

Acts 2, Peter's Pentecostal Sermon
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Overview

The business of the infant church is to bear witness to its Lord--and that's our business now as well. One of our main emphases in going through Acts will be to notice how we should carry out that business.

In this chapter, the HS has given us a case study of what happens when God confronts unbelievers with the gospel. Note:

1. 1-4, What draws their attention.
2. 5-13, Two kinds of people, two kinds of response.
3. 14-36, The technique of Peter's message.
4. 22-36, The content of Peter's message (next time).
5. 37-40, The Aftermeeting (next time).
6. 41-47, Life with the Lord (next time).

A. 1-4, What Draws their Attention

Perhaps the hardest part of sharing the gospel with someone is getting the conversation started. It's hard to walk up to someone and initiate a conversation about spiritual things. That's not an unbiblical approach: consider Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch. But the Lord often uses another approach as well, much like the one he used here.

1. Here, the attention of those who are addressed is first of all seized by something that God is doing in the lives of the believers--in this case, their supernatural utterances. One might very well expect to hear foreign languages at a pilgrimage feast--but from Galileans (vv.7,8)? Not only would they not need to speak other tongues, but as ignorant country bumpkins one would not expect them to be able so to speak. It leads people to wonder (vv. 6, 7, 12) what in the world is going on, and gives Peter an open door to explain.
2. General endorsement for this approach
 - a) 1 Pet. 3:15, "be ready always to give an answer to every man who asks you a reason of the hope that is in you."
 - b) Col. 4:6, "that you may know how you ought to answer every man."
3. In the world's terms, Christians continue to be a "peculiar people." If we let God's Spirit work through us, he will produce characteristics just as amazing in the world's eyes as tongues were in Jerusalem in A.D. 33.

- a) Outstanding work performance; a good performance review is a great time to give praise to the Lord.
- b) Quiet courage in suffering; a spell in the hospital ought to be good for half a dozen testimonies.
- c) Cheerfulness and helpfulness to others.

People will remark these qualities, and when they do, we should be ready to buy up the opportunity and give an answer. It's wonderful when someone has the courage, drive, and compassion to take the initiative in reaching out. But I am persuaded that if only we would take advantage of the opportunities we have each day to *respond*, we would have dozens of opportunities to speak about our Lord.

B. 5-13, Two Kinds of People, Two Kinds of Response

Notice two contrasts between v.5 and v.13.

1. There are two kinds of persons. All of them are religious--this is, after all, a great Jewish feast, and the auditors are there for the feast. But there are differences among religious people.

Gk has two words for "other," one meaning "another of the same kind," and the other "another of a different kind." The first word appears in v.12, "saying one to another." The "other" in 13 is the second word, and contrasts the mockers with the "devout men" of v.5.

- a) "Devout men:" the term is used only three other times in the NT:
 - 1) Simeon in the temple in Lk. 2:25, waiting for the coming of the Messiah.
 - 2) The believers who buried Stephen in Acts 8:2--they must have been bold, to retrieve the body of one condemned as a heretic.
 - 3) Ananias in Acts 22:12, described in terms of his jewishness, "a devout man acc. to the law."
 These are not just religious people, but people whose hearts are indeed gentle toward the Lord. Here in Acts 2, they are OT saints.
- b) "Others." The Gk word explicitly claims that they are of a different kind than those in v.5--not "devout." Yet they are religious, attending the feast, going through all the motions.
- c) *Application:* Beware the deception of external religion. Attendance at religious services, possession or even reading of a Bible, even a verbal claim to be a Christian, does not mean that a person is right with God. Salvation is something that God does to us, not something we work up to fit in with the group. Let's be sure
 - 1) that we ourselves are "devout," truly loving and

worshipping God;

- 2) that we correctly discern among those with whom we deal those who are truly open to the Lord and those who are only superficial.

2. These two kinds of people respond differently.

a) The non-devout ones (v.13) mock at the work of God in the lives of the believers. When we make ourselves known as believers, we may expect the same response from people of this class today. We ought not to be surprised--the same thing happened then.

b) The response of the devout ones, those open to learn more, was marked by being "confounded" (v.6), a word that indicates excited and agitated in mind. vv.7-12, 13 amplify this attitude in two ways. Both of these say they were amazed, but the second word, and their statements, show two sides of their bewilderment.

- 1) v.7 says they were amazed and *marvelled*. This is the standard word to indicate response to a Miracle. Operative question (v.8) is "How does this work?" Their attention is seized, and they would like to know more about the sign itself.

In itself, this might be their response at a magic show. Their second response shows how noble they are.

- 2) v.13 says they were amazed and *doubted* (better, *perplexed*). This is the appropriate response to a Mystery. Now their question is, "What does this mean?" They are serious minded folk, and inasmuch as the message concerns "the wonderful works of God," they want to know what the spiritual significance is.

c) *Application*: Just as we can expect the same two kinds of hearers that the early believers had, so we can expect the same two kinds of response. Some will mock, but some will go beyond amazement to wonder what we are all about.

C. 14-36, The Technique of Peter's Message

We will consider its structure, its use of Scripture, and its relation to the context.

1. It has two parts: the first (14-21) capitalizing on their interest in the gift of languages, and the second (22-36) setting forth the gospel.

- a) Note how each begins with a vocative ("Jewish men" ... "Israelite men"), followed by a call for their attention (14, 22).

b) The vocatives are instructive. The first is not "Men of Judea," as though excluding the foreigners, but "Jewish men," in apposition to "dwellers in Jerusalem," cf. v.5. The movement is from a racial and religious description of the company in 14 to a spiritual one in 22. (Recall that "Israel," "prince with God," is the name Jacob was given after God humbled him at Jabbok.) In 14-21 he is appealing to the whole company, who are undoubtedly Jewish by religion, but in 22 his focus narrows to those who aspire to belong to the true Israel, the spiritual circumcision. He grabs their attention as Jews and reminds them of their higher calling as Israelites.

2. His message is an exposition of Scripture.

a) The first section confronts them with Joel 2:28-32, with little explanation (nor is much needed). This passage explains what they have seen and heard.

b) The second section (next study) is built around two verses from the Psalms: 16:10 and 110:1. These texts prove who Jesus is.

c) *Application:* Evangelism involves the use of the Word of God. The idea is get people to listen, not to us, but to the Lord. Of course, these are Jewish hearers, and one might argue that Peter's use of the OT is simply cultural accommodation. But we'll see that even in Acts 17, when speaking to complete pagans, Paul builds his message around Scripture. It is the Word of God that is quick and powerful; the incorruptible seed by which spiritual life is conceived. Being able to give an answer means not only being alert for opportunities and speaking up, but also having some passage of Scripture to introduce.

3. His message takes advantage of the interest of his hearers. We will consider the second portion in our next study, but there is much for us to learn by considering the first portion carefully. It is a contrast, between what the phenomenon is not and what it is.

a) He begins by addressing the locals who have mocked, dismissing their theory politely but briefly. There is an important lesson in his brevity: try to identify and respond to those with real interest, and don't waste time arguing over those who are not receptive.

b) If 15 is addressed to the "others," we may see 16-21 addressed mainly to the devout men, and directly answering their question of v.12. They at least will heed the words of Scripture. The verses from Joel 2 present three points for their consideration.

1) 17-18, the outpouring of God's Spirit and the resulting

prophecy are an indication of the last days, the juncture between the end of the present age and the age that is to come.

The signs that they have seen are portents of great blessing; recall the role of the HS in Jer. 31. But before the glories of the new age arrive in full, something more ominous is going to happen:

- 2) 19-20, wonders in heaven (sun and moon darkened) and on earth (blood, fire, smoke--the signs of war). Compare the Olivet discourse, Matt. 24:29: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days [marked by wonders on earth] shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken [wonders in heaven]." The darkening of the sun and moon is a common prophetic theme of judgment throughout the OT prophets: God made them to rule the day and night, but people turned to worship them as the ultimate rulers, and so God will judge them.

These signs are as dismaying and terrifying as the former ones are encouraging and comforting. How can one escape them?

- 3) 21, salvation is available to those who will call on the name of the Lord.
- 4) Thus the quotation from Joel serves not only to interpret what they have experienced, but to warn them of coming judgment and give them a motive for listening to the second part of his message.

Application: People will never get saved unless they have something to be saved from. Only when people perceive the just judgment that a righteous God is bringing upon them will they see any reason to repent of their sin and receive the Lord Jesus.

Summary

Several key lessons here for us in maintaining a witness to the Lord Jesus.

1. Take advantage of the curiosity of others about the difference the Lord makes in our lives. Be ready always to give an answer.
2. Recognize that our hearers will be of two types: some will mock, while others will marvel and be perplexed. Try to identify and focus in on the latter class. Don't waste time arguing with the mockers.
3. Be prepared to use Scripture in explaining to those who will listen why you are different.

4. Find a way to challenge them with the consequences of not turning to Christ.

Psalm: Rebels who had dared to show, Ps. 107.

Analysis

A. 5-13, Two kinds of reaction

1. Reaction of the godly men (*eulabeis*, like Simeon Lk. 2:25 and Ananias Acts 22:12)--these are believers)

a) 5)^Hsan de\ ei)s)Ierousalh\m katoikou^ntes)Ioudai^oi,
a)/ndres eu)labei^s a)po\ panto\s e)/qnous tw^u(po\ to\n ou)rano/n:

b) ampl p

- 1) text: reason p (they were excited, *sunexuqh*)

a> text: 6 genome/nhs de\ th^s fwnh^s tau/thh sunh^lqen
to\ plh^qos kai\ sunexu/qh,

b> reason: o(/ti h)/kouon ei(^s e(/kastos th^| i)di/a|
diale/ktw| lalou/ntwn au)tw^u.

- 2) ampl: coordinate p (two aspects to their excitement)

a> quote p (*qaumazw*: response to a Miracle)

1> quote f: 7 e)ci/stanto de\ kai\ e)qau/mazon
le/gontes,

2> quote:

a: Ou)x i)dou\ a(/pantes ou(^toi/ ei)sin oi(
lalou^ntes Galilai^oi;

b: 8 kai\ pw^s h(mei^s a)kou/omen e(/kastos th^|
i)di/a| diale/ktw| h(mw^u e)n h(^| e)gennh/qhmen;

c: 9 Pa/rqoi kai\ Mh^doi kai\)Elami^tai, kai\ oi(
katoikou^ntes th\n Mesopotami/an,)Ioudai/an te
kai\ Kappadoki/an, Po/nton kai\ th\n)Asi/an, 10
Frugi/an te kai\ Pamfuli/an, Ai)/gupton kai\ ta\
me/rh th^s Libu/hs th^s kata\ Kurh/nhn, kai\ oi(
e)pidhmou^ntes (Rwmai^oi, 11)Ioudai^oi/ te kai\
prosh/lutoi, Krh^tes kai\)/Arabes, a)kou/omen
lalou/ntwn au)tw^u tai^s h(mete/rais glw/ssais ta\
megalei^a tou^ qeou^.

b> quote p (*diaporew*: "were perplexed," response to a
Mystery)

1> quote f: 12 e)ci/stanto de\ pa/ntes kai\ dihpo/roun,
a)/llos pro\s a)/llon le/gontes,

2> quote: Ti/ qe/lei tou^to ei)^nai;

2. Reaction of others (note *eteroi* + initial subject)

13 e(/teroi de\ diaxleua/zontes e)/legon o(/ti Gleu/kous
memestwme/noi ei)si/n.

B. 14-36, Peter's speech

14 Staqei\s de\ o(Pe/tros su\n toi^s e(/ndeka e)ph^ren th\n fwnh\n

au) tou^ kai\ a) pefqe/gcato au) toi^s,
Note that both sections begin with a vocative and a call to attention.

1. 14b-21, Introduction from Joel

) /Andres) Ioudai^ oi kai\ oi(katoikou^ntes) Ierousalh\m pa/ntes,

a) coordinate p: Pay attention.

- 1) tou^to u(mi^n gnwsto\n e)/stw
- 2) kai\ e)nwti/sasqe ta\ r(h/mata/ mou.

b) contrast p: Not intoxication, but Pneumatization

1) thesis: reason p (answer to the *eteroi* by reason, since they are not submissive to Scripture)

- a> text: 15 ou) ga\r w(s u(meis u(polamba/nete ou(^toi mequ/ousin,
b> reason: e)/stin ga\r w(/ra tri/th th^s h(me/ras,

2) antithesis: comment p (answer to the *eulabhs*, v.12, from Scripture)

- a> text: 16 a)lla\ tou^to/ e)stin to\ ei)rhme/non dia\ tou^ profh/tou)Iwh/l,
b> comment: quote p ... le/gei o(qeo/s, ...

1> summary p: What they have seen: everybody prophesies.

a: text: temporal p

1: time: 17 Kai\ e)/stai e)n tai^s e)sxatais h(me/rais, ...

2: text: summary p

A. text: result p

1. text: e)kxew^ a)po\ tou^ pneu/mato/s mou e)pi\ pa^san sa/rka,

2. result:

- a) kai\ profhteu/sousin oi(ui(oi\ u(mw^n kai\ ai(qugate/res u(mw^n,
- b) kai\ oi(neani/skoi u(mw^n o(ra/seis o)/yontai,
- c) kai\ oi(presbu/teroi u(mw^n e)nupni/ois e)nupniasqh/sontai:

B. summary: result p

1. text: 18 kai/ ge e)pi\ tou\s dou/lous mou kai\ e)pi\ ta\s dou/las mou e)n tai^s h(me/rais e)kei/nais e)kxew^ a)po\ tou^ pneu/mato/s mou,

2. result: kai\ profhteu/sousin.

2> coordinate p: What they will see: earthly and heavenly judgment.

a: 19 kai\ dw/sw te/rata e)n tw^| ou)ranw^| a)/nw kai\ shmei^a e)pi\ th^s gh^s ka/tw, ai(^ma kai\ pu^r kai\ a)tmi/da kapnou^:

b: temporal p
 1: text: 20 o(h(/lios metastrafh/setai ei)s
 sko/tos kai\ h(selh/nh ei)s ai(^ma
 2: time: pri\ n e)lqei^n h(me/ran kuri/ou th\n
 mega/lhn kai\ e)pifanh^.

3> Their chance: plead for mercy now. 21 kai\ e)/stai
 pa^s o(\s a)\n e)pikale/shtai to\ o)/noma kuri/ou
 swqh/setai.

2. 22-36, The Point from David (next study)

) /Andres)Israhli^tai, a)kou/sate tou\s lo/gous tou/tous:

a) This Jesus whom you crucified...

- 1))Ihsou^n to\n Nazwrai^on, a)/ndra a)podedeigme/non a)po\
 tou^ qeou^ ei)s u(ma^s duna/mesi kai\ te/rasi kai\
 shmei/ois oi(^s e)poi/hsen di' au)tou^ o(qeo\s e)n me/sw\
 u(mw^ n, kaqw\s au)toi\ oi)/date,
- 2) manner p: You killed him.
 a> text: 23 tou^ton a)nei/late,
 b> manner-1: th^| w(risme/nh| boulh^| kai\ prognw/sei tou^
 qeou^ e)/kdoton labontes
 c> manner-2: dia\ xeiro\s a)no/mwn prosph/cantes

b) God has made him to be Christ. coordinate p

1) reason p: God raised him up, because he could not stay
 dead.

- a> text: 24 o(\n o(qeo\s a)ne/sthsen lu/sas ta\s w)di^nas
 tou^ qana/tou,
- b> reason: ampl p
 1> text: kaqo/ti ou)k h)^n dunato\n kratei^sqai au)to\n
 u(p' au)tou^:
 2> ampl: interpretation p: The scriptures teach it.
 a: text: quote p: 25 Daui\d ga\r le/gei ei)s
 au)to/n,
 1: Proorw/mhn to\n ku/rion e)nw/pio/n mou dia\
 panto/s,
 2: o(/ti e)k deciw^ n mou/ e)stin
 3: i(/na mh\ saleuqw^.
 4: 26 dia\ tou^to hu)fra/nqh h(kardi/a mou
 5: kai\ h)gallia/sato h(glw^ssa/ mou,
 6: e)/ti de\ kai\ h(sa/rc mou kataskhnw/sei e)p'
 e)lpi/di:
 7: 27 o(/ti ou)k e)gkatalei/yeis th\n yuxh/n mou
 ei)s a(/|dhn,
 8: ou)de\ dw/seis to\n o(/sio/n sou i)dei^n
 diafqora/n.
 9: 28 e)gnw/risa/s moi o(dou\s zwh^s,
 10: plhrw/seis me eu)frosu/nhs meta\ tou^ prosw/pou
 sou.

b: interpretation: reason p (oun in v.30, not de or
 alla)

1: 29) /Andres a)delfoi/,

2: reason: quote p
 A. quote f: e)co\n ei)pei^n meta\ parrhsi/as
 pro\s u(ma^s peri\ tou^ patria/rxou Dau/d,
 o(/ti
 B. quote:
 1. kai\ e)teleu/thsen
 2. kai\ e)ta/fh
 3. kai\ to\ mnh^ma au)tou^ e)/stin e)n
 h(mi^n a)/xri th^s h(me/ras tau/th:s
 3: text: reason p (why kai with reason-2?): David
 spoke of Christ.
 A. reason-1: 30 profh/th:s ou)^n u(pa/rxwn,
 B. reason-2: kai\ ei)dw\s o(/ti o(/rkw|
 w)/mosen au)tw^| o(qeo\s e)k karpou^ th^s
 o)sfu/os au)tou^ kaqi/sai e)pi\ to\n qro/non
 au)tou^,
 C. reason-3: 31 proi+dw\n
 D. text: quote p
 1. quote f: e)la/lhsen peri\ th^s
 a)nasta/sews tou^ Xristou^ o(/ti
 2. quote:
 a) ou)/te e)gkatelei/fqh ei)s a(//|dhn
 b) ou)/te h(sa\rc au)tou^ ei)^den
 diafqora/n.

2) reason p: God raised him up, because we saw it.
 a> text: 32 tou^ton to\n)Ihsou^n a)ne/sthsen o(qeo/s,
 b> reason: ou(^ pa/ntes h(meis e)smen ma/rtures.

c) God has made him to be Lord

1) The Event: circumstance p: He has ascended and sent the
 Spirit.
 a> circ-1: 33 th^| decia^| ou)^n tou^ qeou^ u(ywqei\s
 b> circ-2: th/n te e)paggeli/an tou^ pneu/matos tou^
 a(gi/ou labw\n para\ tou^ patro\s
 c> text: e)ce/xeen tou^to o(\ u(meis [kai\] ble/pete kai\
 a)kou/ete.
 2) Its Meaning: contrast p
 a> 34 ou) ga\r Dau/d a)ne/bh ei)s tou\s ou)ranou/s,
 b> le/gei de\ au)to/s,
 quote p: Ei)^pen [o(] ku/rios tw^| kuri/w| mou,
 l> temporal p
 a: text: Ka/qou e)k deciw^n mou
 b: time: 35 e(/ws a)\n qw^ tou\s e)xqrou/s sou
 u(popo/dion tw^n podw^n sou.

d) Conclusion: quote p:

1) quote f: 36 a)sfalw^s ou)^n ginwske/tw pa^s oi)^kos
)Israh\l o(/ti
 2) quote: comment p
 a> text: kai\ ku/rion au)to\n kai\ Xristo\n e)poi/hsen o(
 qeo/s, tou^ton to\n)Ihsou^n
 b> comment <touton ton Ihsou^n>: o(\n u(meis e)staurw/sate.