

## Peter Tells of God's Redemptive Work

### Acts 2

*Ripples: how the gospel spreads in the book of Acts*

March 16, 2025

We thank you for that love, that love that you pour on us that is deep and wide and high and long. We praise you for that gift. In your name, Jesus, we pray. Amen. Well, as the kids are heading to their classes, I want to just bring you in a little bit, remind you we're walking through the Book of Acts right now.

We're in Acts 2. And what a gift it is that we get to open God's Word. And knowing as a church family, we believe that God's Word is inspired by the Holy Spirit, it is without error, and it is authoritative on all matters on which it speaks. So we come to the Word this morning to learn from this authoritative source. We're picking up kind of focusing on the same story that David talked about last week in Acts 2, but a different part of that story.

So in that story, we're in the midst of Jerusalem, this bustling city. It would have been around 30,000 people on a normal day, but on a festival day, it would have been as many as 100,000 people, where Jews from all different nations and territories from the surrounding area would have converged upon Jerusalem for these special festivals. So Pentecost was the festival that they were celebrating, otherwise known as the Festival of Weeks, helping us remember that it's seven weeks or 50 days after the Passover. So the Hebrew term for this celebration was Shabbat and the Greek term was Pentecost. It was a celebration of harvest and of the giving of the law at Mount Sinai.

So you might ask yourself the question, what's so significant about when God gave the Jewish people the law at Mount Sinai? It was God's covenant with them initiated by Him. It revealed God's heart for his people and showed them the way to enjoy relationship with Him. So people, ever since the Fall have longed for relationship with their maker or peace with their maker. And the Old Testament promises a Messiah or a Savior who would one day bring such peace.

Peace with God, peace with each other, and peace with creation itself. That is all things once again rightly ordered. Peace and justice and righteousness. All things made right. So this festival was pointing to a taste they had of God bringing or showing the way to this peace, the peace that people long for, that things would be made right.

We know what it is to have this longing. In our mature moments, we keenly feel a longing that things would be made right when we see injustice and cruelty and oppression and brokenness in our world and in our friends and in ourselves. I recently spoke with a 14 year

old boy who had been physically abused by one of his parents. And his life is so broken and difficult right now. And then I learned that he is one of 90 child and abuse cases being adjudicated in our court system in the greater Lafayette area.

And that's 90 cases that they're aware of or have enough evidence to prosecute against. And that's all of these situations of brokenness in the midst of. There's also homelessness and there's poverty, there's. There's hunger, there's mental illness. There's.

We look at our praise and prayer update that we receive each Tuesday. And while there's praises on there that we lift up to the Lord, there's also this sobering list of needs within our church family, of difficulty in relationships and illnesses that people are sorting through. And then we realize it's not just that list of some of us that are going through problems, but as we come here on a Sunday morning, we see each other and we greet each other, and it's nice that we share about some of the good things going on in life. But for every single one of us, there are difficult things going on in our life right now. There are longings and there are brokenness.

So we all know what it is to long that things would be made right. In our superficial or selfish moments. We simply long for the desire in front of us to be met. We long for that food or that fun or that pleasure or that approval or that you fill in the blank, that thing that will provide some sort of quick satisfaction because of longing. I think the reality is that longing motivates much of what we do.

Longing is behind many of the good things that we do, and longing is behind many of the bad things that we do. I want to take kind of a longing inventory for a moment for each of you to consider what longings have been on your mind a lot this week.

The biblical story points out that the root of our longings is a longing for peace with God. And that peace with God is in fact, the only thing that will fully and eternally satisfy the longing within us. So these Jews gather at Pentecost to celebrate the giving of the law at Mount Sinai because it represents a taste of or a path to the promise of peace with God, that which they've been longing for, the peace and righteousness and justice that they long for. So what they witness then is this fascinating thing that they'll never forget. The sound of wind and then these pillars of fire come and rest on the heads of several people, and they're speaking in languages such that everyone that can hear these people in their own language and there would have been lots of languages represented.

So what they're seeing would have been both familiar in a sense and also very peculiar. As David pointed out last week, this, this fire resting on something that happened at the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. It happened at the consecration of the tabernacle and the consecration of the temple. In each of these places, fire had represented God's presence

and marked God's dwelling place. So the mountain, the tabernacle, the temple and wait, people, these individual people, God's dwelling place is represented in them.

So we see in the Gospels how something new is usually validated by signs and wonders. In the case of Jesus, it was usually the case that it was a new understanding of something old that was being validated by signs and wonders. So the people would rightly ask is, is that what's going on here? This God's presence resting on individuals rather than on the temple? What could that mean?

David laid out the implications of that last week. They were very clear. Jesus is present to everyone everywhere. We can experience him in us and others can experience him in us. So something amazing is going on.

But the people that are hearing it, they don't quite understand it in the moment. They haven't heard David's sermon yet about the three implications of what was going on right there. So what happens when people are confused and they don't understand something? I think for prideful or fearful people, they mock it, right? Oh look at these guys, they must be drunk or something.

I think for the soft-hearted people, they stare with their jaws open in awe and wonder. And then Peter stands up and I'm guessing this is a softer, yet more confident Peter than we got to know through the story in the Gospels. Remember, Peter has been humbled by his denial of Christ. While Christ was being beaten, Peter was humbled as Jesus came three times and kept asking Peter, do you love me? Peter, do you love me?

So while Peter is humbled by these things, he's also somehow confident because of this new presence of the Holy Spirit in him. We can all empathize with Peter, I think because Peter has royally screwed up. Sorry, but we've all royally screwed up and we're going to royally screw up again. I want my failures to humble me before others and then I want the Holy Spirit in me to empower me to do absolutely whatever he calls me to do. So it's with deep failure, not so far behind that Peter stands with confidence.

This Confidence so large that it's hard to imagine how all that confidence can fit in this small frame. But it's the confidence of the Holy Spirit exploding with truth and light in Peter. So he stands before the crowd. Who knows how big a crowd at that moment when these remarkable things are happening with the Spirit and the languages. And he addresses the hecklers in the crowd first by letting them know, these people, we were not drunk.

And then he turns their attention to a prophecy that they would have all been familiar with. This prophecy in the book of Joel. And he quotes the prophecy in verses 17 through 21 of Acts 2. And first he says this. That's going on right now.

This is what was spoken of in the prophet Joel 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. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days and they will prophesy.

I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below. Blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. So whenever a New Testament writer points to an Old Testament prophecy, he's pointing primarily to a specific part of it that he's connecting to what's going on in the circumstance right there.

So the part that he's pointing to is this reality of God saying, I will pour out my spirit on all people. The all people that he talks about we see in this passage is all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved. So I will pour out my spirit on absolutely everyone who calls on my name. And Peter is saying this right here that's going on. This is what that prophecy was talking about.

All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved. So after he said, all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved, he starts talking about Jesus. And so he mentions in verses 22 through 24, fellow Israelites, 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, this man Jesus was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge.

And you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him on the cross. 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. So all that Jesus accomplished was orchestrated by God. We continue reading in verse 25, David said about him.

So Peter is saying David said in the Psalms about him, that is Jesus. David was actually talking about the Lord, the Messiah. Peter. Peter's making this connection that the Lord, the Messiah that David is talking about is Jesus. And David says, 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 will rest in hope because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead and you will not 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. So David speaks of the Lord Jesus as Messiah.

The last days, he's saying, are now. And the Lord, the Messiah that people are to call on is Jesus. He continues in 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. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him an oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

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. God had raised this Jesus to life. And God has raised this Jesus to life. And we are all witnesses of it, 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.

So he is the Messiah. Peter is saying Jesus is the Messiah and he is pouring out his his spirit on everyone who calls on him. That is absolutely incredible news. Not only has the Messiah, the long awaited Messiah, the one who will make all things right, not only has he come, but as he comes, as you place faith in him, you all, every one of you, get the Holy Spirit dwelling in you. That's amazing news.

Yet there's this one wrong thing going on that needs resolved. It reminds me, I went to a basketball game last night with my sons and with some friends. And it was the regional championship of the boys in Indiana. It was Clinton Prairie against Central Catholic. And Central Catholic was the underdog.

They were longing for this chance to beat the favored team, longing for this regional championship honor. And they get to the end of the game and it's tied at 49. And there's just seconds remaining and one of the Central Catholic players gets the ball and he takes it down the baseline. He goes up for a shot. He makes it, and he gets fouled.

And they're about to receive that which they've been longing for, yet the ref is blowing the whistle. And as he's blowing the whistle, he's making this sign. So the basket is called back. They go to overtime, and they lose the game. So this is kind of what's going on when I.

This is what I was thinking when I read verse 36 and 37. Therefore, Peter says, let all Israel be assured of this. God has made this Jesus. That is, he's made this Jesus, Lord and Messiah. But listen to this.

This Jesus whom you crucified.

So they blew it. They had been waiting all their lives for this Savior to come, and they rejected him. They were cut to the heart. They look to Peter and the other disciples and they say to them, what do we do?

I mean, they realize that they have rejected the Messiah. So they deserve. I mean, they at least deserve to be separated from him who they've rejected for the rest of their lives. He pours out this love on them, and they respond by rejecting him. So they know they deserve to be separated from him.

Their hearts are cut. And they say, what have we done? What can we do? And Peter says this. He says, 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. The promise. This promise is for you and your children. So to the answer to their question, what do we do now? Peter says, repent and be baptized.

I mean, can you believe this? What do they deserve? Separation from the one they've rejected. And what are they hearing? They can repent.

So repent is. It includes two things. It's turning around. It's confessing my sin to the Lord and believing in him. Belief is this beautiful combination of both faith and obedience.

So repent and be baptized. Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. So this is, you know, there was the baptism of John that was a baptism of repentance. And this baptism of Jesus is. It's not just about repentance, but it's about the Holy Spirit coming and circumcising their hearts, purifying their hearts, accomplishing the work of Jesus in their hearts.

So this is a baptism of repentance. Yes, and the saving work of the Holy Spirit. So he says, repent and be baptized. And in verse 39, we see this interesting statement, for all whom the Lord our God Will call. So here we see.

This is for all whom the Lord will call. Earlier we read that this is for all who call on the name of the Lord. So we could choose to be confused by that and get caught in the middle. Where is it God calling me or is it Me calling God? And if we believe in the authority of Scripture, then we have to believe in both.

God's role is he's calling us, and our role is we need to call on him and all who call on him will. Will be saved. That is incredible news. So 3,000 people were added to their number that day. 3,000 people who longed for peace with God, who longed for a savior, a Messiah.

And today they received the best news that they had ever received. Their Messiah has come. And then they received the worst news that they had ever received. You rejected him. And then they received the new best news they had ever received.

Repent and believe. And all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved. God chose to usher in his global movement of making all things right through Holy Spirit, impossible powered lives of sinful, broken people like you and, and me. I want to pause and just take that in for a moment as we, we listen to the Lord and talk to the Lord in prayer. And then we'll respond with worship.

Father, I thank you for this incredible gift. I ask that you would reveal in us the real cry of our longing that you would identify and help us realize that we long for peace with you. Father. Pray that you would identify the places where we have rejected you. And Father, we come before you with confession to own those places, to place belief in you.

Refreshed, renewed belief in you. And turn around and follow you. Jesus, you satisfy my deepest longing. You save us.

In your name, Jesus, I pray. Amen.