that goes beyond just “hanging out”

- c. Sharing a table with others was a big deal in the first century. Remember Jesus was a scandal because he ate with tax collectors and sinners
  - 4. They Continued in Prayers (notice the plural)
    - a. They regularly prayed together
    - b. The Jews had regular times of prayer at the Temple
    - c. The Christians continued this practice as they prayed together to Jesus
  - 5. The Apostles continued doing Miracles (43)
    - a. The Message of Jesus was being proven by the works of God being done
    - b. Every miracle performed was a sign pointing to the reality of the perfect kingdom and the validation of the Apostles' message
- B. The Church Supported One Another (44-45)
  - 1. They had all things in Common – means they shared all things together. (44)
    - a. It doesn't mean they were always in one location together.
    - b. It means they were willing to use their possessions for the common good
    - c. They didn't just say they loved each other, they were willing to demonstrate it
  - 2. They sold belongings to help the needy (45)
    - a. This does not mean that everyone sold everything they had and put it into a big pile for community use
    - b. The only thing Luke asserts here is that people were selling their own possessions in order to help those who were in need.
    - c. This doesn't teach communal life or redistribution of wealth. It teaches that some wealthy people who were saved, sold possessions and gave money to the poor among them.
    - d. This describes Christian charity, not communism.
    - e. We will see later in Acts that members of the Christian community still owned property and other things. In
- C. The Church Worshiped God Together (46-47a)
  - 1. Notice that they still met in the Temple.
  - 2. Not necessarily every believer every single day, but that there were continual meetings.
  - 3. The Temple complex was vast and Solomon's Portico (on the east side of the outer court) was a likely site for them to meet, eat, pray, and worship God together.
  - 4. Many people assert that since the NT church always met in their homes that the church today should meet in their homes

– however, they also met in the Temple and gathered together for corporate worship in the outer court.

5. Of course, they fellowshiped and ate from house to house as well.

6. Because of their lifestyle which was changed by Christ, they gained favor with many people as they praised God.

D. The Church Grew By God's Hand (47b)