



The First Sermon of the Infant Church Acts 2:22-47 (Lesson #5)



To access missed lessons, lesson guides, and additional materials please visit our class website:
<https://truth-seekers.net>

OUTLINE of Acts Chapter 2:

- 1) The outpouring of the Holy Spirit (2:1-4)
- 2) The reaction of the crowd (2:5-13)
- 3) The Explanation provided by Peter (2:14-21)
- 4) The first sermon of the infant church (2:22-36)
- 5) The conversion of 3000 (Acts 2:37-41)

2:22 *"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know — 23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. 24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.*

Vs 22 - We ended last week with this verse, this is the start of Peter's sermon. First, he informed the crowd, and in particular the rowdy element of the crowd that what they were observing was not a bunch of drunk Galileans, but instead it was what Joel had promised when "in the last days" God would pour out His Spirit.

You remember his three points here:

- 1) Jesus was attested, set forth, witnessed of by God with many mighty works, wonders, and signs.
- 2) God did all of this in your midst.
- 3) And you yourselves know it!

Vs 23 - Then he makes **two declarations** that **seem contradictory**, yet are **both absolutely true**, and **both are witnessed throughout the Scriptures**.

FIRST: Jesus was delivered up; Jesus was given over to the will of his enemies. By the way the Greek word translated "given up" is **ἑκδότος (ekdotos)** and it is a **Hapax Legomenon**.

But point number one is that Jesus was delivered up, He was surrendered and handed over to his enemies according to the "definite plan" the NKJV says the "determined purpose", the Holman says "determined plan" of God.

Jesus was betrayed by Judas into the hands of Jewish leaders, who in turn handed him over to the Romans for execution. Jesus was delivered up according to the determined plan of God!

I think we get Peter's point, Jesus' betrayal and subsequent crucifixion followed the "determined plan" but notice he also says according to the foreknowledge of God.

The word **foreknowledge**, is not so much knowing something in advance, but prearranging something in advance.

Fruchtenbaum writes: *"The word "foreknowledge" means "to know beforehand because of preplanning."*

In his commentary, John MacArthur quotes Louis Berkhof: *"The idea that God saw in advance that Israel would reject and crucify Christ and worked that into His eternal plan is an implicit denial both of His sovereignty and omniscience."*

These are both very strong statements by Peter, that **all that happened to the Lord Jesus Christ followed God's pre-arranged, pre-determined plan.**

SECOND: You took... You crucified.... You killed... WOW, so **much for seeker friendly messages!**

You murdered the author of life! And this was all done by the hands of **lawless or wicked men!**

This is a clear affirmation of God's sovereignty, yet at the same time, man's autonomy and man's responsibility.

The **Calvinist** have it wrong, when they **fail to fully appreciate man's autonomy and man's responsibility.** The **Armenians** have it wrong when they **fail to fully appreciate God's sovereignty.**

Now at this point, you may be thinking, **Rich you cannot have it both ways. These two points cannot be reconciled.**

Like Pastor, my job as a Sunday School teacher is not to **reconcile** God's Word, that is not what He pays me to do. I am to **proclaim** and **declare it.**

The Bible teaches God is sovereign (and I mean completely sovereign) and at the same time that man is autonomous and accountable (and I mean completely accountable for his own actions).

Remember Joseph?

We saw something similar that to a greater degree highlighted Peter's point here in (Gen 50:20):

- 1) You did what you wanted to do, you followed your own compass, and you executed evil against me (autonomous and responsible).
- 2) The sovereign God was working in the background for my good, he was taking your evil and turning it into good (God's sovereignty).

This is the autonomy and responsibility of man juxtaposed with the sovereignty of God!

Vs 24 - You crucified Jesus, you killed Jesus, lawless men came against Jesus.

BUT... God raised him, God caused him to arise from the grave!

Good loosed the pangs (in the Greek, the word "pangs" literally means the pangs associated with birth) of death.

It pictures the Messiah as being born out of death. Much like a butterfly is born out of the death of metamorphosis! We could say the tomb, was a type of womb, whereby the Messiah was brought forth to life!

Because it was **not possible** that death could hold him! Did you hear Peter just said? It was impossible for Jesus to stay dead.

Now these are amazing claims!

- 1) God raised Jesus from the dead!
- 2) It was not possible that death could hold him!

What is surprising is that Peter sees all of this in the Old Testament!

The summation of verses 22-24. The Messiah, Jesus came, he came to his own people, he presented his credentials by miracle, signs and wonders. He was rejected, and murdered, placed in a grave, and then three days later he rose from that grave. For it was impossible for the grave to hold him! This is the essence of the gospel. This is the minimum effective dosage of the gospel (Rom 10:9-10; ICor 15:3-4)!

Notice Peter wasted no time in getting it out!

25 For David says concerning him, "I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; 26 therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope. 27 For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption. 28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'

This is a quote from Psalm 16. So let's follow Peter's logic:

FIRST: Vs 25 - What David said, in Psalm 16, according to Peter he said of HIM (the antecedent goes all the way back to verse 23) he said of Jesus.

Follow Peter's point for it will become crystal clear. When David wrote in Psalm 16, he was speaking of Jesus.

What you should be wondering is how can Peter say with assurance that David was writing about Jesus?

29 "Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, 31 he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at 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. 34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, "'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at my right hand, 35 until I make your enemies your footstool.'" 36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Vs 29 – Brothers, Peter is not addressing fellow believers, he is addressing fellow countrymen, fellow Jews.

Brothers, I can tell you with confidence that David is dead! Now of course no one would argue with Peter.

David is dead, David was buried, David's tomb is with us (even to our day), and the unstated point, if we open that tomb do you know what we would find?

Yes, a rotted stinking corpse. David died and his tomb is with us to this day.

Vs 30 - David was not only a king, but a prophet who knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne.

Not only is this factually true, but Peter is once again quoting the Old Testament. He is quoting another Psalm, in this case Psalm 132:10.

So David knew that the Lord had promised one that would come from his body would sit on this throne.
When he wrote this, Peter says he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

For in Psalm 16 David wrote: *"For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption."* (Ps 16:10 ESV)

He wrote as a prophet. He did so knowing that God had sworn with an oath that **one of his descendants would set on his throne.**

Thus, David penned what Peter is quoting.

Now David could not have been speaking of himself, for he went to the grave, his body had **surely seen corruption**, in fact his grave, the place of his burial is with us even now (says Peter)!

Thus, Peter declares that David could not have been speaking of himself. Do you follow Peter's logic?

The promise that the Holy One of God would not see corruption **cannot apply to David** and must apply to the **promised Messiah** who would descend from David. It must apply to Jesus who is the Christ.

Thus, **David in Psalm 16 is speaking about the resurrection of Jesus Christ.**

This forms a larger thought that Peter is developing. Jesus was attested by miracles, signs, and wonders done by God proving that he was the Messiah. Jesus was given up, he was given over, but it was according to the predetermined and prophesied plan of God that the Messiah would die.

Jesus rose from the grave, and by the way it was predetermined and prophesied that the Messiah would rise from the grave. **This is the only possible conclusion! Yeshua was the Messiah, the evidence is undeniable!**

Vs 32 - God raised this Jesus from the dead and we are all witnesses.

I am a witness, but so are you all. This was not done in a closet; you are all witnesses! Many of you are witnesses of the resurrected Jesus! He rounds off all the **obvious conclusions** with the declaration that **"we" are witnesses.**

Peter could be speaking of the 12, but it seems likely that the antecedent pronoun "we" goes all the way back to verses 30, brothers, fellow Jews. We have all witnessed this and there is no denying it!

Vs 33 - Peter now shifts to explain Jesus present position:

He was crucified, rose from the grave, and is not presently exalted in the heavens and seated at the right hand of God. The place of authority, the place of preeminence.

He received from the Father, the promise of the Holy Spirit, which He has poured out, in fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32, and you yourselves are seeing and hearing. This too was a promise fulfilled (Acts 1:4; Joh 16:7).

Thus, the men speaking in other languages is not the result of drunkenness, but instead is evidence of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit! Following all of the evidence that Jesus is the Messiah.

Vs 34 – Two points that are extremely relevant to what Peter is about to say and one no one would argue against:

FIRST: David did not ascent to the heavens following his death. In fact, he died, was buried, and we have his tomb with us to this day.

SECOND: Yet, David himself said in Psalm 110:1: *"The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.""* (Ps 110:1 ESV)

So, we know for sure that David did not ascend to the heavens, he died and his tomb, containing his body, is with us today. Thus Psalm 110:1, must be speaking of Jesus!

And Yahweh said to my **יָרֵד ('adown)** sit here until all the enemies bow to you, until they become your footstool.

Who is the only one that Psalm 110 can be talking about? The resurrected and returned to heaven, Jesus!

Yahweh said this to David's Lord. The only one that could have been King David's Lord is not Yahweh, but it is clearly the promised Messiah!

Yes, this is the resurrected Jesus, ascended to heaven, and the Father says to Him sit here, the world will bow to you!

This was declared by David in roughly 1000BC. It is fulfilled in the resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Jesus!

Vs 36 - Peter now draws this all to the obvious conclusion!

Let all the house, let all the family, let all worship Yahweh, let all Israel know, you have to one degree or another taken part in the **most heinous crime** ever executed on the planet.

God sent His Messiah being attested by miracles, signs, and wonders. You rejected all that, you killed the author of life, with wicked hands you slayed him as if he was a criminal when in fact he was God's Messiah.

But, know for certain, **God has raised him from the dead**, where he is now seated at the right hand of God, and **he is both Lord and Christ**.

He is both king and Messiah. He is both the God-man and God's chosen man.

Is this a condemning conclusion to Peter's message? Absolutely, but Israel (many in Israel) had been instrumental in murdering God's son, their promised Messiah!

Lastly, the resurrection is:

- 1) A fulfilment of Scriptures
- 2) A fulfilment of the Promise of the Father
- 3) Proves that Jesus is both Lord and Messiah!

37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

The crowd senses the weight of the arguments. They **have seen** all that Peter has declared they have seen.

They have **seen the miracles, signs, and wonders** of the Messiah. They have seen, for a **three-hour period** on the day the **Messiah died** the sun was blackened out. Then that evening they saw a **blood moon**, a lunar eclipse. Do not forget more than 500 saw Jesus alive following his crucifixion (I Cor 15:3-6)!

Then today, they have seen **Joel 2:28-32 fulfilled**. They are witnesses of the undeniable miracle of the small band speaking in various languages. They are all, to varying degrees, guilty of the **murder of their own Messiah**.

Peter has pulled the bowstring that contained the arrow of the truth about Jesus, what happened, and their involvement. Peter then let that arrow fly and it hit many right square in the chest. Now let's read, the people's response.

Vs 37 - When the crowd came to fully understand who Jesus was, and that Israel had rejected and crucified their Messiah, Luke tells us they were **"cut to the heart!"**

The crowd begins to ask Peter and the other apostles “**what shall we do?**”

They sense the weight of their involvement in the **most heinous sin** ever executed on planet earth!

Vs 38 – Peter’s call is clear and his call is the call that continues through the ages: The call that continues to go out today:

Repent, change your mind, turn from you rejection of Jesus Christ and place faith in the God-man who was hung on a tree, buried in a grave, and three days later rose from the grave!

Then be baptized, a picture of your death with him, your burial with him, and your resurrection with Him (Rom 6:1-4).

Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus. The one who was dead but is alive.

In this you will receive two things:

- 1) Forgiveness of your sins!
- 2) The promised gift of the Holy Spirit

True repentance demands you publicly show your allegiance to the Resurrected One!

They were publicly showing their break with their nation and their identification with God’s Messiah, Jesus!

Placing faith in Jesus Christ is how a person is born again, it is how a person is baptized by the Holy Spirit, it is how a person receives the promise of the Holy Spirit.

PAUSE: The same is true today. What must each of us do to be saved? Repent, place faith in the one who was dead but is now alive and you will receive the forgiveness of sins and the baptism of the Holy Spirit!

Vs 39 - The promise, in context this is the promise of the father, the gift of the Spirit is for everyone.

Once again, turn and God will give you the gift of the Holy Spirit! Those who are near and those who are far off.

Then we see the divine calling; this gift is for all who will turn to Christ by faith (human autonomy and responsibility) all who the Lord our God calls to himself (divine authority).

The two reside side by side throughout the Scriptures and are truths we should embrace, even if we cannot fully explain them.

Vs 40 - The sermon is over, but Luke tells us that Peter used many other words to bear witness and he continued to exhort, beseech, plead with, or entreat.

Peter exhorted them to: *“Save yourselves from this crooked generation.”*

This generation had killed the Messiah, flee from the sins of your people, your house is on fire, judgement will fall for the nation’s sins. Please turn, please repent, “save yourselves!”

By the way, unless we forget, temporal judgment fell upon the nation of Israel in 70AD when Titus destroyed the city and the temple.

But here Peter is calling them to “save themselves” from this crooked generation!

Vs 41 - Those who received the word, those who repented, those who believed, those who placed faith in Jesus, were baptized and although it does not say it specifically based on everything that Peter had just said received the Holy Spirit. By the way, there is no indication that the 3,000 then begin to speak in other tongues.

But that day, about three thousand souls were saved!

INTERESTING NOTE: At Mount Sinai, the establishment of the Jewish nation, something happened that day too. Do you remember, yes it was the rebellion involving the golden calf (Ex 32:19-28).

At Mt Sinai, likely on the same day as the Feast of Weeks “about three thousand were killed.” In Jerusalem, in 33AD, on the Feast of Weeks, “about three thousand were saved!”

For Theopolis, this is the second progress report:

The first report: When Jesus ascended the band of followers was down to about 120.

The second report: On Pentecost about 3,000 were added to that number in one day, under the preaching of Peter! We will see more of these reports in the coming weeks.

A PRACTICAL POINT: It is roughly 9:00am and we can imagine that the twelve each take a large section of those who have been saved to one of the many pools in Jerusalem and baptize each person in the name of the father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

For a period, the twelve apostles with all of these converts plugged up all the pools in Jerusalem as about 3,000 were baptized that day! **This would be on average of 250 people per apostle! Can you imagine?**

42 ¶ And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”

Vs 42 - OK, I want you to catch this. They devoted themselves to **four things:**

1) The apostles teaching!

The authority of the apostles was recognized immediately. The 12 gave doctrinal teaching and what they shared orally in the beginning was the foundation of the truths that we have today that would be codified over the next 40 years or so.

The apostles were the foundation, with Jesus as the cornerstone!

2) Fellowship!

Christianity is a team sport; it is meant to be done together. The early church did it together. These early believers shared material and spiritual blessings together.

3) Breaking of bread!

More than likely this refers to sharing common meals together, although it could refer to the Lord's Supper, or maybe even both. Understand they broke bread together.

4) Prayer!

They prayed together. They had regular times of prayer together. It has been said that a group that prays together is likely to stay together.

PRACTICAL: These are the elements our small group leaders are trying to reproduce in our monthly small group meetings.

This is the early church and when we do these things, we are following in the steps of the early church as lead by the apostles of our Lord!

Vs 43 - Fear came upon every soul and reverent respect for what God was doing fell upon all.

Through the hands of the apostles God did MANY wonders and signs. Wonders and signs were common during this timeframe as God was validating the apostles and their message.

God was putting his stamp of authority and approval through the execution of MANY signs and wonders.

Vs 44 - I said earlier that they shared material and spiritual blessings. But here we see, even more than that those who believed had all things in common.

Now when we hear this, we often imagine they sold all they had and pooled their money together. I do not believe that is what was happening. As the young movement needed money, people would share, and sometimes sell something they owned and bring the proceeds to the apostles, but as you will see there was still individual ownership of property.

Also, please keep in mind, this is a very transitory time.

But, they created a unique community and they shared the things they had when necessary for the good of the community.

Finally, I would add this is **descriptive** of what the early church was doing. We do not see this **prescribed** in the New Testament. We are being told how the infant church worked and behaved.

But do not miss the larger point, there was an **amazing unity** within this early body! (II Cor 13:11).

Vs 45 - So, they were willing and as needed, people would sell a possession and distribute the income for the good of the body.

As needs arose in this early congregation, they sold property to cover the needs. As you think about this, now this is starting to look and sound more like a modern-day church, caring for one another.

Vs 46 - So here is what was going on in the early church.

Day-by-day their going to the temple together, worshipping the one true God and His Son Jesus Christ.

Day-by-day – they are breaking bread together. Again, this could be the Lord’s supper, but I suspect what Luke is telling us is that they were worshipping together and they were dining together in their homes.

There they received their food with glad and generous hearts. This was the early church!

Vs 47 - Here we are told three additional things that were happening during this very early time in the life of the church:

- 1) They spent their time praising God. This was at the temple and in their homes.
- 2) They had favor with all the people. Even those who did not agree that Jesus was the Messiah. Their version of Christianity was very inviting.
- 3) The Lord continued to add to their numbers. We just saw 3,000 come in.

Here Luke provides Theopolis with a third progress report, another update on the impact of the gospel.

Men and women continued to repent of their sins and place faith in King Jesus! The Lord continued to add to their numbers those who were being saved! **What a time!**
