

Have You Heard the First Sermon?

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Acts 2:13-32

You will be my witnesses

Sound, Sight, Speech,

They heard, they saw those tongues of fire, and they spoke the words that the Spirit gave them.

And now here we have the first recorded apostolic sermon.

What a sermon!

Here is how Peter spoke:

1. It was a sermon based on the Scriptures.
2. Christ was center of this sermon.
3. He preached fearlessly, especially to a crowd not necessarily friendly with this topic. He took the risk to tell the truth.
4. He did not play with the emotions of the people, “but he reasoned with them, showing them the rational character of the truth of the proclaimed word of God.”¹

What was the first part of the sermon?

Some, however, made fun of them and said, “They have had too much wine.”

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 people 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.

Even on my servants, both men and women, (Acts 2:13-17 NIV11)

Let us analyze Peter's words:

-Peter stands with the eleven. Don't you like that? **One body at work** together... I believe very much in this. For example, I ask Kevin, "Please pray with me. I will face this or that challenging situation." We have the deacons' prayer group. They are my partners in standing together... We are ONE BODY

-People thought they are drunk:

John Stott says:

Peter responds that the disciples are not intoxicated, but rather "the extraordinary phenomenon of Spirit-filled believers declaring God's wonders in foreign languages is the fulfillment of Joel's prediction that God would pour out his Spirit on all flesh."²

Two Sundays ago, our call to worship was this passage from prophet Joel.

Before them fire devours, behind them a flame blazes.

Before them the land is like the garden of Eden, behind them, a desert waste— nothing escapes them.

They have the appearance of horses; they gallop along like cavalry.

With a noise like that of chariots they leap over the mountaintops, like a crackling fire consuming stubble, like a mighty army drawn up for battle.

(Joel 2;3-5 NIV11)

Tough to read what is going on, the **judgment of God over disobedient people. Judah was in trouble.** They were in the midst of **drought and starvation** after invasion of locusts which destroyed the harvest. Joel is describing this invasion like **horses in war** and **flames of fire**...

-In this chaotic situation, **God is at work**, not sleeping or silent...

God is calling the people of Judah **to repent**. Joel calls it "**the great and dreadful day of the Lord.**" (Joel 2:31 NIV11)

-On the one hand God, is calling them to repent, and on the other, God is full of mercy and hope.

Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the Lord your God,

for he has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful.

He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before.

²⁴ **The threshing floors will be filled with grain;**

the vats will overflow with new wine and oil. (Joel 2:23-24 NIV11)

God also says, you will have plenty to eat.

God fills their field with harvest, and God fills their stomach with food.

After this:

“And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people... (Joel 2: 28 NIV11)

Peter changes **“afterwards”** to **“in the last days...”**

-After resurrection of Jesus we live in **last days....**

-Peter is saying people **repented and God is sending HIS SPIRIT on you now.**

But to whom?

“your sons and daughters will prophesy” Both Male and Female

“your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams” all ages

“Even on my servants, both men and women,” no social distinction

Everyone is invited to be witness (martyrs), literally, everyone, all ages, all races, all social classes....

In the OT we experience how God’s Spirit came on **individuals**, especially on **Israel’s leaders- prophets, judges, kings.**

With this prophecy, and **with Pentecost, God is fulfilling His promise sending His Spirit over everyone.**

-It is not automatic, whoever asks, whoever is seeking God, whoever is serious in walking with the Lord.

Paul says:

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit.” (Eph 1:13 NIV)

-This is my dream, that we pastors who are professionally hired by you will **equip you** to be “priests”, “prophets”, “servants”, “teachers,” ...

There is no such thing as Christian who has not been anointed by the Holy Spirit for the ministry. Paul will say later, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body. (1 Corinthians 12:13)” ³

They will prophesy. They will see visions.

Martin Luther put it, ‘prophesying, visions and dreams are *all one thing*’. That is, the universal gift (the Spirit) will lead to a universal ministry (prophecy).

In this sense all God’s people are now prophets, just as all are also priests and kings. So Luther understood prophecy here as **‘the knowledge of God through Christ which the Holy Spirit kindles and makes to burn through the word of the**

gospel', while Calvin wrote that it **'signifies simply the rare and excellent gift of understanding'**. In fact, it is this universal knowledge of God through Christ by the Spirit which is the foundation of the universal commission to witness (1:8).

Because we know him, we must make him known.⁴

Peter continues to quote Joel saying this is not automatic:

And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. (Acts 2:21 NIV11)

-Then Peter said the second part of the message:

"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. ²³ This man 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 to the cross. (Acts 2:22-23 NIV11)

-“PETER'S PRESENTATION OF the gospel begins with a reference to the miracles of Christ as evidence that he was **accredited by God** (v. 22). Although Jesus cared and have compassion when he did miracles, yet here too his miracles are presented as evidence that God has accredited him.

-Next, Peter presents the death of Christ as having been caused by the audience, but also as being **“by God's set purpose and foreknowledge”** (v. 23).

We see here, as often in Scripture, the paradox between **divine providence and human responsibility** (4:27–28). While God planned for Christ to die on the cross, those who carried out this act were responsible for it”.⁵

-This paradox often will come in our lives. For example, **Joseph was sold to slavery**. The human wicked responsibility. Yet Joseph said to his brothers: **Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? ²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.**” (Gen 50:19-22 NIV)

The cross was preplanned redemptive act of God, for salvation of humanity. This was difficult message for the Jews. Cross was stumbling block for them. How come messiah will be crucified.

The Resurrection (2:24–32)

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 rest in hope,

²⁷ because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,
you will not 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 “Fellow Israelites, 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 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. ³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. (Acts 2:24-32 NIV11)

THE RESURRECTION OCCUPIES the longest part in the sermon (9 verses).

-Peter says, “**God raised him.**” We see the same in other references in the Bible.

-He adds, “**freeing him from the agony of death.**”

Literally, the “pain” word used here is the pains of childbirth during labor.

Every woman knows that she cannot hold the child. In the same way, the grave could not keep Jesus. Because he is Messiah, he *cannot* remain dead. G. Bertram describes beautifully what Peter is saying: “The abyss can no more hold the Redeemer than a pregnant woman can hold the child in her body.”⁶

Peter goes back to quote from OT, from book of Psalms

In verses 25–28 Peter quotes Psalm 16:8–11,

“**you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay**” (Acts 2:27 NIV).

Obviously, David is not talking about himself. He did not rise from the dead. The passage must be referring to his David’s descendent Jesus.

Thus,

“Resurrection’ was and is about a physical body being very thoroughly dead, but then being very thoroughly alive again, so that the normal corruption and decay which follows death wouldn't even begin.”⁷

After resurrection, even Jesus was referring about quotes in OT:

He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” (Luke 24:44 NIV)

“...we are all witnesses of it” The spoken testimony of the apostles and the written prediction of the prophets meet.

Application:

1. Do you declare Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? The invitation is open to everyone.

2. If you know him personally, share your testimony, “be witness of Jesus”: **Biblical, Christ-centered, bold.** You probably will not have 3000 people to proclaim to, yet share it with whoever God puts in your life. Biblical, Christ-centered, bold.

“for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” (2 Tim 1:7 ESV)

3. We will approach the Table of Communion because of the risen Lord. He suffered, he died, he rose, and he ascended and sent the Spirit. Today you are invited to share the Table if you believe Jesus is your Lord and Savior.

Let us approach the table.

1. R.C. Sproul, You Will be My Witnesses to the End of the Earth, Acts. P 27
2. John Stott, The Spirit, the Church and the World, p 73
3. R.C. Sproul, You Will be My Witnesses to the End of the Earth, Acts. p30
4. John Stott, The Spirit, the Church and the World, p75
5. Ajith Fernando, The NIV Application Commentary, Acts P 103
6. *ibid* p 104

7. N.T. Wright, For Everyone Bible Study Acts. P 37