

The Good News of Jesus

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Preacher: Jonathan de Groot

- [0 : 0 0] Well, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson were on a camping trip, and in the middle of the night, Holmes woke up Dr. Watson. He gave him a nudge, and he said, Watson, look up into the sky and tell me what you see.
- I see millions of stars, Holmes, said Watson. And what do you conclude from that, Watson? So Watson thinks for a moment, and he says, well, astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets.
- Astrologically, I observe that Saturn is in Leo. Hororologically, I deduce that the time is approximately quarter past three. Meteorologically, I suspect that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow.
- Theologically, I see that God is all-powerful, and we are small and insignificant. What does it tell you, Holmes? Holmes, silent for a moment, then says, Watson, you idiot, somebody has stolen our tent.
- Now, sometimes it is easy to miss the obvious, isn't it? We can miss what is right in front of us. And missing the obvious is what happens when it comes to Jesus Christ.
- [1 : 1 0] And it is no laughing matter because while God has spoken to us by his Son, many people either completely miss Jesus or they simply dismiss Jesus as being irrelevant.
- And so as we look this afternoon at Peter's sermon in Acts chapter 2, we see that the focus of Peter's sermon is firmly on Jesus Christ. Because he doesn't want his listeners to miss the significance of who Jesus is and what Jesus came to do.
- And so his sermon is on the person and the work of Jesus Christ. Now, last week, we looked at Acts chapter 2, the first part, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.
- When the crowd were amazed and perplexed and they were left asking in Acts chapter 2, sorry, Acts chapter 1 verse 12, what does this mean?
- Well, here, Peter answers their question by telling the crowd that this is all about Jesus. Jesus is the meaning of the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.
- [2 : 1 3] Because Peter is not preaching here to believers about the Holy Spirit. Peter is preaching to unbelievers about Jesus Christ. And his sermon is Christ-centered because, essentially, Jesus is at the center of God's purposes for this world.
- And that's why the good news of Jesus Christ has turned this world upside down. And why the good news of Jesus Christ can also turn our lives around. Because what we see in this text is that the good news of Jesus demands a response from every single human being.
- And that's what we're going to look at today in Peter's sermon. So, looking at it under two headings. First of all, revelation, what God has done, verse 14 to 36. And then, secondly, response, what we must do, verse 37 to 41.
- So, first of all, revelation, what God has done. So, the crowd were asking one another, what does this mean? Chapter 2, verse 13. So, Peter stands up and he addresses the crowd.

And what he does is he explains to them the significance of what has just happened at Pentecost. And why the Holy Spirit came. So, the believers weren't drunk because, Peter says, it's only 9 a.m.

- [3 : 33] And so, he answers their question by stating that this was, essentially, the fulfillment of God's saving purposes. So, what happened in the life and the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ and in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the fulfillment of everything that God had promised in the Scriptures.

Now, remember who Peter is addressing here. He's speaking to a crowd of Jews. And they are in Jerusalem. And so, they would be familiar with what the Scriptures, what the Old Testament had to say with all these prophecies regarding the coming of the Messiah.

And so, Pentecost, Peter's telling them, happened because God said it would. And that's why Peter starts the sermon by saying there in verse 16, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel.

And then he goes on and quotes from Joel chapter 2, verse 17. In the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy.

Your young men will see visions. Your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

- [4 : 55] The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood. Before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. So, Peter's quoting Joel to say that these, these days are the last days.

Now, of course, what Joel saw was in the future. But Peter is saying to his audience, these things are happening before your very eyes. We are living in the last days because the life and the death and the resurrection and the ascension of Jesus, accompanied by the coming of the Holy Spirit, that is the dawning of a new age in God's purposes.

A new era had begun. The last days had arrived. And so today, sometimes people will ask the question, do you think we're living in the last days?

And it usually comes when there's been some global disaster or a world war. Surely, people think this must be the last days. Things are coming to an end. But the reality is that we are already living in the last days.

Not because the world is getting worse, but because the last days began when Jesus ascended into heaven and gave the gift of the Holy Spirit to the church.

- [6 : 11] And so these last days that we're in will continue until the day that Jesus Christ returns. So at Pentecost, God's saving purposes had moved on a stage.

And that's why Joel's prophecy was being fulfilled in this momentous moment in what theologians would call redemptive history. It's the turning of a new page onto a new chapter of God's saving purposes.

And Joel mentions this, and Peter quotes Joel to say this. First, the Spirit's being poured out on all God's people, verse 17. Second, all God's people will be able to prophesy.

In other words, all God's people will be able to speak about God. And then thirdly, by signs on earth, which emphasize the dramatic work of God in history.

And so all of this means, by Peter quoting Joel's prophecy, it means that judgment is on the horizon. And that's why there is a great warning here.

- [7 : 16] It's an indication that in this new era and the coming of the Holy Spirit, the next era, the next stage in God's plan and God's purpose will be the coming of Jesus.

And then after the coming of Jesus, there will be the judgment. So there's a warning of the judgment, but there's also great hope here. Because Peter is giving the offer of salvation.

So these are the last days. The judgment is coming, but he's saying to his listeners, you need to be ready and do something about it. Because Peter doesn't want his listeners to miss what God has done in history in Jesus.

And that's why his quotation from Joel ends with the words in verse 21, And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. And so he's taking Lord, the word Lord, to refer to Jesus.

Jesus is the Lord who saves all who call on his name. So what Peter is doing is showing how God's revelation in the scriptures is all about Jesus.

[8 : 27] Because he doesn't want his audience to miss the obvious. And that's why he highlights four vital truths about Jesus in this sermon. The life of Jesus, the death of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus, and the exaltation of Jesus.

So there's the life of Jesus in verse 22. Fellow Israelites, listen to this. Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs, which God did among you through him as you yourselves know.

So what's he saying? He's saying Jesus was a man. He was called Jesus of Nazareth. But more than that, he's saying Jesus was also divine.

So God did miracles and wonders and signs through Jesus. And everybody knew this. And then Peter moves on. That was his life to his death.

The death of Jesus in verse 23. This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge. And you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

[9 : 36] So Peter is saying Jesus died according to God's plan. But at the same time, he tells the crowd that along with wicked men, they killed Jesus.

He's pointing the finger at them. So you've probably heard of seeker-sensitive sermons before. Well, this isn't one of them by Peter. Because Jesus is saying that they killed the Messiah.

They killed Jesus. So after his life and then his death, Jesus, sorry, Peter moves on to Jesus' resurrection. Verse 24 says, But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

So God raised Jesus from the dead. And so Peter is emphasizing, again, that Jesus' resurrection is the fulfillment of prophecy.

And that's why he quotes Psalm 16, which is the psalm that we sang earlier. And it's a psalm of King David. And it's quoted there in verse 25 to 28.

[10 : 43] And in this psalm, David expresses his confidence that God will be with him even in death. But David's not simply talking about himself in that psalm.

The psalm is about the resurrection of Jesus. And so that's why Peter says David did die. And David was buried. And so that's why you can go today and see the tomb of David.

He's dead. And so the psalm is referring to someone greater than David. Verse 30. But he was a prophet, as David, and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. So David's descendant, of course, is Jesus Christ.

Peter's showing how Jesus fulfills David's exact words. And so it's the resurrection that gives ultimate meaning to David's hope in Psalm 16.

[11 : 55] And then after the resurrection of Jesus, it testifies to the fact that Jesus is the Messiah. And so Peter, along with plenty other witnesses, had seen the resurrected Jesus.

That's why Peter says in verse 32, God has raised this Jesus to life and we are all witnesses of it. And so Peter is saying here that the revelation of God in the Scriptures about the Messiah perfectly matches the revelation of God in history in the person of Jesus.

It was all promised by God. And the apostles were witnesses to this happening. And so we read God did miracles, wonders, and signs through the life of Jesus.

God's deliberate plan was the death of Jesus. And then God raised Jesus from the dead. But there's more because Peter moves from the resurrection of Jesus to his exaltation at God's right hand.

Verse 33 to 36. As we read, verse 33, Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

[13 : 18] And then David goes on. And this time he quotes from Psalm 110. Another Psalm. And he quotes from the Psalm to say that Jesus is Lord.

So Jesus had already applied the Psalm to himself in the Gospels because the Psalm speaks of two Lords. The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand.

So one is the Lord God, Yahweh. And the other is the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, who sits now exalted at God's right hand.

And so Peter is now showing that Jesus is Lord, just like he had shown how Jesus is Messiah from the Scriptures. And that was essentially the point of his sermon.

It's summed up in verse 36, where he comes to a conclusion and lands the plane and says, Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this. God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.

[14 : 27] So what has Peter done? He's argued from the Scriptures, and he's argued from history that Jesus is Lord and Messiah.

And that is the answer to the crowd's question way back in chapter 2, verse 13. What does this mean? It means that Jesus is Lord and Messiah.

So he is ushered in the last days with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in fulfilment of all of God's promises to his people. And so Peter wanted his listeners to be absolutely clear on this.

He didn't want them to miss the obvious, that the Jesus who was killed and who had been raised to life is both Lord and Messiah.

Jesus the Lord came to save, which means Peter's listeners had to realise realise that Jesus needed to save them. And they needed to submit to Jesus as their Lord.

[15 : 30] And so what God revealed in the Scriptures was playing out right in front of them in Jesus. And that is why Christianity is a historical religion.

It is firmly based on historical events, things that actually happened with Jesus. So Christianity claims that God has revealed himself in human history in the person of Jesus.

Christ has done in order to save us. So Jesus entered into our world of space and time to live, to die, and to rise again so that when we are united to him by faith, then we benefit from what he has done and we are saved.

And that's why we must respond to Jesus Christ. And Peter's audience had failed to see this. But of course, it wasn't just a Jewish audience away back then who had missed the revelation of what God had done in Jesus.

Because today, still, people miss what God has done and continue to reject Jesus. They regard Jesus as being a complete irrelevance to their lives, that he has got no meaning or significance to life in this world.

[16 : 56] And perhaps you're here this afternoon and that's you. You've missed the fact that Jesus is both Lord and Messiah who came to save you.

But if that's true, that Jesus is both Lord and Messiah, then you can't just dismiss him. You've surely got to respond to him in a way that is appropriate.

Well, let's see how that happens here in our second point, response. First, revelation, what God has done. Second, response, what we must do. That's the question asked in response to everything Peter's just said.

Verse 37. When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, brothers, what shall we do?

Cut to the heart. In other words, the Holy Spirit convicted them of their sin. They realized they were guilty of killing the Lord and Messiah. Messiah, a horrendously evil act.

[18 : 02] And so they knew this was serious. They knew that they had made themselves enemies of God's Lord and Messiah. They had rejected the Lord of the universe.

And there can be no worse crime than this. So they were guilty of high treason. And it hit home right to their hearts.

And so they were struck with fear, knowing that they now had to do something about it. That's why they ask, what shall we do? And so Peter tells them straight, there's only one possible response to make.

He says, repent. Verse 38. Peter replied, repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

And you'll receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promises for you and for your children and for all who are far off, for all whom the Lord, our God, will call.

[19 : 02] He urges every single person to repent. But what does it mean to repent? Well, it's more than just simply saying sorry, which is always good.

To repent means to actively turn from sin and turn to Jesus. There's a personal change of heart, a change of mind, where we acknowledge our sin and rebellion against God and we go to Jesus for forgiveness.

And so repentance is inward and it is personal. But notice it's also outward and it's public. That's why Peter commands, repent and be baptized.

Baptism is an outward expression of faith in Jesus. And so all who repent by turning from sin and turning to Jesus, Peter says, receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

And so this promise wasn't just for the Jewish audience who were there on that day. It was also a promise for their children.

[20 : 14] So it was for future generations, including us. And it was for all who are far off. So it was for Gentiles too, including us. It's for everyone whom the Lord, our God, calls to himself.

Verse 40, with many other words, he warned them and he pleaded with them, save yourselves from this corrupt generation. What's he saying? He's saying to his audience, stop being part of a generation of people who reject Jesus Christ.

Stop missing the obvious. Open your eyes and wake up to what God has done in history right before you and the life and death and resurrection of Jesus.

Because he promised he would do all of this in his scriptures. So can't you see what you need to do? Peter's saying they need to repent and be saved.

And so what's the response? Verse 41, those who accepted his message were baptized and about 3,000 were added to their number that day.

[21 : 25] 3,000, that's amazing. And so what does all this mean for us? Well, there's an application here for people who wouldn't call themselves Christians and there's an application for people who would call themselves Christians.

And so for those who are Christians, well, we should never forget what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. Jesus is both Lord and Messiah.

And so we must recognize that we are no more than a sinner who needs the grace of God and who can receive the grace of God by repenting and turning from our sin and turning to Jesus.

And when Jesus has saved us, then we will want to live lives of gratitude. for all that he has done. And we'll also want to recognize that Jesus is Lord and so he's got to be Lord over my life, over my time, over my talents, over my treasures.

He's Lord of all of these things. They belong to him if I belong to him. And so I must serve him with all that I am. And then there's an application for those who aren't Christians because when Peter preached the sermon at Pentecost, his listeners were confronted with the good news of Jesus and they were forced to respond.

[22 : 50] And today, the good news of Jesus continues to confront all of those who hear it. And it demands a response. And the only proper response we read here is to repent.

Because if I refuse to acknowledge that I am a sinner who needs Jesus to save me, and if I reject Jesus' lordship over my life, then I continue to live as God's enemy.

I'm still in rebellion against my creator. And that will never end well. Because the Lord Jesus will judge every person for how they have responded to him.

And that judgment day is coming when Jesus returns. And that's why we must repent and receive forgiveness for our sins.

And we can receive forgiveness no matter what we've done. Because Peter is saying there's forgiveness forgiveness even for killing the Son of God and crucifying him.

[23 : 53] Because everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, he says from Joel. And that's why Jesus Christ is such good news for every single one of us.

He is our only hope because he is the only hope for this world. And so the sheer enormity of what Christianity claims about Jesus Christ means that we can't possibly ignore him.

Because if there's a chance that God has stepped into history in the person of Jesus, not just to reveal himself to us, but to save us, then you can't be too busy to look into this and explore it further.

It would be intellectual suicide at best. And it would be eternal loss at worst. So just imagine you get a letter from your doctor.

It comes through your door tomorrow and it says, Dear so-and-so, please get in touch. We are aware that you have a life-threatening condition and we must see you.

[24 : 59] Yours, Doctor so-and-so. What are you going to do? Surely, you've got to check it out. Why? Because the enormity of the claim means you've got to find out before you simply dismiss it.

Because if there's a chance that what the doctor is claiming is true, then you risk your life by dismissing it. And can you see it is the same with Jesus Christ.

We put ourselves in a dangerous position if we ignore God's clear revelation to the world and we dismiss Jesus without even investigating Him.

Because if He is both Lord and Messiah and we miss Him, then we lose everything. And yet, we've also got everything to gain if we bow to Jesus as our Savior and as our Lord.

Because the message about Him, the one that Peter proclaims, is good news. good news that what was promised and then fulfilled in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus, it impacts us.

[26 : 08] It impacts you and me. And that's why we have got to respond to Jesus in repentance and faith. And for Peter, this is not a take it or leave it offer. It's not a lifestyle choice that if it suits you, go for it.

But if you don't think it works, go somewhere else. what Peter gives is a command to his listeners to repent. And if we have, then we as the church must urge others to repent too.

Because we can't let anyone miss what God has done in history in Jesus. the memory of God of God of God to this are up to there.

And if we have activity in East public, you are unsured to the shooter of God of God and Jerome as the church as the church as the church and the church should be well. And the Lord is a gift For Whole Anthony to Lager and Christ the Father Jesus.