

PETER'S SERMON AT PENTECOST

Acts 2:14-36

Peter's sermon at Pentecost was a masterpiece. And the fact that it was a re-claimed backslider who preached it is abundant proof that God can even take a wayward man and use him mightily in His service and for His glory if only that man willyield himself completely to God.

Whereas Peter was formerly timid and cowardly, he was bold and brave. This was due to the fact that he was filled with and empowered by the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit holds sway and controls any life there is no room for cowardice and fear. When a believer is filled with the Holy Spirit he is bold and courageous to speak for Christ.

I. The Introduction. Acts 2:14-21.

(1) Some physical matters.

a. He stood up as a herald.

This was a new method. Teachers sat, while heralds stood. What an impressive scene it must have been when Peter and the eleven with him arose. When the twelve Apostles faced the representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel, Peter was the spokesman. What boldness, courage and directness characterized him and his message! What a change from the Peter before Pentecost! It was all the result of the coming of the Holy Spirit.

b. "He lifted up his voice."

With more than three thousand in his audience, Peter spoke so that all might hear.

c. "He spake forth."

This Greek word means that he enunciated clearly. He articulated with perfect distinctness so that each person in the crowd could understand.

d. "He spake forth unto them."

Preaching is often before people rather than to them. The latter method is always preferable.

(2) Some mental matters.

a. He recognized their right to inquire.

"Be this known unto you." This is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel."

b. He was willing to answer their inquiry.

c. He made his appeal to the things they knew. He explained the things they did not know by taking them back to the things with which they were familiar.

d. He declared the truth in orderly sequence.

e. He proclaimed the Lordship of Christ.

(3) Some Spiritual matters.

- a. He was obedient to the Holy Spirit.
- b. He was illumined by the Holy Spirit.
- c. He was successful through the Holy Spirit.

1. A Defense. Acts 2:14-15.

In this he quashes their accusation about the Christian's being drunk. When Peter heard some of the critics falsely accuse the disciples of drunkenness he arose in the power of the Holy Spirit to vindicate the things which the believer's were doing. No Jew on the Sabbath, and that a Feast day, would either eat or drink before nine o'clock in the morning. The very suggestion was preposterous.

2. A Declaration. Acts 2:16-21.

In this he quotes from Joel 2:28-32, which is as follows: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the hand-maids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and t the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call."

The Holy Spirit is on all flesh to convict of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. The characteristics of the day, of the outpoured Spirit are those of visions, dreams and prophesying. What is a vision? Something seen by a watcher. What is a dream? Something seen by a sleeper. Visions are for the young men, who should be watching. Dreams are for the old man, who should be resting.

II. The Argument. Acts 2:22-35.

1. Christ's resurrection was declared. Acts 2:22-24.

- (1) He lived His life - verse 22.
- (2) Men put Him to death - verse 23.
- (3) God raised Him from the dead - verse 24.

Why was it "not possible that He should be holden of" death? Because He trusted His Father to raise Him up. Because the Scriptures cannot be broken. Because it is unthinkable that death and Satan should triumph.

"Thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol, neither wilt Thou suffer Thy Holy One to see corruption." It was not possible. The resurrection of Christ is the very heart of the Christian gospel.

2. Christ's resurrection was predicted. Acts 2:25-31.

- (1) Peter made a quotation. (25-28)

He quoted Psalm 16:8-11. This reference was made to the Messiah's soul, which went to Sheol (Hades), and to His body which was put in the tomb, but not to see corruption. Only One fulfilled this prophecy, therefore David was a prophet and a seer, and foretold an event which did not take place until a thousand years later.

3. Christ's resurrection was attested. Acts 2:32.
All were witnesses, at least one hundred and twenty, and probably many more. No court would refuse the testimony of one hundred and twenty eye-witnesses. No event in human history is better attested than the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

4. Christ's resurrection was proved. Acts 2:33-35.

III. The Conclusion. Acts 2:36.

Observe carefully this designation.

1. Jesus is His human name.
2. Christ is His official title
3. Lord is His divine title.

Jesus is both Christ and Lord. He is therefore the Lord Jesus Christ. That truly is a wonderful sermon; and we shall see that it had a mighty effect.