

## Acts 2:14-41

### The First Gospel Sermon

**Introduction:** If you've been with us for the last few weeks we've looked at the ascension of Jesus to heaven, we looked at the restoring of the twelve Apostles getting ready for Jesus' promise and we looked last week at the descent of the Holy Spirit. Now in our passage here - The Holy Spirit has just fallen on the 120 disciples, remember the sound of wind, something that looked like divided tongues of fire on each persons head, and now uneducated Galileans are eloquently declaring God's mighty acts of salvation in foreign languages that gathers a crowd of people that are completely amazed at what they are seeing and hearing... The people ask what does it mean, while others say that they're just drunk.

Now Peter stands up to give an explanation of this event. But Peter turns this explanation into the first Gospel sermon ever preached. By Gospel we mean this - the good news of God's gracious rescue and acceptance.

Jesus lived the life we should live. He also paid the penalty we owe for the rebellious life we do live. He did this in our place on the cross. We are not reconciled to God through our efforts and record, as in all other religions, but through his efforts and record.

"We are more flawed and sinful than we ever dared believe, yet we are more loved and accepted than we ever dared hope at the same time." -Tim Keller

- 1. Peter's Sermon Theme** - What is the big idea or main point of peter's sermon? The more I thought about this is how I would summarize it. God's kingdom project, which you see and hear, is back on track because of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus the messiah - you are a co-conspirator in the evil that is destroying God's world and in resisting his kingdom by rejecting and crucifying his anointed servant and king Jesus. Yet God raised him from the dead and now offers you redemption - the forgiveness of sins through Jesus death on your behalf - so turn around and choose God's side - join his kingdom community and project. (Not your typical Gospel sermon)
- 1. This is that** - Peter begins his sermon with a connection back to Joel 2 showing that God's great promise is being fulfilled. The first thing we need to know is that every good Jew longed for the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel - which the scripture foretold

would come through David's son being seated on Israel's throne who would in turn rule, not just Israel, but to the ends of the earth( 1 Chronicles 17;Psalm 2; Psalm 8; Psalm 72; Psalm 102 ). He (Messiah) would usher in an era of peace, not just the absence of war, but of God's shalom, absolute justice, of healing, a bringing in of the Gentile nations to worship Yahweh, an era of prosperity, human flourishing, a banishing of death evil and suffering. Especially these Jews would be longing for this - they had been under tyranny, captivity and foreign occupation for nearly 700 years. Joel among other prophets said that strange things would happen in those days - the pouring out of God's Spirit - the gift of prophecy being on all regardless of status, age, and gender. There would be great wonders in the heavens and signs on earth, cataclysmic events or some interpret it to mean social and political upheaval. all this leading up to the great and magnificent day of the Lord or as some might call it judgment day. - anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. Peter says, this is what's happening right here, right now. Here is why - God's Messiah has come.

## 2. **Jesus fits the bill - Resurrection and Ascension**

1. Peter uses two events in the life of Jesus, two passages of scripture from David, and eyewitness testimony to support the fact that Jesus is Messiah and Lord
2. Jesus of Nazareth was obviously anointed by God to do what he did - great signs and mighty works - this same Jesus was delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, You crucified and killed him by you handing him over to lawless men - But God raised him up.
3. **Resurrection** - Peter quotes David from psalm 16, yet he claims that David could not possibly mean this text to be about him, because he died, was buried and everyone knew where his tomb was to that day. David must have spoke this prophetically concerning the resurrection his descendent - the Christ - God did not abandon him to death, he didn't allow his body to experience corruption or decay - Jesus was raised by God and we all are witnesses - we saw him, spent time with him, he is not just back from the dead but resurrected.
4. **Ascension** - Jesus being exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he

has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing -  
Again, David did not ascend into heaven but wrote, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool -

5. **Peter's conclusion: "Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."**

1. A quick note before we go into this next part - Jesus, as well as the apostles, saw every OT character and theme as ultimately pointing to Jesus and his work of salvation..meaning that Jesus is the true and better version of every character or theme in scripture. It all points to him, whether it be the Passover lamb or King David. (Examples) - We need to learn to read our OT this way and then we will see that the continual message of scripture is The Good news of Gods grace. It's not about us and how we imitate the characters of the Bible but it is ultimately about Jesus and how he does for us what we ourselves can never do.

3. **Cut to the Heart -**

1. I can't even imagine what was going on in the mind of this crowd when they heard Peter's sermon - They had been waiting for thousands of years for God's messiah, thousands more for God's deliverance and salvation and they just realized that they murdered the messiah, they're own king, the one they had been longing for, the bringer of all the promises of God.....Now they stand not as the recipients of salvation but as enemies and those who resisted God's kingdom.
2. This is where this sermon now begins to come to us, and I pray it cuts to our hearts as well - Each of us though not 1st century Jews - who were personally responsible for crucifying God's messiah - have resisted God in our own way - Everyone of us is complicit in the evil and suffering that is in the world. Maybe not to the degree of Nations or certain individuals, but each of us through our own selfishness, our own looking out for ourselves for our own joy and good, have hurt, slighted, burnt, and exploited others. We have used each other to get what we want rather than loving and serving each other. Not only that but we have resisted God as king over our lives - we devote and sacrifice our lives for things that are not God, or that are opposed to God. We constantly break the first commandment which

is to give God first priority in our lives. I read this on Friday morning and I thought it fit rather well with what I'm saying. Romans 1:21 indicts all people for not giving God the glory or thanks that he deserves. This may not sound like that big of a deal compared with murder or adultery, but consider the crime of plagiarism, "It is both theft and lie. It robs others of their due and creates the illusion that you are more able than you are. Sin is cosmic ingratitude. It gives you the delusion that you have the ability to conduct and hold your life together. Actually every day that your heart keeps pumping, your country is not invaded, and your brain keeps functioning is wholly an undeserved gift of God. We ought to live simple, normal, uneventful days full of amazed, thankful Joy." -TK

1. You and I owe God everything, and yet each day we fail to give him the glory and thanks that he deserves.
2. Martin Luther said, "We are beggars, this is true." Actually he didn't say it it was found written on a piece of paper in his pocket when he died. When the Gospel cuts to your heart you realize how incredibly indebted to God's grace you truly are. "You are beggar, this is true."
3. Again this is where this sermon comes to us when we see God doing for us in Christ what we could not do for ourselves- we cannot redeem ourselves, we cannot, as much as we try, create a utopia on earth, we cannot bring ourselves the peace, the healing, the rest, the true home our hearts long for, we cannot even keep ourselves happy for a sustained amount of time.
4. Why is that? If like secularism says, "This life is all there is," why do we long for something beyond this life? Could our longings be a sign post to God? The Bible's answer is an emphatic yes!
  1. As Augustine said, "If there is a God who created you, then the deepest chambers of your soul simply cannot be filled up by anything less." And again he says, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you."
5. God our Creator and Father is our true home. But we're lost and separated from God by our sin, we cannot get back to God on our own. And since we cannot, God sends his one of a kind son, the perfect man to do what we cannot do, to live the life we owe to God (a life of perfect obedience), and to suffer the punishment we

deserve for not honoring God. To bring us to God so we can experience the healing, love, rest, peace, and home our hearts need but we cannot attain.

1. When we learn to read the story of Jesus and see it as the story of the love of God, doing for us what we could not do for ourselves - that insight produces, again and again, a sense of astonished gratitude which is very near the heart of authentic Christian experience.” - NT Wright
2. **Cut to the heart** -When you realize that you have rebelled against and rejected not just God, the cosmic judge of the universe, but your creator, the one who loves you and wants good and joy for you more than any other. When you realize that you have spit in the face of this amazing love - that’s when you know you’ve been cut to the heart. When you know it was your sin, that put Jesus on the cross, that he died, because of his great love for you, to bring you into God’s kingdom and rescue. When your sin becomes personal, it doesn’t just beat down upon your will, it melts your heart or cuts to your heart and you begin to change and that leads to this last part - that you give your life.
3. **What shall we do?**
  1. As the words of Peter’s sermon cut to the heart of this crowd - you can hear the desperation of their question -“Brothers, what shall we do?
  2. Repent and be baptized is Peter’s response -He says, this will result in the forgiveness of sins and the receiving of the Holy Spirit.
  3. Repent and get forgiveness - there is a new freedom
  4. Be baptized and get a new family, a new identity, a new community - the church
  5. Get a new power, the gift of the Holy Spirit, coming into your life - changing you from the inside out - Making God’s love a living, life changing reality.
  6. Get a new outlook - a removal of all prejudices -the promise is for all people - the people that you thought were no good, outsiders, unfit for salvation or church -become your brothers and sisters because the Gospel is changing you, it’s humbling you, it’s going

to deal with your prejudices and make you more open to the world.

1. When this happens to you, you've become a Christian.

**Conclusion:** In closing I'd like to summarize Peter's sermon one more time. It's this - God's kingdom project to heal the world of sin and evil and make it his dwelling place once again, is back on track, because of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus the messiah - you are a co-conspirator in the evil that is destroying God's world and in resisting his kingdom by rejecting and crucifying his anointed servant and king Jesus. Yet God raised him from the dead and now God offers you redemption - the forgiveness of sins through Jesus death on your behalf - so turn around and choose God's side - join his kingdom community and project.

The invitation is for any and for all I pray that if we've heard a thousand times before, we would hear it afresh. That is would stir in our hearts a great awe, wonder and gratitude for God's great love for us - that will result in a greater surrender of our lives.

If we are hearing this for the first or second time that this word of God's gracious acceptance and offer of forgiveness and restoration would cut to your heart, would melt you, that you cry out to him for salvation today -As Peter - whoever calls on the name of the Lord (Jesus) shall be saved.

**Prayer** - Gracious holy God, Lord and master, king and Father we thank you for your great love for us - You are the author, the designer of this great salvation. This amazing display of your grace and of your love. We ask that we would hear your gracious offer to us again today and that we would respond. That we would confess and repent of our sins, that we would petition you for your help by the grace that is in christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit to be now what you have called us to be; that we would praise and thank you, that worship would fill our hearts and work its way out in our lives...

Oh that this truth may soak into our souls. That feel ourselves guilty; that we would feel guilty because we do not feel guilty; we that are broken in heart because our heart will not break; we that feel that we cannot feel; it is to you that this offer salvation in Christ by faith is toward. You groan because you cannot groan; but whoever you may be, you are still within the range of this mighty word, that "whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" - Spurgeon

Thank you God for your grace, and steadfast love that pursues such sinners. Amen