

The speeches in Acts, and Scripture as God's word

Acts 2:14-41

“...it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.”

Luke 1:3-4

Acts chapter 2 overview

1. The description of what happened on that day in Acts 2:1-13
2. Peter's sermon and explanation of what happened in 2:14-41
3. The immediate effects of the event on the life of the brand new Jerusalem church in 2:42-47

Excursus: The speeches in Acts

In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach...

Acts 1:1

The distribution of the major speeches

1. By Christians:
 - a. Eight by Peter: Acts 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 10; 11; 13
 - b. Two by James: Acts 15; 21
 - c. One by Stephen: Acts 7
 - d. Nine by Paul: Acts 13; 14; 17; 20; 22; 23; 24; 26; 28
2. By non-Christians:
 - a. One by Gamaliel: Acts 5
 - b. One by town clerk in Ephesus: Acts 19
 - c. One by Tertullus: Acts 24
 - d. One by Festus: Acts 25

“But are these speeches genuine utterances by the people to whom they are attributed? Are they accurate? There are three possible responses.” Stott, page 69

1. The speeches are verbatim (word for word) accounts of what each speaker said.
2. The modern critical (or skeptical) approach - Luke created the speeches to fit his narrative and serve his own historical and theological purposes.
3. Regard them as reliable summaries of what was said on each occasion, rejecting both extreme literalism and extreme skepticism.

Stott quoting F. F. Bruce:

“Taken all in all, each speech suits the speaker, the audience, and the circumstances of delivery; and this ... gives good ground ... for believing these speeches to be, not inventions of the historian, but condensed accounts of speeches actually made, and therefore valuable and independent sources for the history and theology of the primitive Church.”

(72)

Scripture = God's word

In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, “Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.”

Acts 1:15-16

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.

Acts 2:25-26

For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
or let your Holy One see corruption.

You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'

Acts 2:27-28

“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. 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, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

Acts 2:29-31

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16

And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

2 Peter 3:15-16

For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.”

1 Timothy 5:18

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus...

Luke 1:1-3