



ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
PENTECOST – PART 2 (GOSPEL)
ACTS 2:14-41
02-14-21

All = bold sections – read together

Leader = regular font – leader reads (choose or rotate leaders)

Sung together = italics

NOTE: Please have a white candle ready to light.

Reflect – Affirmation #5

Because **the formation of authentic Biblical community is the intricate, patient work of the Holy Spirit**, when interpersonal problems arise (and they always do) we will navigate those with love. We will not be satisfied with just another club or social group meeting. We will work to develop the deep, life giving community that is only available through the giving of ourselves to each other through the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

Good Morning and welcome! We give thanks for the opportunity to worship our Living God, Father – Son – Holy Spirit this morning corporately as Community Christian Reformed Church. May these words be true for us today.

May the love and joy of the Father, the grace and peace of the Son and the courage and comfort of the Holy Spirit be ours in abundance today!

Call to Worship – Psalm 46 -- TO THE CHOIRMASTER. OF THE SONS OF KORAH. ACCORDING TO ALAMOTH. A SONG

It may seem that the earth is giving way, that the waters are roaring and that the mountains are being thrown into the sea – that is, life as we knew it has been significantly disrupted. Covid-19, injustice and the presidential election have become realities and events that have brought out both our worst and our best, but mostly our worst. Disruption is not all bad. In fact, it can be vitally important – especially when we have grown comfortable, soft, complacent and irresponsible with our time and resources so that we honor not our Living God, but his creation or man-made objects or values instead. When we are knocked off our faulty foundations (idols), we have the opportunity to look within, examine and assess. We have the opportunity to recognize and respond to our waywardness. We have the opportunity to repent and turn back to God as our refuge and strength and fortress. So, even if the nations rage and empires totter and the earth melts, the Lord of Hosts is with us. May we, “Be still, and know that He is God.” God will be exalted. Will you join in the exalting?

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts.



The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come, behold the works of the LORD, how he has brought desolations on the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire.

**“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!”
The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.**

Pause for a moment and be still – ponder the excellencies and worth of our Good and Gracious King. Ponder the amazing grace and love that are gifted. Ponder and praise the majesty of God.

Song – Good And Gracious King -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMPV7UABJm8>

*I approach the throne of glory
Nothing in my hands I bring
But the promise of acceptance
From a good and gracious King
I will give to You my burden
As You give to me Your strength
Come and fill me with Your Spirit
As I sing to You this praise
You deserve the greater glory
Overcome, I lift my voice
To the King in need of nothing
Empty handed I rejoice
You deserve the greater glory
Overcome with joy I sing
By Your love I am accepted
You're a good and gracious King
O what grace that You would see me
As Your child and as Your friend
Safe, secure in You forever
I pour out my praise again
You deserve the greater glory
Overcome, I lift my voice
To the King in need of nothing
Empty handed I rejoice
You deserve the greater glory
Overcome with joy I sing
By Your love I am accepted
You're a good and gracious King
Holy, holy, Lord Almighty
Good and gracious
Good and gracious
Holy, holy, Lord Almighty*



*Good and gracious King
Holy, holy, Lord Almighty
Good and gracious
Good and gracious
Holy, holy, Lord Almighty
Good and gracious King
You deserve the greater glory
Overcome, I lift my voice
To the King in need of nothing
Empty handed I rejoice
You deserve the greater glory
Overcome with joy I sing
By Your love I am accepted
You're a good and gracious King
You're a good and gracious King*

Christ Candle – Burkina Faso

We light the Christ candle as a visible sign of God’s presence with us; that he has come as light into a world of darkness. We light the Christ candle to remind ourselves that Jesus is the light and that in him we become light too. We are never a light on our own. The light we have and can offer to others is the light of Jesus of Nazareth. May we be God’s light in 2021.

Jesus of Nazareth said that to be a Christian means to be maltreated for his name’s sake (Matthew 5:11) and the apostle Paul said that “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ will be persecuted” (2 Timothy 3:12). Mistreatment as a disciple of Jesus is not a matter of *if* but a matter of *when* and a matter of *degree*. Hope is a vital aspect of being a disciple of Jesus. This is especially true under heavy persecution. In America, the land of religious freedom, we have it pretty easy in that there is minimal outright persecution against Christians. **May we make the most of our religious freedom to honor Christ and give credible and coherent witness to him! At the same time, may we be aware of our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world who don’t share the same freedom that we do. The 28th place that is most challenging to be a disciple of Jesus is Burkina Faso.**

Of the 20.3 million people who live in Burkina Faso, about 5.1 million are Christians. Over the last year, Burkina Faso’s northeastern region has seen a brutal onslaught of deadly attacks on Christian churches and villages – including several during and after worship services on church grounds in which worshipers were told to convert to Islam or die. An influx of violent Islamic extremist groups into West Africa’s Sahel region has led to these attacks that killed at least 40 Christians in 2019. These groups are campaigning for attacks on believers, with some who want to create an Islamic state opposing the very existence of Christianity.

Prayer Points: Pray for the Lord’s comfort and grace of the holy Spirit to be at work in the lives of all who have lost loved ones. Pray that Christians would have the grace to remain firm in their faith as they face increased hostility. Extremist ideologies sweeping across the Sahel have brought destruction. Pray that the Lord would use these circumstances to display his glory.

Jesus is the Light. We are a light. Shine His light!



Light the Christ candle at this time

Song – O Praise The Name (Anastasis) -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqBpifDpNKc>

*I cast my mind to Calvary
Where Jesus bled and died for me.
I see His wounds, His hands, His feet.
My Savior on that cursed tree
His body bound and drenched in tears
They laid Him down in Joseph's tomb.
The entrance sealed by heavy stone
Messiah still and all alone
O praise the name of the Lord our God
O praise His name forever more
For endless days we will sing Your praise
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God
Then on the third at break of dawn,
The Son of heaven rose again.
O trampled death where is your sting?
The angels roar for Christ the King
O praise the name of the Lord our God
O praise His name forever more
For endless days we will sing Your praise
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God
He shall return in robes of white,
The blazing Son shall pierce the night.
And I will rise among the saints,
My gaze transfixed on Jesus' face
O praise the name of the Lord our God
O praise His name forever more
For endless days we will sing Your praise
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God*

Song – Hymn Of The Holy Spirit -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LgguVaGqHE8>

*Holy Spirit, guide my vision
Help me see the way You see
Always Jesus, ever Jesus
Christ in all is Christ in me
Holy Spirit, guide my speaking
Words of grace in truth abound
Let my lips be filled with stories
Of the mercy that I've found*



*You're the light
You're my path
You're the shepherd of my soul
All I am
All I have
Holy Spirit, lead me on
Holy Spirit, guide my hearing
Wake my ears to words You speak
In the thunder and the stillness
Let Your voice be clear in me
Let Your voice be clear in me*

*You're the light
You're my path
You're the shepherd of my soul
All I am
All I have
Holy Spirit, lead me on*

*You're the light
You're my path
You're the shepherd of my soul
All I am
All I have
Holy Spirit, lead me on*

*Holy Spirit, lead me onward
Walking through the great unknown
Trusting, leaning, holding, clinging
Till the day You lead me home*

Centering Prayer – From: Every Moment Holy (A Liturgy For Embracing Both Joy & Sorrow)

Do not be distant, O Lord, lest I find this burden of loss too heavy, and shrink from the necessary experience of my grief.

Do not be distant, O Lord, lest I become so mired in yesterday's hurts, that I miss entirely the living gifts this day might hold.

Let me neither ignore my pain, pretending all is okay when it isn't, nor coddle and magnify my pain, so that I dull my capacity to experience all that remains good in this life.

For joy that denies sorrow is neither hard-won, nor true, nor eternal. It is not real joy at all. And sorrow that refuses to make space for the return of joy and hope, in the end becomes nothing more than a temple for the worship of my own woundedness.

So give me strength, O God, to feel this grief deeply, never to hide my heart from it. And give me also hope enough to remain open to surprising encounters with joy, as one on a woodland path might stumble suddenly into dapplings of golden light.



Amidst the pain that lades these days, give me courage, O Lord; courage to live them fully, to love and to allow myself to be loved, to remember, grieve, and honor what was, to live with thanksgiving in what is, and to invest in the hope of what will be.

Be at work gilding these long heartbreaks with the advent of new joys, good friendships, true fellowships, unexpected delights. Remind me again and again of your goodness, your presence, your promises.

For this is who we are: a people of The Promise—a people shaped in the image of the God whose very being generates all joy in the universe, yet who also weeps and grieves its brokenness.

So we, your children, are also at liberty to lament our losses, even as we simultaneously rejoice in the hope of their coming restoration.

Let me learn now, O Lord, to do this as naturally as the inhale and exhale of a single breath:

To breathe out sorrow, to breathe in joy.

To breathe out lament, to breathe in hope.

To breathe out pain, to breathe in comfort.

To breathe out sorrow, to breathe in joy.

In one hand I grasp the burden of my grief, while with the other I reach for the hope of grief's redemption.

And here, between the tension of the two, between what was and what will be, in the very is of now, let my heart be surprised by, shaped by, warmed by, remade by, the same joy that forever wells within and radiates from your heart, O God. Amen.

Offering – Community Sharing

Community Sharing is a faith-based organization created by many of the churches in Oakdale in the 50's to provide groceries for families in need. They continue that mission today and provide groceries to approximately 250 families, or 550 individuals per week. They work with the grocery stores, bakeries and individuals to provide this service.

We remember that giving is an act of faith, a practice of hope and an expression of love.

(You can give by sending your offering to the church, P.O. Box 217, Oakdale Ca 95361 or consider giving online through your bank. Our deacons can help you with this if necessary.)

Scripture Reading – Acts 2:14-41

We continue our series through the New Testament book of Acts called, Acts of the Holy Spirit. We are in the second part of a three-part message on Pentecost from the second chapter of Acts. Last week looked at the three signs God gave of the real presence of the Holy Spirit being given to the apostles and disciples of Jesus of Nazareth – just as he and John the Baptist said would happen (and as we'll see today, the prophet Joel as well). The signs were: (1) a mighty wind, (2) tongues of fire, (3) different speech. Remember we said the first two were not wind or fire, but the Holy Spirit who was like fire and wind. We also saw that the Spirit enabled the disciples to speak in foreign languages so that all that were in Jerusalem for the feat of Weeks (Pentecost) would be able to hear and understand them declare the excellencies of the mighty works of God. Some mocked them saying they were filled with



wine and drunk. Luke was saying no (as will Peter in today's message), they were not filled with wine and drunk but they were filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered to give witness to God and his kingdom to all those willing to see and hear and believe.

This morning continues this scene. The 120 have now move out of the room, possibly to the temple courts. There is a very large crowd forming because of the three signs above – particularly the speaking in foreign languages. Thousands are present hearing Peter's response to the accusation that the people were drunk. His response is gospel-centered. What we will see in our text is Peter's answer to their accusation, and then the proclamation of the gospel followed the OT support of the gospel and its fulfillment in Christ and Pentecost. Then we will see the response of the crowd to this proclamation, to this Good News (gospel) message of Peter's. We will be challenged to know and believe that we too are called to be his verbal witnesses today and to continue to preach the gospel to ourselves so that we might continually be formed and reformed into the image and likeness of Jesus of Nazareth.

With that in mind, please read Acts 2:14-41 now.

Gospel Message – Pentecost – This Jesus (Gospel = Good News)

Understanding and believing and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ is essential to being a disciple of Jesus Christ, a child of God by grace through faith. A wrong understanding of the gospel and there is no discipleship nor identity as a child of God. A distorted or truncated or reduced or narrowed gospel will stunt and inhibit and constrain and impede and hinder discipleship and living as a child of the King. The apostle Paul says to the Galatian Christians that there is only one gospel. All others are not the gospel even if they contain some of its truths. There is only one true gospel. It is therefore apparent the immense significance of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Not just knowing it intellectually (although that is indeed very important) but trusting it, believing it, "faithing" it. Living out its truths daily as a disciple and child of the King.

I. Pentecost People

To be a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth is to passionately proclaim Christ. And to passionately proclaim Christ is to verbally communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ. 120 people, the apostles and Mary the mother of Jesus and his siblings along with other followers have just experience the promised sending of the Holy Spirit - Pentecost. Last week we highlighted the three signs of this sending: (1) a mighty wind, (2) tongues of fire, (3) different languages. We said that the wind and the fire were not wind and fire but the Holy Spirit who was like wind and fire. And the different languages that the 120 were speaking to the Jewish foreigners – who had travelled to Jerusalem to observe and celebrate the feast of Pentecost (Weeks or Harvest) – was in their own tongues so that all could hear and understand the proclamation of the mighty acts of God. This we said, was a reversing of the tower of Babel in which people were thrown into confusion by their speaking in different languages so that no one could understand the other and then God scattered them over the face of the earth because they were striving to make a name for themselves and reach God on their own (which is impossible). Now, God comes to his people through the Holy Spirit, gathering them from all nations and uniting them together by a common hearing and understanding to make a name for God and not themselves! God is "undoing" sin and its effects in and through the finished work of Jesus of Nazareth and the sending of the Holy Spirit into his disciples.



The Jewish people of the city took notice. Word spread quickly. The 120 now move from their room to a larger gathering area – likely the temple courts (see pics) for now there are thousands of people



who are gathered together. Some of the folks there get loud and mock the 120 saying they are filled with wine and are drunk, but the passage last week makes it clear that they were not filled with wine but with the Holy Spirit. That is what the three signs indicated: an outward visible symbol of an inward and invisible reality.

It is at this point Peter stands up and addresses the mockers and the rest of the crowd with an explanation of what just happened. In doing so he quotes the OT and then proclaims the gospel of Jesus Christ to them. They respond. So, we will look at three things this morning: (1) the explanation Peter gives for the fact that the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and not wine. (2) The proclamation of the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth. (3) Their response of being cut to the heart and asking, “What must we do?” As we begin to dive in, ask yourself this question: “What is the gospel?” How would you answer that? How would you explain it to someone not very familiar with the Bible? Take some time to think through this and try saying it to yourself if alone or to someone in the room with you. You may want to write it out here (or summarize it with bullet points):

My understanding of the gospel:



II. This is That

Peter immediately counters the mockers not by stating what he feels or his personal opinion on the matter or what it subjectively means to him at the moment but by going to the Word of God – the Bible. He quotes scripture, specifically Joel 2:28-32 to explain what is happening. This is the practice of reincorporating that we have talked about before. It shows the importance of knowing our Bible, the history and the stories and the themes and the promises and so much more so that, like Peter in the spur of the moment, improvisationally he might speak truth and grace. Peter says that what has just happened was foretold by Joel who promised that a day was coming in which God would send his Spirit to sons and daughter (men and women), old and young and even servants – “all flesh” (v. 17). This is what John the Baptist and Jesus foretold as well. Peter does not even try to explain the text. He simply leaves it to explain itself. In essence, he simply says that this is that! This – what you are seeing and hearing and witnessing is that – what the prophet Joel spoke of many years ago!

Some of the signs of this “day” are indicative of the last Day when Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead. Most commentators understand Peter quoting Joel 2 to indicate that the coming of the Holy Spirit initiated the “eschatological age.” That is, the last chapter of the book before the final and forever chapter (remember R5: Reigning, Rebelling, Redeeming, Renewing, Restoring – Jesus of Nazareth is the epicenter of the entire narrative in R3 and now with the sending of the Holy Spirit we have entered into R4 and the renewing of people through reconciliation with God and others by Love that results in repentance from sin and rebellion to God. R5 is when Jesus returns in all his glory to forever set things right by permanently separating evil from good and bring heaven to earth). We are and have been living in the last days like Peter and the rest in this historical event 2000 years ago! So – he and the others are not drunk, not filled with wine but enlivened and filled with the Holy Spirit.

II. This Jesus

Luke indicates that Peter spoke a whole lot more than what he recorded so it is important to recognize that what he chose to record is very important. The next part of Peter’s Pentecost sermon is the heart of his message and it is the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth. How did you do in the exercise above about writing out and speaking out the gospel? Here is how Peter answered that question. In doing so, he addresses four things that are central to a whole gospel proclamation: (1) Jesus’ life (2) Jesus’ death (3) Jesus’ resurrection (4) Jesus’ Ascension. Did you have at least these four elements in your gospel understanding? First, Jesus’ life. Peter commands the crowd of thousands to hear him. This is similar to my saying, “Don’t hear what I’m not saying” and “Hear what I am saying.” In other words, listen carefully – this is too important to mess up. Jesus of Nazareth, says Peter was “attested” or, to be known or proved genuine by God “with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know – this Jesus...” Yes. This Jesus! What were some of the mighty acts that God did through Jesus of Nazareth? How about his authority over nature (calming of the storm); his authority over sickness (the many healings); his authority over death (raising of Lazarus); his authority over evil (the casting out of a legion of demons into a herd of pigs); his walking on water; his perfect life; his not giving in to the temptations of the Devil; his turning water into wine; his teachings; his sermon on the mount; his ways of prayer and solitude and gentleness and peace and love and truth and grace; his authoritative confrontation with the religious leaders who were “sons of the Devil” and much more? All this is part of the gospel. Why? In short and in a general sense, because Jesus of



Nazareth is the gospel: all that he said and did is good news. If Jesus sins once in his life, in what he said or did, the salvation plan is done with, over, destroyed, invalidated, cancelled, annulled, void, negated. Just once. Wow! Amazing, perfect and mighty works of Jesus! You could also include the miraculous and supernatural mighty act of the incarnation as well. The birth of Jesus of Nazareth as both 100% God and 100% man is beyond comprehension and is by nature, mysterious. It too is good news, God with us as Immanuel.

Second, the death of Jesus of Nazareth (his crucifixion). This Jesus... “you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.” Jesus dies. Luke does not indicate if Peter elaborated on this. He simply states it. If you want a great explanation of the gospel doctrines and truths, see the New Testament book of Romans. It is wonderful and detailed and powerfully opens up the gift of the good news of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus dies. This is the substitutionary atonement; that is, Jesus of Nazareth suffering and dying in my place, as my substitute in order to pay for my sins and take the full wrath of God the Father against my sin. Jesus pays what I cannot contribute anything towards, not a cent. The punishment and death that I deserve for my sins are taken up by Jesus of Nazareth out of love. He absorbs it so I won’t have to face it – at all. Instead of condemnation, we get forgiveness. Instead of punishment, we get grace and life to the full in Jesus of Nazareth. Instead of permanent separation from God because of my sins, I get union with God through the Holy Spirit because of the finished work of Jesus of Nazareth who makes us righteous and able to be united with the perfect and righteous God. His death is bad news in that it was the evilest thing that has ever, indeed will ever happen in the history of the world. However, in the bigger [picture of the gospel], it is good news for what it provides for us – forgiveness and escape from eternal punishment in Christ. Yes, we are justified (just as if I never sinned) by faith in Jesus of Nazareth because of his death on the cross but there is so more to the gospel than this! There is his life and also his resurrected life.

And yes, Jesus’ death was “at the hands of lawless men.” But it was also according to “the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.” This was no accident. This was not a plan B. This did not happen by chance. No. It was the “definite” plan of God that he knew before the foundations of the world. The word “definite” means to determine and appoint. God determined and appointed that Jesus of Nazareth would die on the cross at the hands of lawless men. This is what it means for God to be sovereign, to be fully in control of the unfolding narrative and drama of the world. Nothing happens apart for his sovereign will – even evil is allowed by our sovereign God as the consequence of sin and to serve his almighty and beyond us purposes. Make no mistake, God is in control and is steering, directing and determining the future and it moves into the present and becomes past. And this movement is good news. This Jesus – the one who was crucified for us in order to be with us – is continuing his good work of making all things new through the inworking of the Holy Spirit in our lives today. So yes, both lawless men killed Jesus and God determined it. Both. God’s sovereignty does not negate our free will to choose but somehow, mysteriously works with it in determining his foreknown plan of saving his people and his creation. But there is more!

Third, the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth to life after life after death. Jesus’ perfect life earned him perfect righteousness that he could then extend to his elect by uniting himself to them. His death paid for our sins and his blood washed us clean in forgiveness by removing our condemnation and deserved punishment through his sacrificial and substitutionary death. We are declared righteous in Christ and we are set free from our sins in Christ. And, we are now made alive in Christ, the resurrected Christ.



Jesus rose from the dead. Not like Lazarus who died again to enter life after death a second time but unlike any other being ever – to life after life after death. Jesus emerged on the other side of death and separation from the physical body when he bodily rose from the grave. Every other living being who has died is currently separated from their body that is still in the grave, returning to dust. When Jesus comes again, we will receive our resurrection bodies, our perfected bodies and once again be whole. All this is done in Christ. We were crucified with him and raised to new life in him – guaranteeing the hope of salvation and future inheritance with him. Sin does not have the final say. The wages of sin – death – does not have the final say. God does. Love does. Grace does. Mercy does. Jesus of Nazareth does. Life in Christ does.

Peter again goes to scripture to back this up; to back up the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. These are not his ideas or opinions or feeling or wishes or thoughts – these are God’s. Peter quotes Psalm 16:8-11. This is a Psalm of David that Peter interprets in the light of the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth, to be about Jesus and not David!! Yes! We must see the Old Testament through the lens of the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth! The whole OT is about him! Peter rightfully notes that the tomb of David is right here in Jerusalem; check



it out for yourselves, his body is still in there (see pic). His body did see corruption and decay so those verses cannot be about him. They must be about Jesus of Nazareth! “...for you will not abandon my soul to hades (place of the dead) or let your Holy One see corruption.” David was acting a prophet who foresaw that one of his descendants would defeat death. This is Jesus of Nazareth. Indeed, Jesus of Nazareth was not abandoned to hades nor did his body see corruption. Peter says that it is “not possible” for Jesus to be held by the “pangs of death.” Why not? Because death has power only over those who sin. Remember, Romans 6:23 says that the wage of sin is death. Jesus never sinned so death was not something he deserved. He had to willingly lay his life down in order to die! Death could not contain him because it had nothing on him. So Jesus triumphantly, victoriously emerges on the other side of death, above it and over it by entering into it and succumbing to it. Death is defeated. The righteous, crucified and resurrected Jesus reigns over death. This is amazing hope!! But there is more!!

Fourth, the resurrected Jesus of Nazareth ascends to the right hand of God. This Jesus – God raised up and to which they all were witnesses. He was then “exalted at the right hand of God.” As Ligonier ministries says regarding the right hand of God, “God’s right hand is the place of “highest favor with God the Father” (Westminster Longer Catechism, Q&A 54), and the phrase is used throughout Scripture to indicate His power and sovereignty (Ex. 15:6; Isa. 48:13). To say that Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father is to say, as John Calvin explains, that “Christ was invested with lordship over heaven and earth, and solemnly entered into possession of the government committed to him — and that he not only entered into possession once for all, but continues in it, until he shall come down on Judgment Day” (Institutes 2.16.15). In sitting at the right hand of God, Jesus sits on the “throne of his father David” (Luke 1:26–33). He is the Messiah of Israel, “the highest of the kings of the earth” and the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise to keep the offspring of David on the throne forever. (Ps. 89:19–37). We are not waiting for Jesus to enter into His messianic reign, He enjoys it now. All of His enemies are being put under His feet as His gospel is preached and His kingdom expands (1 Cor. 15:20–28).”



Jesus says before he ascends to heaven that “all authority” has been given to him. Yes, indeed. Jesus reigns. Jesus is King. Jesus is not kicking back taking a well-deserved siesta until he comes back again. No! He is working right now, making all things new through the person and power of the Holy Spirit poured into the lives of the elect. Furthermore, his ascension also raised humanity to its highest level ever. Humanity ascended in Christ as he became what we will become.

III. Repent & Be Baptized

Peter then, after these four aspects of the gospel of Jesus Christ are proclaimed, commands the crowd to “know for certain that God has made him [Jesus of Nazareth] both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.’ This Jesus is Lord and Christ; he is both the one who saves us (Christ) and the one we serve and bend our knee to and follow in the obedience of faith (Lord). He is God. He is to be honored and worshipped and revered and made much of by our seeking to be conformed more into his image and likeness (godliness). Peter says that the response of the crowd was dramatic! They were “cut to the heart.” That is, they experienced acute emotional and rational distress that involved concern and regret (Louw-Nida). This state of heart leads to the deeply intense and submissive question, “What must we do?” The gospel that is heard and understood as good news results in action. Romans 1:16-17 says that Paul is not ashamed of the gospel for it is the power of God for salvation. The gospel, rightly heard and believed causes salvation. Or better, the gospel rightly heard and understood because of a regenerated heart by the Holy Spirit and the gift of faith, responds in obedience. Peter says to repent and be baptized. This is the obedient response of gospel faith.

Repent and be baptized. To repent is to turn from the previous way of knowing and thinking and living to a new way of knowing and thinking and living. This turning is from a life of sin and unbelief in Jesus of Nazareth to obedience and faith in Jesus of Nazareth as both Lord and Savior, as the one who saves and is to be served. It is turning from a life of sin to a life of service to God. It is turning from younger brother licentious living and turning to God who is the giver of every good gift and at his right hand are pleasures forevermore. It is turning from elder brother legalism and self-righteousness to the life transforming unmerited freedom and grace of God in Christ. Baptism is the appropriate next step after repentance. It is declaring the excellencies of the grace of God in saving a dead and helpless person. It is the act of demonstrating the forgiveness of sins being washed away and being united with Christ in his death and resurrection. It is attaining a new identity as a beloved child of God and new citizenship that is in heaven, in the kingdom of God and not the empires of the world. It is being identified in community with other believers as members of the body of Christ. 3,000 people bent their knees to Jesus of Nazareth that day – 3,000! 3,000 people were saved from there “crooked generation” to the narrow and straight path of eternal life in Christ.

Peter is a pentecost person! Pentecost people passionately preached the gospel of Jesus Christ and God powerfully showed that this gospel is his power towards salvation. May we continue today, as his pentecost people to passionately, consistently, wholly, credibly and coherently preach and teach the gospel of Jesus Christ individually to ourselves as his disciples and corporately as his body and as the bride of Christ. May we not water it down, distort it, narrow it, cheapen it, soften it, reduce it or change it in any way. May we, like Peter reincorporate the gospel daily in our own lives and we seek to share that hope with anyone who might be interested and curious...for the glory of God and our joy.



Communion Meditation

Professing: (Apostles Creed)

**We believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.
We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose and ascended to heaven
Where he is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come to judge the living and the dead.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
The communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

Proclaiming: 1 Corinthians 11:23b-25 (Paraphrased)

On the night of his betrayal, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it saying, "this is my body given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." After the meal he took the cup of wine and pouring it out said, "this wine is my blood, a new covenant of grace poured out for the forgiveness of sins."

Remember and believe that the body & blood of Jesus was given & shed for the forgiveness of sins.

Song – King Of Kings -- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Of5IcFWiEpg>

*In the darkness, we were waiting without hope, without light
'Til from Heaven You came running, there was mercy in Your eyes
To fulfill the law and prophets to a virgin came the Word
From a throne of endless glory to a cradle in the dirt*

*Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings*

*To reveal the kingdom coming
And to reconcile the lost
To redeem the whole creation,
You did not despise the cross
For even in Your suffering,
You saw to the other side
Knowing this was our salvation,
Jesus for our sake You died*

*Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings*

*And the morning that You rose
All of Heaven held its breath*



*'Til that stone was moved for good
For the Lamb had conquered death
And the dead rose from their tombs
And the angels stood in awe
For the souls of all who'd come
To the Father are restored
And the church of Christ was born
Then the Spirit lit the flame
Now this gospel truth of old
Shall not kneel, shall not faint
By His blood and in His name
In His freedom I am free
For the love of Jesus Christ
Who has resurrected me, ohh
Praise the Father, praise the Son
Praise the Spirit, three in one
God of glory, Majesty
Praise forever to the King of Kings
Praise forever to the King of Kings*

Sending as Disciples of Jesus

The Holy Spirit has been given to you as God's presence and life-giving and life-shaping power. The Spirit enables us to proclaim the excellencies of the mighty acts of God – the gospel of Jesus Christ. May we look for the opportunities to share in winsome and relational and wise and listening ways.

We are sent out by God into the world as his witnesses. As we go, may we know with our minds and believe with our hearts and confess with our mouths the gospel of Jesus Christ and his kingdom. And may we live in a manner worthy of that Good News at work, at home, at school and in our neighborhood to the glory of God and through the person and power of the Holy Spirit.