

Message Date: 05-24-20

Sermon Series: To the Ends of the Earth- ACTS Part 1: What Happens Next

Message Title: Week 5, Cut to the Heart

SCENE 1- OPENING

- **Welcome! Week 5 in this first section of Acts... time for a quick recap!**
- **Started with disciples gathered together after Jesus resurrection... He is with them, and gives them first command- GO AND WAIT for GIFT FATHER PROMISED- Holy Spirit.**
- **Then Jesus gives great commission: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**
- **ASCENSION! Two angles... stop looking up! He’s coming back! There is work to be done!**
- **SO, they go to Jerusalem and wait, 120 of them joined in prayer every day.**
- **During this time, Peter arises as the leader of apostles, and they select a replacement for Judas. IN DOING SO, we see the first fulfillment of scripture, MAJOR THEME Going forward.**
- **CHAPTER 2! Day of Pentecost. God fearing Jews from around world.. Disciples, both men and women, are praying**
- **HOLY SPIRIT ARRIVES, comes upon the disciples... they move out into the streets, enabled by the Holy Spirit to speak directly to all the people in their native languages, declaring the message of Jesus Christ.**
- **CROWD IS AMAZED... WHAT IS HAPPENING!**
- **QUE PETER.. Steps up, launches into his speech.**
 - **Shows the evidence that Jesus resurrection and coming of the Holy Spirit is a fulfillment of OT prophecy, that the LAST DAYS have arrived, new age has begun**
 - **Looking at the crowd, Peter declares... AND YOU KILLED HIM. That’s the bad news!**
 - **BUT the good news! ... death could not hold him.**
- **NOW, MOVE INTO SECOND PART OF PETER’S SPEECH, where he is going to fully demonstrate that THIS JESUS is both LORD and MESSIAH**

SCENE 2

- **TO DO THIS, Peter returns to the Old Testament to demonstrate again how Jesus is fulfillment of Jewish prophecy of the coming messiah.**
- **He quotes from THREE psalms, two directly and one indirectly. Significantly, These psalms are connected to the central figure of the nation of Israel’s history, a figure also closely connected to Israel’s messianic hope. This person is DAVID.**
- **Remember in verse 24... “ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him”**
- **By HIM, Peter meant JESUS... then Peter said, “David said about HIM”**

- *Imagine... there you are in the crowd that day. You are a ‘God fearing Jew.’ You possess at LEAST a working knowledge of your scripture’s prophets, even more so from the Psalms, and even MORE SO from Psalms connected to DAVID.*
- *Peter already has your attention from his reference to the Prophet Joel. What’s going through your mind?*
 - *Last Days? HERE*
 - *Messiah? JESUS*
 - *God pouring out His Spirit? Happening right now*
 - *Who killed Jesus? ME*
 - *What happened next? He rose from the dead, and I can’t deny it.*
- *Now, Peter is saying to you... “Remember what David said in the Psalms? These prophecies of David you’ve learned since you were a child? Well, DAVID WAS TALKING ABOUT JESUS.*
- *VERSE 25: David said about him: “I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.*

SCENE 3

- *That’s from Psalm 16:8-11. Everyone knew it was a Psalm BY David, but Peter’s about to show that it’s not a psalm ABOUT DAVID.*
- *Why would Peter assert this Psalm is speaking about the Messiah?*
- *FIRST, the Psalmist here confesses an absolute certainty of God’s presence and protection. Not only that, they also confess total dependence upon God*
 - *In acts, Peter quotes “I saw the Lord always before me”... here he’s quoting from the Septuagint- the Greek Translation of the O.T. that was completed over a century prior to birth of Christ. In our translation, which goes back to older Hebrew texts, we see this translated “I keep my eyes always on the Lord”*
 - *Because I am with you, I will not be shaken... GOD is the source of security and peace*
- *IN VERSE 26, interesting confession, written in common Hebrew literary tool of parallelism- where we have three parallel concepts, all which combine to make a single larger point:*
“Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope”
- *HEART- soul, inner self... TONGUE- My will, my choices, my actions, outward expressions... BODY- my physical self...*
- *IN ALL OF WHO I AM, I am glad/well, I rejoice, and I am at REST*
- *Picture of a person who is completely dependent upon God, and is receiving EVERY NEED from God, all the time.*
- *WHAT would be the Psalmists REASON to have such faith in God?*
- *VERSE 27 “ because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead- you will not let your holy one see decay.”*

SCENE 4

- **Because of the Lord's promise to Him, the psalmist states with Confidence... DEATH HAS NO POWER OVER ME.**
- **Some speculation about what Psalm means by "realm of the dead". Hebrew concept of Hades, place of separation from God until Judgement day? Or when quoted by Peter, Is it our NT concept of hell, eternal separation from God?**
- **EMPHASIS HERE is a CONTRAST- the contrast between the realm of the dead- absence of God, and the joy and blessing of being in the presence of God.**
- **What we see here is that the threat of death- both spiritual and physical- isn't principally the punishment of hell, however that is understood- the threat of death is the devastating loss of being OUTSIDE THE PRESENCE OF GOD.**
- **SIDE NOTE: Great distortion in history of 'c'hristianity is the idea that the primary purpose of salvation is to provide deliverance from the punishment of hell. As a result, there is dismal history- up to this day- of people being emotionally manipulated into a shallow faith by a fear of hell.**
- **NOW- make no mistake- the prospect of eternal separation from God is Biblical, real, and again, it is devastating.**
- **FRIENDS!! Great gift of salvation, of NEW LIFE IN CHRIST isn't just that we are delivered out of punishment... it is that we are delivered INTO THE VERY GOODNESS, PRESENCE, GLORY OF GOD.**
- **VERSE 28, the Psalm continues... "You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence."**
- **If you go to Psalm 16 itself, you will see one more phrase that Peter didn't quote... "with eternal pleasures at your right hand"**
- **HEAR! For the person in this psalm, quoted by Peter, their unshakable confidence, joy, and hope is in their absolute certainty of the PROVISION, PROTECTION, and PRESENCE of GOD.**

SCENE 5

- **ONE MORE KEY PHASE... Not only is there the certain hope of not being abandoned by God, the Psalmist says "Nor will you let your Holy one see decay"**
- **Meaning is clear. The psalmist is referring to corruption and decay that results from the prolonged effect of physical death. And while the imagery here is of a person who has fully faced death, both spiritual and physical, this death was SHORT LIVED... because this is also a person who fully experienced both spiritual and physical RESURRECTION.**
- **AND BECAUSE THIS IS WHAT THE PSALM SAYS, this person COULD NOT have been DAVID. This is Peters point as he continues...**
- **VERSE 29: "Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day."**

- *In other words, David's body did see decay! His tomb is over there!*
- *But even though David is dead, he wrote about a person who is very alive.*
- *VERSE 30: But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.*
- *This is a reference to Psalm 132:11, another psalm that would have been well known- that the Messiah would come from the family line of David.*
 - *This is often something we focus on at Christmas- how Jesus was of the family line of David, and his birth- as a descendant of David (The root of Jesse) was a significant fulfillment of prophecy.*
- *NOW, Peter connects the prophecy of the Messiah's resurrection in Psalm 16 with the prophecy that the messiah would be a descendant of David.*

SCENE 6

- *VERSE 31: Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay.*
- *Peter's proclamation is this: When David spoke of God's promise to place his descendant on the Throne as Israel's King, he was speaking of the resurrection of the messiah.*
- *AND THE IDENTITY OF THIS MESSIAH, who is a descendant of David, who died but was not abandoned to the grave, who was really dead but really rose from the dead, this person is JESUS, AND YOU ARE A WITNESS OF IT!*
- *VERSE 32-33: ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. ³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.*
- *The resurrection happened! We all witnessed it!*
- *Again, we take this for granted, but it is of utmost importance! The FULL, BODILY resurrection of Jesus was the essential truth of Christianity from DAY ONE.*
- *Over the centuries, skeptics have tried to argue that for the early church, Jesus resurrection was a 'symbol' or a 'metaphor', and that the teaching of Jesus' actual resurrection was a later development. BUT THIS VIEW COMPLETELY FALLS APART when confronted by the evidence.*
- *In his commentary, Darrell Bock puts it this way "In the earliest tradition of the church, the resurrection was a historical fact, not an interpretation of an event. The Resurrection is not a symbol or a metaphor for anything- it was a real event that changed the direction of the witnesses lives.*
- *In VERSE 33 Peter references Christ's ascension- that Jesus has been "exalted to the right hand of God". This isn't just a picture that Jesus is WITH GOD, it is a proclamation that Jesus IS GOD. THAT HE IS LORD. THAT CHRIST and the FATHER ARE ONE.... And, by extension, to call upon the name of the Father is to call upon Christ.*

SCENE 7

- Next, Peter makes an interesting statement I had never really noticed before... that Jesus “has received from the father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.”
- So... how did Jesus receive the spirit from the Father? What does Peter mean here?
- COULD be a reference to the Holy Spirit coming upon Jesus at his own Baptism, by JTB. Luke describes this event in his Gospel.
- However, the emphasis of this statement is that Jesus is the MEANS by which the Holy Spirit has been given to His disciples. Here we see a picture of God and Jesus working together, as the Father accomplishes his work through Him.
- This is crucially important as Peter is demonstrating JESUS THE MAN, who lived not out of his own power but in dependence upon the father, is ONE WITH THE FATHER. HE IS not just a person used BY GOD, He is ONE WITH GOD, and HE IS LORD.
- PETER concludes his point with one more reference to the Psalms, now to Psalms 110. Like Psalm 16, this is a Psalm attributed to David, but it is not principally about David.
- VERSE 34: 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, “The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”
- Peter again references Christ’s ascension. “David wasn’t the one ascend to heaven... that was Jesus” And then we have this amazing image from Psalm 110.
- It’s an image of Jesus being welcomed into heaven... when THE LORD (God the father), said to MY LORD (Jesus)- sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.

SCENE 8

- There are other ancient historic accounts- particularly out of the Persian empire- of when one nation or city-state conquered another, and the victorious king would bring in the defeated King, and force him to get down on his hands and knees before the victorious kings throne, and he would be used as a footstool.
- This is a bit of a shocking image to us, but in the ancient world it was a picture of COMPLETE AND TOTAL VICTORY.
- LIKEWISE, HERE, by quoting this Psalm Peter is declaring the complete and total victory of Christ, AND the total unity/union, between Christ and the Father.
- Let me diverge just a bit- speak a little as to why this is important
 - In Christian theology, there is a concept known as “Christology”- it is the study of what Christians believe about Jesus, and when those beliefs came about.
 - What we see here is that the early church- again, from day one- had the HIGHEST CHRISTOLOGY. They believed...
 - Jesus is raised from the dead, fulfilling the prophecy that he is the messiah
 - Jesus is exalted by God, completely triumphant over his enemies. This is nothing less that Jesus, as God, being sovereign over the universe.
 - Jesus is at the Father’s right hand- WITH God, AS GOD.

- *Jesus is the means by which God's blessing and presence- by the Holy Spirit- came to believers*
 - *Jesus is the means of God's salvation*
 - *JESUS IS LORD.*
- *THEN, vs 36, Peter drops the mic. “³⁶ “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”*
 - *Luke tells us that “when the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”*

SCENE 9

- *THAT IS THE QUESTION! We will see Peter's answer next week... BUT NOW, I want to speak as your pastor...*
- *CHURCH, it is ALWAYS a work Christ is doing- by the spirit- to CUT TO OUR HEART. Jesus is always after our hearts. In this time, whatever you- your marriage- your family- are going through, JESUS IS AFTER YOUR HEART. WHEN we know that he is speaking to us, leading, encouraging, convicting... the question is WHAT SHALL WE DO? How are you going to listen, respond?*
- *With this in mind, lets go back to Psalm 16:8-11 (read out of bible)*
- *We saw how Jesus was the fulfillment of this prophecy... but this is also for US.*
- *As a Psalm, these words were called upon for generations by the Jewish people as WORSHIP. The psalm clearly is speaking about an individual, but it was also seen as a promise to all also would keep their eyes upon the lord.*
- *Today, we know this Psalm to speak of Jesus, and what is TRUE OF HIM. AND as followers of Christ- people who have been brought from death to life- this also reveals what is TRUE OF US.*
 - *When we keep our eyes upon the Lord, we will not be shaken!*
 - *Therefore, IN ALL OF WHO WE ARE – by faith- we may know security, joy, gladness- wellness of our soul.*
 - *This is true, because we are those for whom death has been defeated! The power and fear of death holds no power and fear over us, because God will never abandon us... and even though our current physical bodies WILL decay- and are decaying (smile)- this is a temporary condition.*
- *For by his gift of faith, his word, and the presence of his spirit...*
 - *GOD HAS MADE KNOWN TO US the paths OF life...*
 - *He fills us with the joy- even the pleasure- of his presence*
- *WE HAVE THIS PROMISE, right now- in the midst of life as it really is- and for all eternity.*
- *FRIENDS... may this amazing truth- this hope- cut to our heart. In the deepest part of who we truly are, may we allow Jesus- who is our LORD- to do his work, and may we respond.*