

Acts 2.14-41

The Greatest Sermon in History

HUMBLE TITLE!?! Refers to PETER'S Sermon in Acts 2 – NOT Mine!!

Greatest?? **Purpose of Sermon** > CHANGE LIVES for God's Glory

Result of THIS Sermon – 3000 Believe – was Luke EXAGGERATING??

Certainly is COMMON Tendency in CHURCH > esp PREACHERS!!

Luke was ACCURATE HISTORIAN > Jerusalem population 100,000

PENTECOST Feast – Jews from around Mediterranean – 300,000+?

LUKE was NOT PRESENT for ALL SERMONS / SPEECHES of ACTS

NOT Claiming EXACT RECORD of Peter's Words > **Reliable Summary**

v. 40 With many other words he warned them...

VERSES take 3 Minutes to Read > No Spirit-filled Preacher is THAT BRIEF!

Luke – Interviewed, Researched > Guided by HOLY SPIRIT to Write TRUTH

...since I myself have *carefully investigated everything from the beginning*, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you... Luke 1.3

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. F.F. Bruce

TODAY Not a PREACHER?? > GOOD Thing! > Are Spirit-filled WITNESS!

Make Jesus KNOWN in YOUR Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria > ENDS of EARTH

SERMON > Good MODEL of CONTENT of our Witness for Jesus

1. Declaration: What God has Done in Jesus
2. Doctrine: Application of God's Truth to All Areas of Life
3. Demand: What God Requires from Us

1. Declaration: What God has Done in Jesus

a. Person > MANIFESTATION of HOLY SPIRIT > Message about JESUS

STRANGE, UNUSUAL Phenomenon in City of JERUSALEM

SOUND Mighty Wind / SIGHT of Flaming Tongues / SPEECH of Many Lands

Peter's last PUBLIC STATEMENT was DENIAL > Now DECLARATION

SCOFFERS Accused SPIRIT-FILLED DISCIPLES > Being DRUNK!!

v. 15 Peter: These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning!

Many Sermons – BEGINS with JOKE > NOT YET Drunk > TOO EARLY!!

LAUGHERS Now Given OPPORTUNITY to become LEARNERS

v. 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

PETER'S ONE WORD ANSWER: v. 22 Men of Israel, listen to this: *Jesus*

NOT a SERMON about the HOLY SPIRIT > Spirit came to GLORIFY Jesus

He will *bring glory to me* by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. John 16.14

EVERY MAJOR RELIGION HAS SOME PLACE FOR JESUS

OTHER RELIGIONS – Person Named JESUS > NOT Jesus of the BIBLE

Brahmin / Buddha / Prophet / Rabbi / Teacher / Zen Master / Demiurge

Human / Divine / Spirit of Divine / god with small g / Human & Divine

NOT EVERY JESUS IS JESUS

My Name is BLAIR > But I've Never Been PM of Great Britain

v. 36 God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both *Lord and Christ*.

Israel's TRUE KING is also the World's TRUE LORD

v. 39 ...the *Lord our God* will call.

With the resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, the disciples now fully understand the implications of who he is...It is amazing to find the term *kyrios* (Lord) used of both Jesus and God...in practically interchangeable contexts. G.E. Ladd

JESUS is NOTHING LESS than GOD in REAL Human FLESH

b. Pain God ACCREDITED Him > They ATTACKED Him

Great WICKEDNESS of Cross > DEATH Could Not have the LAST WORD

PUBLIC Declaration > JESUS – Crucified in Weakness – EXALTED in Power

v. 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.

Word - AGONY / PANGS of DEATH = lit. PAINS of CHILDBIRTH

AGONY of Death = lit. 'BIRTH PANGS' – New Birth unto New Life

RESURRECTION Begins REGENERATION of ALL THINGS

Jesus: "...the *renewal of all things*, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne..."
Matthew 19.28

The abyss can no more hold the Redeemer than a pregnant woman can hold the child in her body.
G. Bertram

c. Poured Out - Jesus on EARTH – LED by Spirit

Peter's Sermon in the House of Cornelius....

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because *God was with him*.
Acts 10.38

Jesus – Fully Man and Fully God – Served in POWER of HOLY SPIRIT

HOLY SPIRIT Present / Empowers at EVERY POINT of Earthly Ministry

Jesus, *full of the Holy Spirit*, returned from the Jordan and was *led by the Spirit* in the desert... Jesus returned to Galilee in the *power of the Spirit*... Luke 4.1,14

Now Jesus from HEAVEN – GIVES the Spirit to GUIDE His Body on EARTH

v. 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.

‘POUR OUT’ – Not Drizzle, HEAVENLY DELUGE > Get DRENCHED!!

For the one whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for *God gives the Spirit without limit.* John 3.34

WISTFUL Desire of MOSES > God POURED OUT Spirit – 70 Elders of Israel
Moses replied, "...I wish that all the LORD'S people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!" Numbers 11.29

The coming of the Spirit is the evidence of the enthronement of Christ, just as the resurrection is the evidence of the efficacy of the death of Christ as atonement.
Sinclair Ferguson

For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants.
Isaiah 44.3

COME HOLY SPIRIT! COME! Be Lifted Up, Lord JESUS!

d. People > WORK of Salvation ACCOMPLISHED > Messengers Sent Out

NOW AS VICTOR – Over Sin, Death, Hell, Satan – WINS SPIRIT as PRIZE
To each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."
Ephesians 4.7-8

v. 17 God says, I will pour out my Spirit *on all people.*

400 Years before Jesus > NO OUTPOURING of Holy Spirit on Israel

NO Prophets sent to PROCLAIM Word of God

Before that OCCASIONAL Outpourings on Judges, Kings, Prophets, Priests

NOW Spirit Poured Out – NOT on Priests in Temple or Rabbinic Schools

Now in a sudden burst of fresh divine energy released through the death and resurrection of Jesus, God's spirit has been poured out on a lot of people all at once...slaves and free, male and female, young and old...the nucleus of God's true people.
N.T. Wright

ALL PEOPLE > for Peter = JEWS Everywhere > HS (Luke?) ALL NATIONS

ALL PEOPLE – Pentecost Day – ONLY JEWS > Soon Samaritans, Gentiles

WHOLE WORLD Can NOW HEAR > Savior of the World HAS COME!

Paul, Luke's COLLEAGUE in Pentecostal Service, later wrote...

All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing... Colossians 1.6

We DECLARE WELCOMING Truth of the GOSPEL to the WHOLE EARTH
v. 21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

2. Doctrine: Application of God's Truth to All Areas of Life

a. Prophecy Peter's Sermon based: Three OT Texts – Joel 2, Psalm 16, 110

40 Days between Resurrection and Ascension > CRASH COURSE on OT....

Jesus: "Everything must be fulfilled that is *written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.*" Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.
Luke 24.44,45

...*giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles* he had chosen...
forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. Acts 1.1-4

The very words of the Bible and the use of the Bible by God's Spirit are far more important in spiritual work than anything the preacher can say – even if he is an apostle.
James Boice

PETER, Guided by Spirit of Risen Jesus, takes GOSPEL-Liberties w/ OT Text

FUTURE HOPE of PROPHETS > FULFILLED NOW in EXALTED JESUS
ISRAEL'S ROLE > ACCOMPLISHED IN JESUS – the TRUE ISRAEL

vs. 25-31 David said about him: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence."
"Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 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. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.

David Claims HIS BODY would NOT ROT in Grave > BUT IT DID!

David PROPHESED > SON of David, ROOT of David, LORD of DAVID

Jesus LORD of LIFE > INDESTRUCTIBLE Nature of RISEN LORD

He lay buried in the grave, but the hyenas did not touch him, and on the third day, he rose from the grave. Masai Creed

Very DIFFICULT Audience > 50 Days Earlier SHOUTED 'Crucify HIM'

RAN Jesus OUT of CITY > ABANDONED Him to CROSS and GRAVE

Restless Listeners, No MOOD Music Played > No CLIMATE Controlled Room

Message > Peter told NO CUTE Stories about Himself or HIS KIDS!

GIVES them SCRIPTURE! Carefully Reasoned Explanation of OT TEXTS

13 Verses Quotes OT – 11 Verses Exposition – 2 Verses Application

HALF Scripture – HALF Interpretation / Explanation

IF Before HOSTILE Crowd Wondered WHY you & 119 Friends act DRUNK?

Would we ANSWER by Reading CHUNKS of ANCIENT SCRIPTURE?

Confident ASSUMPTION: Audience KNEW SCRIPTURES – Hebrew BIBLE

1st C Jews LOOKING for LAST DAYS and Fulfillment of PROPHECY

b. Plan Most TERRIBLE Event in History > Carefully PLANNED by God

v. 23 This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.

HOW COULD MESSIAH be MURDERED? Should be an EXALTED KING!

Christ Crucified is a contradiction in terms, of the same category as 'fried ice'.
Gordon Fee

SAME Question Muslims ask > GREAT PROPHET ISA could not SUFFER
5 times Quran States 'Jesus / Isa DID NOT Die on the CROSS'

KING JESUS: Cross Not Accident but Accomplishment, Not Victim but Victor
No one takes (my life) from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.
John 10.18

Wisdom of SOVEREIGN God > **PLAN the Cross & PUNISH the Crucifiers**
Even if their HANDS NOT Bloody, Cried for MURDER w/ HEART & VOICE
Human Responsibility linked with DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY > Saving Death
Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen.
Acts 4.27-28

Christ suffered nothing by accident or because he lacked the power to rescue himself...Christ's death was ordained by God's eternal counsel...God's providence teaches us that our life and death are in his hands. John Calvin

c. Proof TRUE MAN filled with SPIRIT > Mightily Used by God: Miracles

v. 22 Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

MANY of LISTENERS had SEEN MIRACLES with OWN EYES...
 If I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come
 to you. Luke 11.20

CHRISTIAN Faith built on SOLID HISTORICAL FACTS of Jesus

Global Spread of EASTERN Idea – FEELINGS more important than FACTS

I have never forgotten the astonishment with which a devout and learned Hindu
 teacher regarded me when he discovered that I was prepared to rest my whole
 faith as a Christian upon the substantial record concerning Jesus in the New
 Testament. To this person it seemed axiomatic that such vital matters of
 religious truth could not be allowed to depend upon the accidents of history.

Bishop Leslie Newbigin
 Missionary to Church of South India

As PETER PREACHED they WITNESSED Another MIRACLE –

OUT of FEARFUL FOLLOWERS > God builds SPIRIT-filled CHURCH

PETER > Speaker > Usually just OPENED Mouth to CHANGE FEET

NOW Boldly Preaches > PERHAPS His Last Words > Only God Knew!!

NOT how HE FELT > But DECLARATION of What God HAS DONE!

v. 14 Then Peter stood up *with the Eleven*, raised his voice and addressed the
 crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to
 you; listen carefully to what I say.

PETER stands w/ 11: 12 Apostolic Foundation Stones COMPLETE, UNITED
 v. 32 ...we are all witnesses of the fact

Ministry in Acts > Always done as TEAM > Never ONE MAN Leadership

JESUS Works FROM HEAVEN IN Them and Thru Them....

I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have
 turned back, strengthen your brothers. Luke 22.32

d. Present v. 17 "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

God's final act of salvation has begun to take place. I. Howard Marshall

God's NOW Started on PENTECOST - 'In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.' I tell you, *now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.*

2 Corinthians 6.2

FUTURE DAY Begins NOW with RESURRECTION / EXALTATION

The early Christians believed...they were living in a period of time between the moment when the 'last days' had been launched and...come to an end on 'the day of the Lord'....Jesus final reappearance...heaven and earth would be joined together in the great coming renewal of all things. N.T. Wright

One of the major obstacles that many have to becoming a Christian is the fear of reprisals – from other gods, from religious leaders, from government authorities, and from family, community and friends. They fear curses, persecution, ridicule, and discrimination. I know many Buddhists and Hindus who are convinced of the truthfulness of Christianity but who will not become Christians because of such fears. We need to show them that the only one really to fear is the supreme Lord of the universe, who will conquer all rebellion against him. The safest thing to do is align ourselves with him. Ajith Fernando

3. Demand – What is our Duty?

Pluralism – MANY Religions – ALL Correct – NONE have UNIQUE TRUTH
PLURALISM – ORDER of Day in 1st Century ATHENS > PAUL SHOCKS..

God... now *commands all people everywhere to repent.* Acts 17.30

GOSPEL is DECLARATION – DOCTRINE and a DEMAND

Your DESTINY Moving to FINAL MOMENT > STAND BEFORE this GOD

a. Conviction Reason GREAT SERMON God Used for GREAT RESPONSE

v. 37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

50+ Days before, Jesus: “When he (the Counselor) comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment” John 16.8

Whenever you find men and women being pointed to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, however or wherever that may happen, there the Holy Spirit is at work...That is the greatest of all miracles...spiritual regeneration. James Boice

BOLD, DIRECT Preaching of PETER: Like Cold Shower or Bolt of Lightning
MANY in Modern Church would be AGAHST: GENTLY Meet FELT NEEDS
PREACHING is NOT ALL EARLY CHURCH Did to PROCLAIM JESUS
But GOAL of all we DO in HIS NAME > PEOPLE will be BROUGHT to HIM

After twenty-one years of evangelistic ministry with non-Christians, I have come to the conclusion that most people *come* to Christ in order to have a felt need met, but they *stay* with Christ because they have come to believe that the gospel is true.
Ajith Fernando – Sri Lanka

GOD Faithfully BLESSED His Word – Spoken in the Power of the Spirit

b. Plea > SIGNS of Spirit’s Work > SUMMONS to Receive Christ’s Blessings

STRANGE and STRONG WORDS of Jesus

Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.

Matthew 7.6

Too QUICK to Tell World that HATES HIM > Jesus LOVES YOU!

ONE TRUTH > Also, True they’ll FACE Loving Jesus as STERN JUDGE

How can SAVIOR MEAN ANYTHING When SIN MEANS NOTHING??

AFTER Evidence of Spirit’s Work of CONVICTION > Peter pleas with them.. vs. 38,40 Peter replied, "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...With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

CORRUPT GENERATION – Families, Elders, Priests > CRUCIFIED JESUS!

CLEAN BREAK with DEAD RELIGION > Meaningless Sacrifices & Rituals

Two Stipulations: REPENT and BELIEVE

Two Promises: FORGIVENESS and HOLY SPIRIT

REPENT > TURN AROUND – Leave your Sin, Live for God

BELIEVE > Whole SOUL EMBRACES Person of Jesus – Living Relationship

BAPTISM is NOT a NECESSARY REQUIREMENT for SALVATION

BAPTISM is the OUTWARD CONFIRMATION of INWARD Transformation

c. Promise > Amazing, Gracious, INCREDIBLE Offer to CONTRITE Sinners

v. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call.

They had murdered God's Son; he was offering them his Spirit. They had crucified the second person of the Trinity; he was offering them the third...

David Gooding

CHILDREN – COVENANT Promise for WHOLE Family – If Believe > Saved

All who are FAR OFF: HERE WE ARE Today at ZGC - Far OFF & Far OUT!

JESUS Sent them to ENDS of EARTH, Even there People WILL BE SAVED!

d. Confession v. 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

CALL to PUBLIC, CORPORATE Identification with Christ

NEW Testament Believer is BAPTIZED Believer > Symbol of CONFESSION

Church GREW 26 times – 120 to 3,120

EZEKIEL Called to PREACH to DRY BONES: "Prophecy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'" So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet-a vast army... Ezekiel 37.9-10

PETER PREACHED > 3000 DEAD BONES Rose to NEW LIFE

v. 38 ...be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ...

Since JESUS did ALL THIS > We MUST CALL HIS NAME for Salvation

BAPTISM in JESUS Name > Shows RADICAL CHANGE in Relation

One they CRUCIFIED – NOW they CONFESS as Lord, Savior, Messiah

BAPTISM – HUMBLING for JEWS > Rite for PAGAN GENTILES Converts

NAME of JESUS! Swallow PRIDE > One they MURDERED is MESSIAH!

Acknowledge AUTHORITY, CLAIMS, DOCTRINE > Submit to His RULE!

It is not enough to have Christ set before us unless we are also taught to run away from those things that take us away from Christ...The example of the reactions to this sermon should shame us. Through one sermon a large crowd was converted to Christ, whereas hundreds of sermons hardly move a few of us...
John Calvin

Gospel EVENTS – Life and Work of Jesus
Gospel WITNESSES – Scripture and History
Gospel PROMISES – Forgiveness and Holy Spirit
Gospel CONDITIONS – Repent and Believe

GREAT SERMON > Almost 2000 years Old > WORDS: LIFE and POWER

15 yr old LUKE SHORT – Heard Sermon from Puritan Pastor John FLAVEL

Flavel Preached in 1600's in Dartmouth, Old England

Luke Short eventually Immigrated to NEW England in USA became FARMER

85 yrs later – Celebrated 100th Birthday – Strong in Body, No Peace with God

Vivid Memory of Flavel's Words – Spoken 85 yrs Before – Knew was LOST

Age 100 Luke Short began CHILD of LIVING GOD

May God use OUR WORDS for Him > Now and in Years to Come

That we MAY SEE Continuing Advance of Kingdom > People come to Jesus!

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. ¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. ¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. ²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. ²¹ And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.' ²² "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 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. ²⁵ David said about him: "I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. ²⁶ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, ²⁷ because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. ²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.' ²⁹ "Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 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. ³¹ Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. 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. ³⁴ For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand ³⁵ until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ' ³⁶ "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and

Christ." ³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" ³⁸ Peter replied, "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 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." ⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.