

## **Peter's sermon at Pentecost: observation**

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## **Why we're not studying the Greco-Roman world this week, and what the next few weeks probably look like, though I hesitate to make any more predictions!**

1. Too much material to get ready for the Greco-Roman world - I need more prep time.
2. Acts 2:14-41 is a large and important passage of Scripture, so we're going to try something different.

This week we're going to observe the text (see what it says). Over the next one or more weeks we're going to identify and discuss the theology in this text, then take a closer look at the Old Testament passages that Peter quotes and alludes to, and finally draw some applications for us in the present day.

Regarding theology: it is not something to be feared or shunned or looked down on. Theology is simply "knowing about God" - "theos" = God, "logos" = word. Similar to psychology, physiology, pharmacology, etc. Theology is composed of doctrines or truths - what we know or can know about God.

## **Slides (F. F. Bruce, Desiring God)**

### **Review**

1. Why study the book of Acts?
  - a. Luke 1:3-4 "...so that [we] may have certainty concerning the things [we] have been taught." [SLIDE]
  - b. In other words, so we can get the facts right and the story straight.
2. Last week we went deep and looked at some of the background of the NT: the Diaspora, the Aramaic language, and the Septuagint.

Two weeks ago we had another excursus into the speeches in Acts.

And three weeks ago we looked at Acts 2:1-13 and the arrival of the promised Holy Spirit.

## Acts chapter 2 overview

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

## Peter's speech (sermon) in Acts 2:14-41

1. **Acts 2:1-13 (for context) [SLIDES]**
2. **Acts 2:14-41 [SLIDES]**

## Observation - What is the text saying?

1. Four elements of early apostolic preaching (though not always in this order) as identified by F. F. Bruce (*The Book of the Acts*, 63) **[SLIDE]**
  - a. the announcement that the age of fulfilment has arrived
  - b. an account of the ministry, death, and triumph of Jesus
  - c. citation of Old Testament scriptures whose fulfilment in these events proves Jesus to be the one to whom they pointed forward
  - d. a call to repentance
2. Overview of the basic structure of the passage **[SLIDE]**
  - a. "This is that" **(14-21)**
  - b. Jesus, and his life, death, and resurrection **(22-28)**
  - c. Jesus is Lord and Messiah **(29-36)**
  - d. The response of the crowd **(37)**
  - e. The call to repentance **(38-40)**
  - f. Some do repent and believe **(41)**
3. "This is that" **(14-21) [SLIDE]**
  - a. Who is the primary speaker? (Peter)
    - i. But Luke points out that the other eleven apostles are there with him
  - b. Where are they at this point?
    - i. Where were they when the Holy Spirit came? ("all together in one place **(2:1-2)**)
    - ii. Somewhere between verses **4 and 6** they probably moved to the Temple area **[SLIDES]**
      1. Why can we assume this? (Because Peter is speaking to a large crowd, numbering in the thousands.)

- c. How does he address them in verse **14**? (“Men of Judea, and all who dwell in Jerusalem”) [SLIDE]
    - i. Is this significant?
  - d. First, he deals with the accusation of drunkenness, perhaps with some apostolic humor mixed in.
    - i. It’s only 9 a.m. - how could they be drunk this early in the day?
  - e. Then he tells them what is really happening - “**this is that**”
    - i. We’ll spend more time on this passage from Joel when we look at the OT passages in a week or two (or three)
    - ii. However, look at everyone Joel is talking about who will receive the Holy Spirit...
      - 1. “all flesh” (humanity)
        - a. Every single human being? Or representatives from all humanity?
      - 2. “sons and daughters”
      - 3. “young...and...old”
      - 4. “male servants [bondservants = slaves] and female servants”
    - iii. What is the promise in verse **21**? (everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved)
      - 1. Similar to Peter’s promise in verse **38**
4. Jesus, and his life, death, and resurrection (**22-28**) [SLIDES]
- a. How does he address them in verse **22**? (“Men of Israel”)
    - i. What changed from verse **14**? (More specific - he’s not including the visitors from other nations or cities)
    - ii. Why did this change?
  - b. Why include “of Nazareth” instead of just “Jesus?” (to be very specific about whom he’s talking about - Jesus was not an uncommon name)
  - c. The overall force of verse **22** is that they know who Jesus is - they cannot truthfully deny it
  - d. In verse **23**, he again specifies which Jesus he’s referring to
  - e. “the definite plan and foreknowledge of God”
    - i. We’ll cover this more when we discuss the theology in this passage...
    - ii. Balance or tension between God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility
      - 1. God planned the death of his son
      - 2. The men of Israel were responsible for putting him to death
      - 3. **Discuss**: Some people like to say that if we (you or I) were there we would have been just as guilty of putting Jesus to death. Is this true?
  - f. Peter quotes from **Psalm 16:8-11** to show and explain that David was prophesying about Jesus, and that Jesus fulfilled that prophecy

5. Jesus is Lord and Messiah (29-36) [SLIDES]

- a. How does he address them in verse 29? (“Brothers”)
  - i. Why the change?
  - ii. Is this significant?
- b. Peter exposit (explains) how the Psalm is referring to Jesus (29-25)
- c. In verse 36, Peter sums it all up by declaring that Jesus is the Lord and the Christ (Messiah) that Israel has been waiting and looking for - and they killed him!
  - i. We’ll spend more time on this verse when we look at the theology of this passage
    1. Lordship
    2. Christology

6. The response of the crowd (37) [SLIDE]

- a. How do they respond? (“cut to the heart”)
- b. What do they ask Peter **and the rest of the apostles**?
  - i. “Brothers, what shall we do?”

7. The call to repentance (38-40) [SLIDE]

- a. Are they lost? Completely without hope? (No)
- b. What are the elements of Peter’s answer? (38)
  - i. Repent
  - ii. be baptized
    1. Who? (Every one of you)
  - iii. in the name of Jesus Christ
  - iv. for the forgiveness of your sins
  - v. you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit
    1. Salvation, which for Luke cannot happen without receiving the Holy Spirit
- c. Who is the promise for? (39)
  - i. Them
  - ii. Their children
    1. Does this mean that their children will be automatically saved?
      - a. No - repentance (and faith) are required of all
  - iii. All who are far off
    1. Jews and Gentiles? (Probably, considering where Luke is going with the Acts narrative, but Peter may not have had this in mind just yet...)
  - iv. How does Peter end this promise? (everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself)
    1. What theologians refer to as the “effectual call”

- d. Was Peter done speaking at this point? (No, Luke says that he continued to bear witness (to Jesus) and to exhort them (to repent and believe))
  - i. How does Luke summarize what he said? (“Save yourselves from this crooked generation.”)
- 8. Some do repent and believe (41) [SLIDE]
  - a. What is the result?
    - i. Those who received his word were baptized
      - 1. What is meant by “received?”
        - a. Believed
    - ii. About three thousand people were saved that day

### **The take-away for us**

- 1. This is perhaps the most important speech in Acts, and hopefully a deeper understanding of this passage gives you hope in the power of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and the gospel to save and change lives, including yours and mine.

### **Resources**

- 1. *The Acts of the Apostles*, F. F. Bruce
- 2. *The Book of the Acts*, F. F. Bruce
- 3. *The Message of Acts*, John Stott
- 4. *The Acts of the Apostles*, Ben Witherington III