

Pentecost Is All About Jesus: The Saviour is Made Known

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Preacher: Paul Brennan

[0 : 00] Welcome to the lunchtime service, that way you can hear me. Well, a warm welcome to you. My name is Paul Brennan, one of the ministers here at the Tron Church. It's very good indeed to see you here this afternoon as we gather for our service.

We are continuing a little series in the book of Acts, so if you would turn with me to Acts chapter 2, and that's on page 909, I think, round about there in your church Bibles, 909 Acts chapter 2.

And we're spending two weeks in this chapter. Last week we were looking at the first half, so from verse 1 up to verse 21. And this afternoon we're going to focus on the second half, from verse 22. But I will begin the reading at verse 14. The events of Pentecost are recorded there in verses 1 to 13. And then from verse 14 we get the explanation of those events from the Apostle Peter.

So we'll pick it up at the start of his explanation, verse 14. But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them.

[1 : 09] Men of Judea, and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words. For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel. And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.

And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. And your young men shall see visions. And your old men shall dream dreams, even on my male servants and female servants.

In those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heavens above, and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and vapour of smoke.

The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, that great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass, that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

[2 : 16] 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, this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. 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.

Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced. My flesh also will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.

You have made known to me the powers of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence. 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.

[3 : 28] Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on the throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

This Jesus God raised up, and of that we are all witnesses. 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.

For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus, whom you crucified.

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? 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.

[5 : 00] 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. And with many other words, he bore witness, and continued to exhort them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.

So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about 3,000 souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and the prayers.

And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together, and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings, and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.

And day by day, attending the temple, together, and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God, and having favor with all the people.

And the Lord added to their number, day by day, those who were being saved. We'll spend some time together now thinking about that, but before we do, let's just gather our hearts and pray, shall we?

[6 : 18] Let's pray. Our Father, we come here this afternoon with so many thoughts, so many worries and frustrations, so many fears running through our minds.

Would you minister to our hearts this afternoon, set our minds on things that are above. Jesus, Master, at your word, we are gathered all to hear you.

Let our minds and our wills be stirred now, to seek, and love, and fear you. By your teachings, true and holy, draw us, Lord, to love you solely.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, we're looking at this chapter, this week, and last week, in three parts.

Let me remind you and refresh you. If you were here last week, and if you weren't, I'll fill in some of the gaps. So there are three sections in this chapter that we're looking at. In verses 1 to 13, we saw the events of that day of Pentecost, the pouring out of Jesus' spirit, his promised spirit.

[7 : 37] Those are the events, verses 1 to 13. And then from verse 14 to 36, we see the Apostle Peter giving the explanation of those events.

He proclaims Jesus as the promised Savior. And then from verse 37 to the end, we see the effects of that proclamation. We see penitence in Jesus' name.

So we see the events themselves, the explanation, and the effects. And last week, we looked at the events, and also the first part of Peter's explanation, which is from verse 14.

And he says that, look, what you've witnessed is proof that we are now in the last days, the pouring out of the spirit, which you've witnessed. That is evidence of all that was promised through the prophet Joel.

That is now happening. Jesus has come. He's now sent his spirit. We're in the last days. And what you've seen is evidence of that. You're seeing the fulfillment of the scriptures.

[8 : 38] That's only half the answer. Notice Peter's words there at the end of verse 21. He's quoting from the prophet Joel. And this is the last sentence from that prophet.

Verse 21. And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And so the question naturally arises.

Who is this Lord? Who is this Lord that we are to call upon to be saved? And in the second part of his speech, Peter tells us who that Lord is and what that has to do with the events of Pentecost. And the Lord, well, it's the man, Jesus. It's the one there crucified. So in these verses, we see verses 22 to 36, the Savior is made known.

Peter's second half of his speech is all about Jesus. Jesus, a man who you killed even though he was attested to you by God.

[9 : 46] Jesus, who couldn't be held by death. Jesus ascended, who sent his spirit. Jesus, the promised Lord and Christ.

This is all about Jesus. And look there, verse 22. It starts with Jesus, the man. Verse 22. Jesus of Nazareth.

And the passage ends, verse 36, with Jesus. Again, let all the house of Israel, verse 36, know therefore for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus, whom you crucified. It begins with Jesus, it ends with Jesus. In between, in between those two bookends, it's all about Jesus. It's about his earthly ministry, and it's about his heavenly ministry.

It's about who he is. Why it is to him that all people in all places are to call upon for salvation. It's because of Jesus' ministry, his words, his works.

[10:52] It's because of his fulfillment of all that the prophets promised and looked forward to. It's because of his sin-bearing death. It's because of his vindication through his resurrection.

It's because of his ascension to the right hand of the Father. Because of all of this, Jesus is the one to call upon for salvation. And Peter's words here, they hit his Jewish audience right between the eyes, don't they?

Look at their response there in verse 37. They were cut to the heart. Why? Why were they cut to the heart? Let's look at this a bit more closely.

Look firstly at what Peter says about Jesus' earthly ministry. He points them in verse 22 to a real man, a historical figure, Jesus of Nazareth.

And the people he's speaking to, the people that Peter is speaking to here, they all know who Jesus is. Look at what it says. Jesus, 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.

[12:06] You saw Jesus with your own eyes. God himself made it plain to you through what he did and said, through the mighty works and wonders that you saw.

And even if you didn't see it with your own eyes, you would have certainly heard about it. This news went out. Great crowds were gathering to come and see who Jesus was. People knew him.

These people he was speaking to knew that this was a real man. He'd walked around their towns and villages. They knew who he was. But look at the killer blow.

Verse 23. This Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and for knowledge of God, you crucified, killed by the hands of lawless men.

You killed him. You can't pin this on Judas. You can't pin it on Pilate. You can't pin this on the Roman soldiers who nailed him to the cross. No, you did it.

[13:14] You are responsible. And the implication is that you and I are too. Last week we sung these words at the end of our service.

Let me read them to you. Behold the man upon a cross, my sin upon his shoulders. Ashamed, I hear my mocking voice call out amongst the scoffers.

It was my sin that held him there. Jesus Christ killed by man. And we all bear the responsibility.

All through the ages, we have always rejected God's prophets, his people sent to us. And we have ultimately done that with his son. We've killed his son. Jesus was killed by man, but it was also part of the divine plan.

That's what Peter affirms there in verse 23. Yes, mankind is responsible, but it was also the divine plan. Jesus had to die. And this has been the repeated refrain throughout Luke's two-volume work.

[14:20] Just one example. Listen to these words from Luke chapter 18. Jesus says, See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.

For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles, and will be mocked, and shamefully treated, and spit upon. And after flogging him, they will kill him. And on the third day, he will rise.

It was always the plan that Jesus would die. He was the perfect and final sacrifice for sin. The ultimate Passover lamb.

But it was also the plan that he would rise again. Verse 24. God raised him up. It was not possible for Jesus to be held by death.

It was not possible for him to be held by death. Why? Well, Simon Manchester turns a well-known verse on its head. The wages of sinlessness, everlasting life.

[15:24] The wages of sinlessness, everlasting life. He was the perfect, sinless man. Now, yes, he carried our sin on his shoulders, but he, he was without sin.

And so death had no claim on him. His body didn't decay. God raised him up. And again, this was just the fulfillment of the scriptures.

King David spoke of this a thousand years before. That's the quote that we have there in verse 25. King David spoke about these very events. This is from Psalm 16.

David speaks of God not letting his holy one see corruption. And clearly, says Peter, David is not talking about himself here.

Look at verse 29. Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried. His tomb is with us to this day. So David wasn't speaking about himself in this psalm.

[16:27] He was looking ahead. He was looking forward to another Messiah, to the Messiah. He was pointing forward to the resurrection of Jesus.

And this has now happened. We are all witnesses to this, says Peter. And having been raised, he's been exalted. He ascended to the heavens.

He's now sat at the Father's right hand. And here is where Peter makes the connection between what everyone has witnessed there on the day of Pentecost and Jesus.

Look at verse 33. Being, therefore, exalted at the right hand of the Father and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

So Jesus is exalted. He's given the Spirit by the Father which he then pours out on all those who believe in his name. And that's what they've witnessed there on the day of Pentecost, that giving of the Spirit to those who believe in him.

[17:36] And that pouring out, that pouring out of the Spirit, that means that the last days are now here. The clock is ticking to Christ's return.

That pouring out of the Spirit enables the proclamation of the Gospel. Now is the time of repentance and forgiveness. Now is the time because there is a judgment day coming.

And Jesus' exaltation guarantees that. He's gone to be with the Father but he is coming back.

There is a judgment day coming. Proclamation of the Gospel will go to the ends of the earth.

That's the priority of Acts chapter 1 verse 8, isn't it? And it will go with great power because the power of the Holy Spirit is with his people. And it will be so until that day when all enemies of Jesus will be made his footstool and defeated once and for all.

And so, says Peter, know for certain that God has made this Jesus, the Jesus you know, you've seen, he's made him both Lord and Christ.

[18:53] You've seen what he's done. We are witnesses to his resurrection. He's ascended to the Father. He sent his Spirit. This is the promised Lord and Christ. This is the one you've been waiting for.

And the implications of that conclusion are absolutely huge. And they weren't lost on those who are listening. Jesus is the Lord. That means he reigns.

That means he is coming back one day to be the judge of all. Jesus is the Christ. He is the long-promised king who would bear his people's sins and defeat death.

Jesus has fulfilled the Scriptures. He is the one they were waiting for. It is in him alone that salvation is to be found.

These are big claims. This is who Jesus is, but you crucified him. you crucified him.

[19:54] To feel the weight of that final sentence. No wonder, verse 37, that they were cut to the heart. These folk knew their Scriptures.

They knew what the Bible promised. And Peter is saying, it's been fulfilled in this man who you crucified. they understood that as things were, they were enemies of the Lord.

This should have been wonderful news to their ears. The great hope of the Jews, the Messiah, he's come. But they killed him. God makes himself known in the most personal way that he can.

And mankind wanted nothing to do with him. That has always been the path and it was then and it is now.

Pentecost is all about Jesus. It's about who he is. It's because of who he is. It's all that he did. His death, his resurrection, his ascension. It's because of his exaltation and the sending of his spirit that explains the amazing events there in verses 1 to 13, the events of Pentecost.

[21:10] Jesus is the fulfillment of the scriptures. He is the one to whom all people everywhere are to call upon for salvation. Jesus, the man who they all saw and knew, Jesus was the Christ.

He was, is the Lord. but they killed him. The penny drops. They are cut to the heart.

And so our final point we see there from verse 37 to the end. We see penitence in Jesus' name. We see the effect of the explanation of those events.

The pennies drop for those who are listening. Jesus, the man we crucified is the Lord and Christ.

What have we done? They were cut to the heart. And so they ask the only question they can.

In light of what Peter has said, in light of what they've done, there's only one question. And it's there in verse 37. Brothers, what shall we do?

[22 : 16] What shall we do? And Peter's words in response, aren't they just wonderful words of abundant grace? he's just proclaimed to them the words of Joel.

And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And so Peter says to them, call on Jesus. He is the Lord.

Call upon his name. Look what he says there, verse 38. 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.

Forgiveness was possible. The gift of the Spirit promised. They are to recognize Jesus' Lordship and respond appropriately in penitence.

But it's not just simply a matter of believing in Jesus. It's a real recognition of who Jesus is. It's a real recognition of who we are in our sin.

[23 : 24] We are by nature enemies of God. We by nature are guilty. And so to call on the Lord means repentance. It means a turning from doing things our own way, thinking that we're in charge, and a turning to him and confessing.

Confessing. Confessing our sin before him because he is the Lord. It means publicly submitting to him. And that submission, that turning to him wonderfully brings forgiveness and the gift of the Spirit.

And what a wonderful thing for those who are gathered there to hear. They knew they were responsible for Jesus' death. They were there. They were in the crowds. But these are wonderful words of grace for them.

Forgiveness is possible. The gift of the Spirit is promised. So it means penitence, but it also means it brings real commitment to the people of God.

We see there from verse 42 to the end, commitment to the teaching of the Word, commitment to each other. To be a Christian is never a lonely or aloof existence.

[24 : 41] There's no conception of Christians outside of fellowship with each other. That just doesn't appear in the Bible. Christians are to be in fellowship with one another, committed to each other at the local church.

That is the evidence of God's Spirit at work. And so we see here in Acts chapter 2 the events of Pentecost. We see the explanation and we see the effect.

But this isn't just some curious bit of first century history. This isn't a history lecture. This Jesus is the Lord of the cosmos.

We still live in the last days, which means that there is a judgment day yet to come. And so I'll ask you here this afternoon, each of us, you've seen who the Lord is.

You've seen Jesus, what he's done. Peter is plain. And Luke has recorded this so that you and I can have certainty about who Jesus is. So I'll ask you, have you called upon the name of the Lord for your salvation?

[25 : 56] Are you saved? If not, then you must. or you will remain one of his enemies. There is ultimately no alternative to that.

But the wonderful news is that this is the day of grace and mercy. Today, if you call upon his name, he will not turn you away.

If you repent, submit to him, you will be forgiven. He will give you his Holy Spirit. So will you do that today? On that day, on that day of Pentecost, that very day, 3,000 men and women received the word, were baptized.

All over the world today, men and women, young and old, are calling upon his name. Will your voice be among them? No one is beyond salvation.

Remember who this sermon is addressed to. Those who crucified Jesus. And yet, they were cut to the heart. 3,000 repented that day. Perhaps you feel too far gone.

[27 : 12] You feel the things I've done and said. If only you knew. You wonder, can there possibly be acceptance for me? Well, the answer is yes.

There is grace for all who throw themselves upon Christ. Perhaps that's you, even this lunchtime. Even if you've been here many times before, you've come face to face with the living God, with the risen Lord Jesus.

You've heard the testimony of his mighty words, his acts. And your conviction is that he is the sovereign Lord of all the earth. and that there is a judgment coming.

So will you seek refuge in him? Here is who Jesus is. All who call upon his name will be saved.

Will you fling yourself upon his grace this afternoon? Well, let me pray. Let me pray. Heavenly Father, forgive us for when we think of Jesus other than who he really is, he is the Lord.

[28 : 27] He is reigning. Even at this very moment, he is coming back one day to judge. And your world tells us that our only hope for salvation is to turn to him.

And so would you help us this afternoon to truly turn to Jesus, to submit to his rule and to know the joy, forgiveness and the gift of his spirit.

Help us for we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.