Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Preaching Jesus of Nazareth, Part 2
Scripture: Acts 2:14-36
Code: 44-10

Open your Bible, the Word of God, or as the case may be, turn on your Bible. We live in that world, don't we? And we're going to go to Acts chapter 2. You're going to have to work with me a little bit tonight. This may be more an exercise in expository listening than anything. Learning how to listen as I try to explain this incredibly important text to you. It would be impossible to overestimate the importance of this portion of Scripture. We're looking at Acts 2, versus 14 through 36, the first sermon preached the day the church was born. The first truly apostolic sermon recorded in Scripture, the first apostolic sermon ever preached.

And it's not just the sermon that makes this so important; it's the occasion on which the sermon was preached. It has no parallel. The day of Pentecost, sadly, sadly. It has been cluttered with endless nonsense in the Pentecostal and charismatic movement that have distracted us from the intention of this text. The substance of this event and the substance of this sermon is so critical that it cannot be mistaken. Diversionary tactics are unacceptable to drive us away from what is really happening here.

Now, the sermon is the climactic moment of an incredibly important day. Everything that happened on that day was building up to this sermon. The Lord chose this day for maximum impact. This was going to be a day that would catapult the church and the message of the church into the world. The church needed to be born on a dynamic day at a dynamic event that had far-reaching impact, and this was that kind of day.

This was the Feast of Pentecost, 50 days after Passover. Christ had been crucified on Passover. 50 days later came this great Feast of Pentecost, Pentecost meaning 50, in which there was a celebration of the Feast of Harvest. Multitudes poured into Jerusalem from everywhere: Jewish people came from all around the Mediterranean region as they came to Passover. Estimates range in the multiple hundreds of thousands of pilgrims who invaded the city of Jerusalem. It was, then, the maximum moment to capture the widest possible audience, not only those who lived in Jerusalem, but those from everywhere else who could then take what happened back, and spread it.

The feast was the right feast to select because the feast was a celebration of God's provision for a harvest. And of course, the coming of the Holy Spirit on this day signaled God beginning to gather the great harvest of His redeemed church. There were hundreds of thousands of carriers of the message of this event. So that what you might have imagined would have a slow beginning, namely the church with 120 people in it, had a massive, explosive beginning. Sovereign timing, perfect situation, the

Lord Jesus would launch His church in such a way that it would spread rapidly.

The church, the believers, were, that day, baptized with the Holy Spirit, placed into union with one another and union with Christ. They were then filled with the Holy Spirit. They became a powerful force. They launched immediately into evangelism. Immediately. They began to speak in languages they didn't know, the wonderful works of God. These were languages that the people there spoke. The effect was astonishing. There was a supernatural sound, like a hurricane, that drew the crowd together where the believers were. And then there was this miracle of languages, and people were hearing their own language, and the content was the wonderful works of God. Very hard to explain.

The scene was set. Obviously, this was supernatural, a supernatural sound, a supernatural audio, then a supernatural video, as flame-like tongues came down and rested on the people who spoke the languages. And then, the miracle of the languages, and then the content, the wonderful works of God. It was clear that this was a divine event. It was a divine event that stunned and shocked the people of Jerusalem.

The church immediately went into action, and the very first thing the church did, Peter representing the church, took the lead. He preached a sermon. He preached a powerful, evangelistic sermon, at which people 3,000 people were converted. The church went into action before it went into discussion, I might say. When the church was born, the first activity was not to plan, not to have a strategy session, not to have a committee to decide what to do. The first thing the church did was preach the Gospel. Organization would come later, Acts 6, that the explosive power of the church, just blew on a wide level, and ministry started happening, primarily the driving ministry in the early chapters, is of course the preaching of the Gospel. And then, the church meets for prayer, and fellowship, and the breaking of bread, and to study the apostles' doctrine. It's an explosive beginning. People have taken back this phenomenon across the Mediterranean world. And the church is already at its primary task, which is to fulfill the Great Commission.

Now, this is such a monumental moment that you have to understand: this is what officially launched the Messianic age. In redemptive history, this day launched the Messianic age. How long have they been waiting for that? Since Genesis 3, since Genesis 12? Throughout all of redemptive history, waiting for the arrival of the Messiah? Waiting for the inauguration of the Messianic age?

Obviously, something monumental had happened. Audio miracles, video miracles, linguistic miracles, and then God's glorious works are being declared. Something happened to the people who made up that little group of 120. They were, up to this point, afraid, and hesitant, and powerless, and hobbled by questions, and fears, and doubts. And then, all of a sudden on the day of Pentecost, there's this explosion of the new age. And after Pentecost, there are no more secret meetings. There are no more midnight knocks on doors, and there are no more secret passwords. They're out in the street, and they're out in the daylight, and they're all over the temple, and they're declaring Christ

everywhere they go, and they're shouting it at the top of their voice to the world, and they have courage, and they have authority, and they have persistence. They're like a mortar barrage.

Their transformation proved that the Holy Spirit of God had come, and the new age had been born. Mark it down: this is the official inauguration of the Messianic age. And the first thing the church does at the launching of the Messianic age is to preach. And the first sermon goes like this: "This is the Messianic age, therefore the Messiah has come. Let me tell you who He is." And Peter tells them, "It is none other than Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had just crucified." They were set up for this, probably like no other audience in history. Peter launches into his sermon in verse 14. I read it to you a couple of weeks ago, so I won't do that again. The first few verses, down to verse 21, are an introduction, an introduction explaining Pentecost. And we went through that. The Lord has set it up. The Lord has given him an incredible introduction, with all the phenomena that has happened. So, Peter connects to that.

Taking his stand with the 11, he raised his voice and declared to them: "Men of Judea, all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words. For these men are not drunk, as you suppose." They said these people are drunk; that's what's going on. That's not the case. It's only the third hour of the day; it's just 9:00 in the morning. "This is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel." This is what Joel said would come in the last days, the Messianic times, the last days. "I will pour forth My Spirit; your sons and daughters prophesy," and it goes on to give the full prophecy, all the way down to the very end of the Messianic age, where the "sun is turned into darkness," verse 20, "the moon into blood, and the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come." The Messianic age has begun with the coming of the Spirit; it ends with the destruction of the world.

During this Messianic age, "It shall be," verse 21, "that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." It is the last days; we are still in the last days. The beginning was at Pentecost; the end is in the final divine judgment. In this time, in this Messianic era, everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. This is the age of salvation.

So, Peter, guided in every single word by the Holy Spirit, begins by explaining to the people that what they saw and heard was the Holy Spirit inaugurating the Messianic age of salvation. It is now time to call on God for salvation because the Messiah has launched His church. It is a Messianic time. Well, it is. If there's to be a Messianic time, there must be a Messiah. If this is a long-awaited last days, for God to send His Anointed to establish His kingdom, and to bring salvation, then there must be an Anointed One. There must be a Messiah.

So, starting in verse 22, we come to the second part of this great sermon: the theme. The introduction, explaining Pentecost; the theme, exalting Jesus Christ. Here, verses 22 all the way down to verse 36, Peter presents Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah. Peter says, "Jesus is the Messiah." Verse 22, "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you

by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know. This Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him up again." His subject is Jesus Christ.

He concludes: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him," Jesus of Nazareth, whom you crucified, "both Lord and Messiah." That's his sermon. This is the Messianic age. How do you know that? Because what Joel 2 prophesied has started to come to pass. Supernatural communication. The pouring forth of the Holy Spirit. This is the beginning of that era. And if it is the Messianic era, then the Messiah has come; let me introduce Him to you. It is no other than the one you crucified.

But to the Jews, Jesus was a blasphemer, imposter, false teacher. To say that Jesus, whom they just crucified in that city not many weeks before, to say that He was the Messiah was to ramp up the blasphemy again. So, Peter has to set out to prove this claim, to prove to his people that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they had crucified, was in fact, their Messiah. His argument is so powerful; it is so unavoidable that 3,000 people are stabbed, that's the word in verse 36, they are stabbed in the heart. Or verse 37, rather. They are pierced. Peter uses reason and argument based on Old Testament passages. It is an expository message in that he draws it out of the Old Testament. He's already done that in the introduction. He does it again in verses 25 and following. He does it again in verse 30. He draws from the Old Testament in verse 31. He draws from the Old Testament in verses 34 and 35.

This is a model of apostolic preaching of Christ, the apostolic preaching of the death and resurrection of Christ, and based on a very carefully crafted argument built on Scripture. This is the stuff of legitimate preaching.

Now, as we look at what Peter has to say about Christ: the theme, exalting Christ; the introduction, explaining Pentecost; the theme, exalting Christ, he breaks down the life of Christ into several statements. Go back to verse 22, and we've already looked at this. "Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourself know." His first line of evidence that Jesus is the Messiah is that God has attested to that through miracles, wonders, and signs. Miracles describe what He did as to their nature. Wonders describe what He did as to their appearance. Signs describe what He did as to their intention. As to their nature, they were miracles, mighty works. They were supernatural works, manifestations of divine power. As to their appearance, they were startling, shocking, stunning, inexplicable. As to their intention, they were to point to Christ as being validated in His claims by God Himself.

And he says, you know this. "As you yourselves know." God was manifesting His power in Christ to attest to the fact that He is God's Messiah. As you yourself know, because all these miracles are

done before you. “As you yourself know” is a convicting statement. The Holy Spirit convicts the Jews of sin and rejecting massive evidence of Christ’s miraculous approval by God, demonstrable proof that He was the Messiah. They had no excuse for rejecting Him, no excuse for taking His life. They had sinned against light. They had sinned against revelation. They had sinned against truth. And that is the vilest kind of sin with the deepest and most lasting kind of consequences. God did this, he says. It was done by God. Later in the verse, “which God performed.” He repeats it twice. You saw it, it was in your midst, you know it, you have sinned against light.

So, he starts with the life of Christ, and he reiterates in one little summary statement, the miraculous ministry of Christ which was divine validation. So, the life of Christ, His ministry life, is an exhibition. It is a demonstration. It is evidence. It is proof of the proclamation by God that this is the Messiah. This is the Messianic age. Jesus is the Messiah. How do we know? First of all, by His life. Secondly, then, look at verse 23. By His death. This One. “This Man delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.” This One. That’s added for emphasis. The very person whom God, the Father, delighted to honor. The very Messiah whom God accredited, you have dishonored, you have slain. This One, Jesus the Nazarene, Jesus from the town of Nazareth. Make no mistake. He was delivered over. Delivered over. Word is commonly used, by the way, of handing over prisoners, surrendering prisoners into the hands of executioners, or turning over someone into the hands of an enemy or an adversary. He was surrendered to His enemies. But know this: “This Man was delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God.”

Jesus Christ was delivered to death what? “By the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God.” Plan is the word “counsel,” means design, purpose, will. In fact, it’s a strong statement. It’s not just counsel. It’s not just a plan. It’s a predetermined plan. That literally means to set boundaries, to mark out a boundary. This is all what God has done. It means to be appointed, to be designed, to be decreed, to be determined, to be set. Christ was delivered to death because God planned it, and God ordained it. This gets repeated in the early apostolic preaching in the fourth chapter of Acts. Verse 26. We read again, Peter, and what we read is: “The kings of the earth, and the rulers who gathered together against the Lord and against His Messiah.” “For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the people of Israel,” listen, “to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.”

That is a shocking statement, that the delivering over of Jesus to execution was planned by God. And then it says, it not only is by the predetermined plan, but also, and foreknowledge of God. At first, that might seem contradictory. Predetermined plan? You can’t miss that. Predetermined purpose. Set a boundary. Decreed it. So, how does foreknowledge fit it? Because the obvious conveying of that word in English is that you know something before it happens. Did God make this decree because He looked down history and knew something was going to happen? What does it mean? If He was

delivered by the foreknowledge of God, what does that mean?

Well, first of all, in the Greek, it is an instrumental case. So, it says He is delivered by means of the foreknowledge of God. So, the foreknowledge of God is something God uses. It is not some kind of an idea that is floated in front of Him that He becomes aware of. No, He literally delivers up Christ according to a predetermined plan by means of His foreknowledge. Certainly, God knows everything before it happens, but that's not what this is saying. God performs an act by His foreknowledge. The very giving of Jesus over to His enemies was by means of God's foreknowledge.

So, what does foreknowledge mean? It means foreordination. It means the same thing as predetermined plan. You can take the "and," and you can make it "even," so that it simply extends the meaning of predetermined plan. Christ was delivered over by the predetermined plan and for ordination of God. That is by a decision that God had made in eternity past.

This is consistent with how this word is used, for example, in 1 Peter 1. "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." Again, if it only means preknowledge, then it's a meaningless statement. They're not really chosen. It has to be a means by which God chooses. It has to modify election. It is simply a way to broaden the concept of God choosing by means of a foreordination. That is to say, He makes a choice because He's predetermined an end. So, the predetermined end is that Christ died. And so, He chooses to deliver Him over to that predetermined end.

The language is not to be confusing; it's simple, clear language. In fact, you can go even further. Go, in 1 Peter 1, if you happen to still be there, down to verse 20 of that first chapter. "He was foreknown," there's that word again, "foreknown before the foundation of the world." Foreknown before the foundation of the world. Who? Verse 19: "The lamb unblemished and spotless, the one who would offer His blood," namely the Messiah, who would redeem us not with perishable things like silver and gold, but with His precious blood. That was foreknown before the foundation of the world. Meaning, it was foreordained. It's the same word as we see in Peter's sermon in Acts, the same word.

Again, foreknowledge is an act. It is a foreordination. God acted to ordain that the Lord would be the Lamb, unblemished, who would shed His precious blood as the price of redemption. In Romans chapter 11, and I want to help you with this because I don't want you to be confused. In Romans chapter 11 verse 2, "God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew." God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Well, what do you mean by that? It's the same word. It's the same notion. The whole section of Romans, chapter 9, chapter 10, chapter 11, is about election. God choosing. God specifically choosing, and God saying, "I'm not to be questioned, because I'm God."

So, God chooses on the basis of a foreordained end. That is what the language is telling is. Edgar James writes, “To say that God made a decision based on preknowledge would mean that there was a time of indecision.” Did you get that? He says, to say that God made a decision based on His preknowledge would mean that there was a time of indecision. This of course would be contrary to God’s nature, and to biblical fact that the decree is eternal. The decree that he made concerning Christ and the redeemed is an eternal decree. There was never a time of decision, so there was never a time when God got information He didn’t have. It’s impossible.

Peter is saying, go back to Acts 2, that the Lord did not die in some accidental fashion. And why is this important? Because the question they all had is: how can He be the Messiah if He let Himself get executed, if He allowed Himself to die at the hands of the Romans, and didn’t overthrow the Romans? How can He possibly be Messiah if He was rejected by the leaders of His nation, executed by the Romans? So, Peter is saying: it was not the Romans’ decision. It was God’s decision. And it was always God’s decision; it was eternally His decision. And there never was a time when God didn’t make and hadn’t made that decision, and there never was a time when God looked and saw something that was new information, and on the basis of new information, He made a decision. No, the decree is eternal. Everything that God decrees is eternal. Everything. He was not delivered because He wasn’t able to rescue Himself, thus proving He wasn’t the Messiah.

And what did they say when He was hanging on the cross? If You’re the Messiah, do what? Come down. If You’re the Messiah, come down. You can’t be the Messiah and be up there, dying, rejected by Your nation, and executed by pagan Romans, the very ones You’re supposed to overthrow and establish Your kingdom.

So, they have to have their thinking dramatically changed. His death is God’s plan. His death is God’s plan. And this launches all apostolic preaching to the Jews, and what do they preach all the way through the Book of Acts? That Christ, Messiah, must need have what? Suffered and died.

John 19:10. Jesus, before Pilate. So Pilate says to Him, “You do not speak to me?” Do You understand how important I am, and You have nothing to say? “Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?” Pilate says. Jesus answered, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above.” If they knew the Old Testament, they would’ve known that the Messiah had to die. Isn’t that what He told His disciples on the road to Emmaus? Didn’t He go back into Moses and the law, and the prophets, and the holy writings, and speak of the things concerning Christ? If they knew the Old Testament, they would know.

In the third chapter of the Book of Acts, and again, Peter is preaching, and he says in verse 17, “And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Messiah would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.” Zechariah 12, Psalm 22, Isaiah 53. If they had known the Old Testament, they would’ve

known. So, this is so important. This is God's plan. That doesn't lessen your guilt. Keep looking in verse 23. "Delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreordination of God," it would've simplified things if that's the way they'd translated it. "You nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death."

Wow. Let me tell you something. The fact that it was God's plan didn't lessen their guilt at all. Okay? The fact that it was God's plan, that it was His eternal plan, that it was part of an eternal decree did not lessen their guilt at all. His blood was still on their hands. What they did was not noble because God's purpose was glorious. What they did is described as godless wickedness, wicked men, godless men. You, the Jews, you were the instigators. You launched it, men of Israel, verse 22. You put this into motion, and you have taken Him, and handed Him over to godless men, Romans, wicked men. You, the Jews, were the instigators. You turned Him over to the wicked, godless pagan Romans. You did that. You're responsible along with them for putting Him to death. It was all of you, as I read earlier. It was Pilate, and Herod, and Romans, and Jews.

So what you have here again is this juxtaposing of divine sovereignty and human responsibility, right? We always want to ask the question of that doctrine with regard to salvation. The fact that we've been chosen, and called, and regenerated, and that's a mighty miracle of God. And at the same time, we're responsible for faith, and unbelief, and we're held accountable for it. But the same juxtaposing those two glorious truths occurs even in men's action toward Christ. It was the plan of God, and yet they were fully held guilty for what they did.

There's no self-consciousness, again, in the writers of the Scripture, when they bring these two things together. And I know people always ask the question: how can these two things be harmonized? And the answer is: maybe they can't in this life. Listen to the words of our Lord in Luke 22. He's talking about Judas, verse 21, "Behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table." My betrayer is sitting here at the table. "For indeed, the Son of Man," listen, "is going as it has been determined." That's the divine side. Jesus says. "But woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" It is true that it is all the plan of God. It is equally true that all the guilt resides in the hands of the rejecters. No self-consciousness about that matter, no explanation. Those things sit side-by-side, all through Scripture. They had personally, individually, intentionally, hatefully, viciously, rejected and killed the Messiah. It was their horrible sin, the blackest of sins. They were guilty.

All biblical preaching, listen, all biblical preaching, all Gospel preaching must include this conviction, not just for little sins, and I have to say this very often because there's a kind of a failure to rightly represent this. It isn't because you broke the law of Moses that you go to hell; it's because you reject Jesus Christ. That's the ultimate sin. How do I know that? John 16:7 to 9. The Holy Spirit convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. And all of that focuses on Christ. The sin of rejecting Christ. We must tell people not just that you are a fornicator, not just that you have hated people, so

you've killed. You're a murderer in your heart. Not just that you've broken the Ten Commandments, but the sin which is terminal, and from which you can't recover unless you're forgiven, is rejecting Christ.

So, the preacher boldly arraigns his audience, accuses them of murdering the Messiah, whom God had publically accredited. He is not a victim. Jesus is not a victim. This is all in the plan of God, but you are guilty. You are guilty.

Jesus, then, is declared to be the Messiah in His life evidence, miracles, wonders, signs. He is declared to be the Messiah in His death, because His death was by the predetermined plan and foreordination of God. And then, starting in verse 24, and this becomes the real heart of this presentation. He is declared to be Messiah by His resurrection, by His resurrection.

Here is the great culmination of Peter's sermon. The greatest accreditation of Jesus as Lord and Messiah: His resurrection. This becomes the major theme of all apostolic preaching. It starts in verse 24. "But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power." The Messiah's sufferings were foreordained, predetermined by God. So was His resurrection.

Here's how blunt Peter is. "You killed Him. God raised Him." You killed Him. God raised Him. All through this sermon, by the way, Peter emphasizes the difference between how God treated Jesus and how Israel treated Jesus. You killed Him. God raised Him.

This becomes thematic. Look at chapter 3. Peter preaching again, verse 14. "You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you," Barabbas. "You put to death the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses." You killed Him. God raised Him.

This, as I said, is so much a part of apostolic preaching. I won't show you all the places it shows up. Chapter 10, still Peter. Verse 38, same message. "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him." That's His life. "We are witnesses of all the things He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They also put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross. God raised Him up on the third day and granted that He become visible, not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen beforehand by God, who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. The One of whom all the prophets bear witness through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins."

This is apostolic preaching. Christ is Messiah, Son of God, Savior. Evidence? His life. Evidence? His death. Evidence? His resurrection. This is what they relentlessly and nobly and significantly preached. If you go into chapter 13, you come into the ministry of the apostle Paul. And just go down to verse 27, or verse 26. “Brethren, sons of Abraham’s family, and those among you who fear God, to us the message of this salvation has been sent. For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by condemning Him.” You fulfilled prophecies you didn’t even recognize. Hmmm. “And though they found no ground for putting Him to death, they asked Pilate that He be executed. When they had carried out all that was written concerning Him,” again, all written in the Old Testament, predetermined by God, “they took Him down from the cross, laid Him in a tomb. But God,” what? “Raised Him from the dead.” You killed Him. God raised Him. You killed Him. God raised Him.

Now, that became the message of the apostles through the Book of Acts. One of the most beautiful benedictions in the New Testament comes at the end of Hebrews. “Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep.” He was killed by the determinate, predetermined plan and foreordination of God. You’re still guilty. God raised Him up.

I don’t have time to go where Peter went after this. So, you need to come back next week because the best is yet to come, as he cracks open Psalm 16 and preaches the first expository sermon recorded in the New Testament on the day the church was born.

But I do want to just take a final look at verse 24. “God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.” God raised Him up. Romans 4:24 says God is the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead, “because it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.” Death couldn’t hold Him. It was not possible. Why was it not possible? Because of divine power. His power was greater than the power of death. He is life, right? In Him was life. He is the source of life; He is life. Not only because of divine power, but because of divine promise. Destroy this body, and in three days, what? I’ll raise it up. John 3. John 14. And, because of divine purpose. God had already determined that He would raise Christ from the dead, and His resurrection body would be the prototype for the bodies of all who would be raised. He’s the first fruits of all. It was not possible for death to hold Him because of divine power, because of divine promise, because of divine purpose. Power, promise, purpose. Death could not hold Jesus Christ.

So, this is a declaration. Peter is going to prove from Psalm 16. What he does starting in verse 25 is a really beautiful expression of how Psalm 16 is to be understood. And you’re going to find that wonderfully rich, but we’ll have to wait till next time. He is a logical preacher. He has a systematic, carefully crafted argument to make, and he goes through that argument. He draws on revelation that is not in the Old Testament because the New Testament hasn’t been written yet. So, he anticipates the writing of the New Testament from which we would preach, and simply, if you will, exposits the life and death of Christ, because that’s history that hasn’t yet been written down. But they all know it. You

all know this. You all know about the miracles. You all know about His crucifixion. And we are eyewitnesses to His resurrection.

Based upon that formula, how do we preach Christ? We preach Christ from the Old Testament as the fulfillment of the Old Testament, and from the New Testament as the record of that fulfillment. This is preaching. This is expositional preaching. From the old, and from the realities and the history of the new, not yet written down. Well, I would love to go on, but I'm not going to do that. So, we'll stop at that point.

Father, we thank You tonight for the, again, the delightful joy of Your Word, and its powerful consistency. It is always, always surprising to us, stunningly true, faithful. It has integrity with itself, consistent, inerrant, authoritative. Thank You for helping us to understand what a monumental day that day was. Monumental. Everything was to set up the preaching of Christ so that everybody would know: He is Lord and Messiah, and those who believe in Him will be saved. That's what should come out of Pentecost. That is what must come out of Pentecost. But instead, there is so much foolish misrepresentation of what that monumental day meant. Help us to be faithful, again, to share these great truths as we have opportunity. And thus, multiply the honor that is given to Christ that began on that day, in that first sermon. And we'll thank You. Amen.

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