

The Anatomy Of The Message - part 2

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Date: 26 March 2023

Preacher: Pastor Ken

[0 : 0 0] So, as we go back to the book of Acts, chapter 2, we're returning to Peter's sermon, which we looked at last week already.

It's the first sermon preached in church history. And this message was preached almost 2,000 years ago now. And many good preachers have come and gone through the years, and there have been a lot of great sermons preached and appreciated by people in the church.

But the message that was preached on the day of Pentecost is both simple and deep. And it's the very foundation on which the church is built, and it's the very foundation on which those great sermons were delivered.

So this being the first sermon in church history is of tremendous importance because it sets the, it doesn't just set the bar, but it sets the standard moving forward.

What is the message that needed to be brought up and proclaimed? What is the breakdown of that message? What is it that we take as a church body from that message, right?

[1 : 1 1] Because in Matthew 28, and we see in Acts 1, verse 8, that Jesus has told His disciples, I am, you are going to receive power from on high.

That's going to be the Holy Spirit coming upon you so that you may be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea, in Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the world, right?

And He's saying, you're going to be my witnesses, but what is it that we are to proclaim as His witnesses? What is it that Jesus was expecting His disciples to proclaim?

And Peter, being the first one to speak up about this on the day of Pentecost with his sermon here, gives us that answer. So let's go ahead and let's read through again Acts 2, 14 through 36.

Acts 2, verse 14. But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them.

[2 : 1 4] Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give ear to my words. For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel. And in the last days it shall be, God declares, and I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh.

And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. Even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.

And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day.

And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Men of Israel, hear these words.

[3 : 21] Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know, this Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning him, I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken.

Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced, my flesh also will dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades or let your Holy One see corruption.

You have made known to me the paths of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence. Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried and his tomb is with us to this day.

Being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

[4 : 48] This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, As the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

So last week was the first of a three-part mini-series that I've entitled The Anatomy of the Message.

We're going through the book of Acts. We're going to go from start to finish. That's the plan anyway. But in it we get this message by Peter, very simple, 22 verses, and we can just leave it at that, read it and say, oh, how nice, how good.

[6 : 02] But there's so much to unpack. There's so much depth to the simplicity of this message. Last week, we looked at the prophecy fulfilled.

In verses 16 through 21, excuse me, in verses 16 through 21, the prophecy from Joel 2, verses 28 through 31, that references the coming of the Holy Spirit.

What took place on the day of Pentecost was an amazing event. It was prophecy being fulfilled. And one thing that made it amazing was that it was a partial fulfillment in that the Holy Spirit was poured out.

Excuse me. I am trying to fight back this cough that wants to come out and continue my thought. I do not. That would make it worse. Thank you, though. So Peter, in verses 16 through 21, references the Joel 2 prophecy concerning the initiation of the last days through the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on man.

So the Holy Spirit's arrival introduces this time period known as the last days. So when someone says we're living in the last days, we are. But it's not because it's just now starting to become the last days.

[7 : 31] It's because for the last 2,000 years, it's been the last days. And God, we know, is very patient and his last days for us are, you know, maybe several generations.

Has already been, right? So we're looking at 2,000, almost 2,000 years now, and who knows how long that'll go. But these are the last days. And as part of these last days, with the Holy Spirit's arrival, there was new revelation to God's people through visions and dreams, which ultimately became the written New Testament.

Excuse me. It also enabled the disciples to boldly proclaim the gospel in light of the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit's arrival did. And in light of Old Testament prophecies that pointed to Christ, such as Psalm 16, the prophecy that was referenced in verses 25 through 31 about the Christ.

And the fact that Peter, most likely an uneducated fisherman, is so familiar with Old Testament prophecy and its connection to Jesus is evidence alone of the Holy Spirit's working in the life of the believer.

Now, Peter had three years with Jesus. So I'm not discrediting that. That's the ultimate seminary education, to walk with Jesus, to see His miracles and hear His teachings each day.

[9 : 02] To have a daily quiet time with Jesus had to have been intimidating and amazing. And just all, like, you had to have this whole conglomerate of emotions.

Like, this is really cool, then like, man, this is really convicting, and wow, I'm learning a whole lot, and man, there's so much I don't know, and He knows it all perfectly. So, no doubt, some of the education, some of what's coming through in this sermon and in His ministry is what He was prepared for by Jesus in three and a half years of walking with Him.

But also, the Holy Spirit who came, according to John 14, 26, would teach the disciples and bring to remembrance the things that Jesus had taught.

So the Holy Spirit has a two-pronged approach there in that you're going to be reminded, you know, the disciples would be reminded of what Jesus had taught them, but He would also teach them what they needed to know.

And so, I think in this case, Old Testament prophecy as it relates to Jesus Christ. He also taught them the new revelation that we have been given, and that is given to us in the Bible, written in the New Testament.

[10 : 15] And then when you think of prophecies, you know, prophecies that are fulfilled, it's not just Psalm 16 and Joel 2, but there are so many.

The sheer number of prophecies that are made and fulfilled concerning Jesus' birth, His life, His death, and His resurrection point to Jesus as being a particularly special individual in history.

There are so many. Remember, I mentioned last week there are a little over 1,800 prophecies in Scripture that one of the, I forgot the guy's name now, who had written the book, not the written book about prophecy, but had done a book about prophecy and listed them all.

Over 1,800 prophecies is what he had counted. And many of them, over 300 are believed to have been fulfilled just through the birth and life of Jesus. And, you know, there's still more to come.

There's more to be fulfilled. You know, God promised a king to reign forever in Jerusalem on the throne of David. Well, that's not happening yet. That's yet to be fulfilled. The great news is we know how it's going to be fulfilled and we know by whom it's going to be fulfilled.

[11 : 27] We don't know the when it's going to be fulfilled. But that's okay. That's the great thing about prophecies. We can see, you know, we can anticipate its fulfillment or maybe we see it happening.

As I mentioned last week, my personal example of being at Target and the guy who said, well, if Jesus is coming back, he'd have come by now. But things just keep going on as they always have.

And you take them to 2 Peter 3 and say, wow, you just, you are a fulfillment. Where it says here in the last days, people, you know, scoffers are going to come and say that things have continued as they always have. That's pretty neat to experience.

So prophecy and these prophetic statements that have been made and fulfilled, they lay the groundwork for the next part of the message that I want to look at today.

And the next part of the message is the person proclaimed, verses 22 through 35. In this part of the message, Peter makes four statements while proclaiming this Jesus.

[12 : 32] You see that phrase used while making three of the four points. He says, this Jesus. And so Peter makes four statements that this Jesus is the one who fulfilled the prophecies concerning the Messiah.

And so he's going to point to four things here. First thing he's going to look at in verse 22, he's going to point to Jesus performing mighty works. Jesus performed mighty works.

The gospel accounts are written for us, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, so that we can know who Jesus is and what all he accomplished while on earth.

If you were in my, if you were in the Wednesday morning Bible study with me through the gospel of John, you know John 20, 31 was going to make an appearance. John writes, but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

The purpose of the writing of the gospel of John is so that people may believe that Jesus is the Son of God and may have life through their belief.

[13 : 53] But the accounts of the gospels are not merely debate material. They're not words meant to be weighed in the balances to determine what is being proposed as being true or not.

Rather, the gospel accounts are eyewitness testimonies written for all the world to know what was seen and heard. In John 21, verse 24, he says, this is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things and who has written these things and we know that his testimony is true.

So John is saying, I am the guy. So he was actually referring to another part, event that took place where Peter and Jesus are talking and Peter's like, well, is this guy, he's pointing to John, is he going to be here until you come back?

And Jesus is like, don't worry about that, you just worry about your own thing is ultimately what he's saying. And so John is saying, I'm that disciple who was there, witnessed this transaction between Jesus and Peter, and I'm bearing witness about these things.

What things? Everything he's written in the gospel. He's saying, I have seen it. It's an eyewitness testimony. So John makes it clear in this passage that he was around to see the great works that Jesus did.

[15 : 17] He was around to see Jesus turn water into wine in John 2. He saw Jesus heal the invalid man in John 5. He saw Jesus feed 5,000 with five loaves and two fish in John 6.

He saw him give sight to a man born blind in John 9, et cetera, et cetera. He saw all these things that Jesus did and he is bearing witness.

He's saying, I'm telling you, he did some awesome things. And even within the framework of his own gospel, he brings forward the testimony of others about what Jesus has done.

In John 3, 2, you got Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and said to him, Rabbi, we know that you're a teacher come from God for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.

Nicodemus recognized that the good works and the signs that Jesus was doing could not be done unless God was enabling him to do it.

[16 : 28] There's a reason and a purpose behind it. John 4, verse 29 with the woman at the well. She goes after encountering Jesus, having a conversation.

She leaves and the disciples are there with Jesus like, what's going on? And she goes into town and says, come see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?

And what's so fascinating about this, this is someone she'd never met before and he knew everything about her. John 5, verse 15, the man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him.

John 7, 31, yet many of the people believed in him. They said, when the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done? No, they recognize what Jesus had done is amazing and is pointing to him being the Messiah.

He's the one that they've been waiting for. John 9, verse 11, the man born blind, he answered, the man called Jesus, made mud, he's given his account, his testimony, made mud and anointed my eyes and said to me, go to Siloam and wash.

[17 : 36] So I went and washed and received my sight. John 11, verse 45, many of the Jews, therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

If you see this guy bringing somebody back from the dead, that's pretty impressive stuff. We don't see that happening today.

Truly, the way that it happened then. Like, we see people who go into cardiac arrest and they get the paddle, you know, and it gets their heart beating again. Like, we see things like that.

But we don't see people who are dead for four days and have already been buried get called out of the tomb and come hopping out in their grave clothes and probably with a muffled voice because they couldn't speak, you know, wrapped up.

But that is something very different. And of course, as you know, as I've mentioned before, there's always a natural explanation, right? They're always trying to figure out, trying to take away the supernatural and try to give a natural explanation and it just falls flat.

[18 : 46] Everything that they try to claim about Lazarus and everything they try to claim about Jesus rising in from the dead just doesn't add up. It doesn't make sense what they're suggesting there.

And there are many more verses that can be looked at throughout the gospel accounts that show the mighty works that Jesus did, which attested to him being the Messiah. And according to John himself, it's still not the entire story.

John 21 verse 25. Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

That's amazing. John was only with him for three years. And he's saying, there's too much to write.

There's too much. It's almost like, it's almost like at this point in penning the gospel, he's at the end, right? John 21. He's coming to the end and he's just overwhelmed by what he had seen.

[19 : 53] He's overwhelmed by what he had experienced. He's like, you know what? The world could not contain the books that would be written. So come back to Acts 2.

This first statement in verse 22 is pretty amazing. And it's packed thoroughly with one example after another, the mighty works that Jesus did. And these people listening to Peter preach, seemingly witnessed at least some of those mighty works.

He speaks in a way, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know.

So these people understand what he's talking about. They witnessed some of them themselves. And that makes the next statement even more amazing to consider.

This Jesus was crucified. Verse 23. He's saying, hey, you saw all these things.

[21 : 06] This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. After seeing all that Jesus had done and what that meant, he was still rejected by the people and crucified.

All the mighty works that Jesus did, all the bread and fish that he provided, all the people he gave sight to, the deaf who could hear, the lame who could walk, the dead who were raised, they still crucified him.

But it was not the fact that he was put to death that is the amazing thing. It's that the only way for it to happen was to him. He had to allow it to happen.

Oswald Chambers said, we marvel, not that Christ performed miracles, but rather that he performed so few. He who could have stormed the citadels of men with mighty battalions of angels, let men spit on him and crucify him.

Let that sink in for a second. Jesus who performed mighty works, who could have called legions of angels, who could have literally taken over the world through might, through military means, instead humbled himself to the point where men spit on him and slapped him and let them crucify him.

[22 : 54] The simple objection to Jesus' mighty works could have been, well, he wasn't God's agent because he failed and God's plans cannot fail. But Peter's answer was that it was God's plan to hand Jesus over to lawless men.

I find that one hiccup, one thing that many people struggle with when it comes to God and the gospel and believing in Jesus, they don't understand it.

They can't comprehend it. And their objections typically lie in, well, how could a good God allow such and such thing to happen? Or how could a good God, if he's in control, or if God knows all things, why did he put the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden?

Now you get these objections. Right? But never is the objection, if God is almighty, how was he crucified? Why did he die?

Because they recognize, I think, or maybe they just don't think about it this way, they recognize that this is almighty God who could have done something, had shown he had the power to do something, but chose not to because of love.

[24 : 21] Because of the love he has for lawless men. He let them kill him. You get this phrase, God's foreknowledge.

That means his ability to anticipate the future. Now it's another way of talking about his determination of events in advance according to his own plan, the predictive prophecies that are made, how he made known in the Old Testament that Judas would betray Jesus.

Yes. You know, the ridiculous question, well, could Judas have said no if God already determined it? Well, yeah, he could have said no. The fact is, he didn't. And so, did God in his determining it determine it because he already knew it?

Well, we're not going to go into that type of theological discussion and leave you with a headache and no answers. But the fact is, God knew. And he knew in his foreknowledge what would happen.

In his foreknowledge, he let this happen. This was the plan from the beginning. Matthew 26, 24, the Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed.

[25 : 37] It would have been better if he had not been born. And we see what happened, we saw what happened with Judas already. And not only was it God's plan for Jesus to die, but the humility of Jesus was on full display during the process.

And that was also predicted in the Old Testament. Isaiah 53, verse 7. He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth.

Like a lamb that is led to the slaughter and like a sheep that before it shears is silent, so he opened not his mouth. He went humbly, quietly.

He didn't raise a fuss. He didn't seek a rebellion. He endured it. What a jarring blow to these people who are listening.

You guys saw the mighty works and you crucified them. This Jesus, who God attested to being someone special, was delivered up by the same crowd that was listening to be crucified by lawless men.

[26 : 50] The Messiah that they had long waited for was cut off and has nothing. Yet another prophecy fulfilled, Daniel 9, verse 26. Yet we're not left without hope.

Peter's audience is not left without hope. Verses 24 and 32. This Jesus was raised to life. So this Jesus performed mighty works.

This Jesus was crucified. This Jesus was raised to life. God's verdict about Jesus is not seen in the cross but in the resurrection.

And God's verdict was to vindicate Jesus. By raising him up, God was loosing the pains of death. Now that's not referring to the pain of the crucifixion, of course, because he had already endured that and died.

Rather, Jews commonly thought that the state of being dead, separation of the ghost from the body, the soul from the corpse, was itself an agony. And of course, so would the process of decomposition of the body be.

[27 : 56] But yet, as we saw last week, as we already read again this week, David prophesied about the Messiah in Psalm 16 that he would not see corruption. That's verse 27 in Acts 2.

For you will not abandon my soul to Hades or let your Holy One see corruption. Not only was Jesus raised up, but Peter and the other 120 disciples with him are witnesses of this fact.

Rather than going through each account in the Gospels to see who has witnessed the resurrected Christ, because that will take a substantial amount of time, turn with me to 1 Corinthians 15.

So hold your spot there in Acts 2 and turn over to 1 Corinthians 15. 1 Corinthians 15 verses 1-8.

This is the Apostle Paul's summary. This is the spark notes about the resurrection. And it's also interesting because it includes him being listed among the number as well.

[29 : 08] 1 Corinthians 15 verses 1-8. Now I would remind you, brothers, of the Gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the Word I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the Twelve, then He appeared to more than 500 brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep, died.

Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared also to me. So there you have it.

Paul's spark notes list of the resurrection appearances of Jesus all compiled for you in one source. And over 500 people have seen the risen Jesus with their own two eyes.

And at least 24% of them were present while Peter preached. There are about 120 of them in that room. And there they were, proclaiming what they saw.

[30 : 39] And this Jesus, who performed mighty works and was crucified by lawless men and raised to life by God, this Jesus is Lord and Christ.

Verse 36 of Acts 2. This is the proclamation that we must make. When I mean we, I mean you and I.

I mean this church body. That this Jesus is both Lord and Christ. The two titles given to Jesus relate back to the psalm quoted in verses 25-31.

That was Psalm 16. And to the prior claim of Joel 2.32 that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. What's the name of the Lord?

Jesus. Jesus is Lord. And Jesus is the Lord on whom to call since He is the Messiah resurrected by God in fulfillment of Psalm 16 verses 8-11 and now exalted to His right hand in fulfillment of Psalm 110 verse 1 where it says, The Lord says to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

[31 : 55] Fulfillment of prophecy in order to proclaim the person. The emphasis in the passage is that despite appearances or despite their actions, God's view of the matter was very different.

See, to the crowd, Jesus was a criminal. But He was not the same person whom God had made Lord in Christ. Just as the angels had announced in Luke 2.11, For unto you was born this day in the city of David a Savior who is called Christ the Lord.

Whether or not they realized that who they were having killed was the Messiah doesn't matter. They saw Him as a criminal. God saw Him as something completely different and labels Him as something completely different.

It's most important that people hear and know who Jesus is.

He is Lord. He is Christ. He is Savior and Redeemer. And I'll be honest with you, that's why I cannot get behind and support something like He gets us.

[33 : 04] Because He gets us shows Jesus in His relation to man, but it does not present Jesus as Lord and Christ.

There's a belief in our society apparently that it's enough to get the name of Jesus out. But what Jesus is being put out there? Jesus, your friend.

Jesus, your confidant. Jesus, your buddy. how about Jesus, Lord, and Christ? How about Jesus, the judge of all man?

We must proclaim. We must proclaim Jesus is both Lord and Christ. The one that offers salvation to all who call on Him and the one who one day will return to judge the world.

Now, He didn't come initially to judge. We're told that in John 3, 16-20. But in Acts 17, verses 30-31, times of ignorance God overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent.

[34 : 24] To repent. Not to look at Jesus as a good guy and a good friend and somebody who loves immigrants and this, that, and the other, whatever social aspect that people want to push for Jesus.

No. God is calling everyone everywhere to repent because He is fixed on a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead.

the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the central doctrine in all of Christianity and arguably the most important doctrine in Scripture.

Because He is raised again, we know that He will judge in righteousness. And because we know He will judge in righteousness, there is nothing more important for people to know than that He is both Lord and Christ.

And He is the one in whom they must call on for salvation. Let us not water down the gospel. Let us not put a weak, sissy, needy Jesus before people.

[35 : 41] Let's pray. Father, I thank You for Your Word. Lord, I thank You that we can dig into this sermon by Peter which is so powerful and so deep.

And there's so much, Lord, that we need to take from it. Lord, we see that prophecy is fulfilled and we see it over and over and over again. It is amazing to know that You are the God who sees the beginning from the end.

You are the one who can proclaim what's going to happen and make it come to pass. And Lord, we thank You that there are people there like Peter, the other disciples who were there in the upper room, and those who witnessed Your resurrection who boldly proclaimed it.

And we thank You that we do have the person to proclaim who is Jesus, our Lord in Christ. And Lord, especially this time of year as we have Holy Week coming up, we've got Palm Sunday, we've got Easter Sunday, a lot of focus on the death and resurrection of Jesus and rightfully so.

Lord, I pray that You help us not to shy and shrink back, but Lord, to be bold and confident, unashamed of the Gospel because it's the power of God for salvation to all who believe.

[37 : 07] Help me, Lord, in my weakness to be strong in You, to be bold in Your message and unashamed. In Jesus' name I pray.

Amen.