

PETER'S KERUGMA

Part 2

[Acts 2:25-37](#)



We are looking at Peter's sermon, his preaching, on the day of Pentecost. The word "preach" comes from the Greek verb *kerusso*. Which is from the noun *kerux*, which means: *"a herald for a king."* Kerugma is: *"the essential message that was preached by the Apostles in the early church."* Peter is in the first message ever preached in the Church and is declaring the policy of the King.

Christian theologians view Pentecost as the birth of the Church. There is not much argument here. So think this through with me; The first sermon to be preached in the infant church was delivered by Peter, a Jew; to a large crowd of Israelites in the Jewish Temple in the city of Jerusalem on the Jewish feast day of Pentecost and the sermon was about a Jewish Messiah. In this sermon twelve out of the twenty-three verses are direct quotations from the Jewish Scriptures. Peter's message is rooted in First Testament prophecy, prophecies given to Israel. Peter speaks of God's coming judgment on Israel, and calls on the "men of Israel" to repent. The context of our text is clearly "Jewish".

What does this tell us about the Church? Its roots are Hebrew. In the Bible the olive tree is a picture of God's people. Israel is God's olive tree. Isaiah says this:

Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. (Isaiah 11:1-2 NASB)

This is a Messianic prophecy. Jesus is the shoot out of Jesse's stump. So this predicts that out of the lineage of David would come the Messiah. Now notice what Paul says:

But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. (Romans 11:17-18 NASB)

Believers, you and I, Gentile believers, have been grafted in to God's olive tree. God didn't get upset with Israel and go out and plant a new tree. He grafted us into Israel. We cannot exist without our Jewish roots. You cannot exist independently of Jesus, nor can you exist independently of your Jewish roots. Because Jesus is not a tree, He is a shoot out of a tree and the tree is Israel. Believers, our roots are Jewish. This should be clear from this first sermon in the Church. If we are to understand Christianity we must understand our Hebrew roots—we must learn the first 3/4 of the Bible. The Church is the true Israel of God. We inherit all the promises God made to true Israel.

In commenting on this passage in Acts, John MacArthur writes, *"Peter preached on the day of Pentecost the day the church was born. [that I agree with DBC] Now I might preface our message this morning by saying it's very basic what we're talking about, because you have to understand that Peter is preaching to a group of people who don't know scratch, which is vernacular for nothing, about theology and have really never been able to interpret anything because they have no precedent."* I think that MacArthur is way off base here, these Jews to whom Peter was preaching, unlike us, knew their Bibles. As we will see Peter gives them several quotes from their Scriptures and



they respond because they knew the Scriptures.

Peter begins his sermon by saying that what they are witnessing is a fulfillment of the prophet Joel. The last days have arrived, the days of Messiah, the days of judgment. A judgment from which they could have been saved if they would call upon the Lord:

'AND IT SHALL BE, THAT EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED.' (Acts 2:21 NASB)

Then to their shock and horror he tells them the Lord is Jesus of Nazareth. God demonstrated Him to be the Messiah through the miracles He did that they were all familiar with. He tells them that the death of Christ was part of the plan of God. They crucified Him but God raised Him up:

"And 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." (Acts 2:24 NASB)

As I said last week, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of Christianity. It is mentioned at least [104 times](#) in the New Testament. It is, without question, the most profound and prominent point in biblical history and in all redemptive history.

The disciples and apostles continually preached the resurrection:

And with great power the apostles were giving witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all. (Acts 4:33 NASB)

In [Acts 17](#), when Paul was preaching to the Greek philosophers on Mars Hill, the subject of his sermon was the resurrection. When the Jews in [Acts 26](#) caught Paul in the temple and attempted to kill him, the Bible says that he received help from God and preached unto them resurrection.

Peter started this pattern in the Church's first sermon. He spends one verse on the life of Christ. One verse on the death of Christ, and then he spends 9 verses, from 24 to 32 on the resurrection.

And from this sermon of Peter sprang the Christian movement, which today numbers over two billion people—one-third of the world's population. A recent [Newsweek poll](#) reveals that 78 percent of Americans believe that Jesus rose from the dead. The article notes that you cannot explain the spread of Christianity apart from the resurrection. If the bones of Jesus could be dug up in some first-century tomb, then as Paul says in [1 Corinthians 15](#), our faith is vain and we are of all people most to be pitied. This one fact has never been successfully answered by critics of the Christian faith. If Jesus did not rise from the dead, what happened to his body? Neither the Romans nor the Jewish leaders would have taken the body. The Romans didn't care about Jesus one way or the other, and the Jewish leaders wanted to make sure he stayed in the grave. The disciples had no reason to take his body. And since Roman soldiers guarded the tomb under penalty of death if anyone disturbed it, grave robbers couldn't have gotten near it. So what happened to the body? Jesus is risen, He's alive!

"And 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." (Acts 2:24 NASB)

Notice how Peter words this, ***"it was impossible for Him to be held in its power."*** Why was it impossible for Jesus to be held by the power of death? It was impossible for Him to be held in its power because the Scriptures had already declared that He would be raised from the dead.

But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol; For He will receive me. Selah. (Psalms 49:15 NASB)

What the psalmist saw as God's providential care in present danger, Jesus knew was God's ultimate caring and power to bring life from death.

Speaking about resurrection Jesus said:

Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John 2:19 NASB)

And they all looked at the Temple and thought how will He ever do that? They were thinking He was talking about [Herod's Temple](#).

The Jews therefore said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" (John 2:20 NASB)

So far the rebuilding of the Temple had taken 46 years and it wasn't finished yet.

But He was speaking of the temple of His body. (John 2:21 NASB)

Divine promises made the resurrection necessary. When Jesus was talking to the disciples after His resurrection,

Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." (Luke 24:44 NASB)

Everything written about Jesus had to be fulfilled and as we will see this included the resurrection. Now to confirm the resurrection as God's plan for the Messiah, that it was according to the determined purpose of God, Peter quotes from Psalm 16, and then applies it.

"For David says of Him, 'I WAS ALWAYS BEHOLDING THE LORD IN MY PRESENCE; FOR HE IS AT MY RIGHT HAND, THAT I MAY NOT BE SHAKEN.' (Acts 2:25 NASB)

The phrase, *"I was always beholding the Lord in my presence"*, means: *"to regard as being near."* It implies: to put confidence in one; to rely on or trust in him, or expect assistance from him.

'THEREFORE MY HEART WAS GLAD AND MY TONGUE EXULTED; MOREOVER MY FLESH ALSO WILL ABIDE IN HOPE²⁶ BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY.' (Acts 2:26-27 NASB)

When men die, their bodies go into the grave and see corruption, and their souls (at the time this was written) enter Sheol/hades. Prior to Jesus' messianic work, no one went to Heaven:

"And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, even the Son of Man. (John 3:13 NASB)

If prior to Jesus' messianic work, no one went to Heaven—where did people go when they died? They went to a holding place of the dead and waited for the atoning work of Christ and the resurrection from the dead.

In the First Testament, the Hebrew word for where they were prior to the resurrection is Sheol. In the New Testament the Greek word is **Hades**. What this place amounted to was a waiting area for disembodied spirits.

The First Testament uses the word "[Sheol](#)" to refer to a place in the depths of the earth. The expressions, "go down" or "brought down" are used twenty times in connection with Sheol. The "depths of Sheol" are mentioned six times

([Deut. 32:22](#); [Ps. 86:13](#); [Prov. 9:18](#); [15:24](#); [Isa. 7:11](#); [14:15](#)). Four times Sheol is described as the farthest point from heaven ([Job 11:8](#); [Ps. 139:8](#); [Isa. 7:11](#); [Amos 9:2](#)). Often Sheol is parallel with the "pit" ([Job 17:13-14](#); [33:18](#); [Ps. 30:3](#); [88:3-4](#); [Prov. 1:12](#); [Isa. 14:15](#); [38:18](#); [Ezek. 31:14-17](#)). Nine times it is parallel with death ([2 Sam. 22:6](#); [Ps. 18:4-5](#); [49:14](#); [89:48](#); [116:3](#); [Prov. 5:5](#); [Isa. 28:15,18](#); [Hos 13:14](#); [Hab. 2:5](#)). Sheol is described in terms of overwhelming floods, water, or waves ([Jonah 2:2-6](#)). Sometimes, Sheol is pictured as a hunter setting snares for its victim, binding them with cords, snatching them from the land of the living ([2 Sam 22:6](#); [Job 24:19](#); [Ps. 116:3](#)). Sheol is a prison with bars, a place of no return ([Job 7:9](#); [10:21](#); [16:22](#); [21:13](#); [Ps. 49:14](#); [Isa. 38:10](#)). People could go to Sheol alive ([Num. 16:30, 33](#); [Ps. 55:15](#); [Prov. 1:12](#)).

'THOU HAST MADE KNOWN TO ME THE WAYS OF LIFE; THOU WILT MAKE ME FULL OF GLADNESS WITH THY PRESENCE.' (Acts 2:28 NASB)

The words, ***"Thou hast made known to me the ways of life,"*** constitute the affirmative assertion of a restoration to life, which had been negatively expressed, ***"Thou wilt not ...allow thy Holy One to undergo decay."***

Peter tells us that [Psalm 16:8-11](#) is prophetic, with application to the Messiah. Jesus probably taught Peter this when He instructed the disciples in the Scriptures ([Luke 24:44-45](#)). Having exhibited, in the quotation from David, ***"the determined purpose, and foreknowledge of God,"*** (Acts 2:23 NKJV) in reference to the resurrection of Jesus, the apostle, next considers the only objection which his hearers would likely use against his prophetic proof. They may say, In the words quoted, David speaks in the first person, which means he was speaking of himself, and not of the Messiah.

"Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day." (Acts 2:29 NASB)

This is brilliant because the Jews revered three men above all others: Abraham, Moses and David. Abraham was buried in Hebron, a town south of Jerusalem. Nobody knew for sure where Moses was buried. But everyone knew where David was buried. His tomb was well-known in Jerusalem.

That the sepulcher of David was well known and honored, is clear from [Josephus. Antiq., b. vii., c. xv., 3](#). *"He (David) was buried by his son Solomon in Jerusalem with great magnificence, and with all the other funeral pomps with which kings used to be buried. Moreover, he had immense wealth buried with him: for a thousand and three hundred years afterwards, Hyrcanus, the high priest, when he was besieged by Antiochus, and was desirous of giving him money to raise the siege, opened one room of David's sepulchre, and took out three thousand talents. Herod, many years afterward, opened another room, and took away a great deal of money,"*

I imagine Peter even pointed to it and said, "Go out there and check it out for yourself." David had died 1,000 years earlier, and his body was still in the tomb. But Jesus just borrowed Joseph's tomb for about 72 hours. Then he left it behind forever. That's why they call it a "borrowed" tomb. He didn't plan to stay there very long.

Peter declares that though David was speaking in that Psalm in the first person, he could not possibly have been talking about himself. This Psalm could not literally apply to David because David did die, and was buried, and because his body did see corruption, as was evidenced by the fact that his tomb was with them to that day. He therefore declares that the literal fulfillment of the Psalm requires its fulfillment of another "David". This fulfillment having not happened to David, it must necessarily happen to the coming David, His Holy One, the Messiah. In this way it would happen to David in his descendant.

Now as you study the Psalms, you'll see this over and over. For example, in [Psalm 22](#), David says, ***"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me."*** But whose words were those really? They were the words of Jesus Christ on the cross. Very often it is prophetic pattern to put in the first person the words of the Messiah right in the mouth of the prophet.

Peter recognized that much of Israel's hope lay in the promises God gave to David.

Peter points out: You've been waiting for this psalm to be fulfilled. You've been looking in every generation for the Davidic King to arise. You thought it might be Solomon. But he died and was buried. You thought it might be King Hezekiah but he died and was buried. You thought it was good King Josiah but he also died in battle and was buried. They remain in the graveyard of the kings. Then, when Zedekiah died, ending the Davidic dynasty, you thought all hope was gone—all promises unfulfilled.

David remained in the grave—or “Sheol,” or “Hades,” the place of the dead. All Israel knew that; so David could not be speaking about himself in that context. David died and was buried and remained as a handful of dust and bones in his tomb. But ***“Your Holy One”*** did not undergo decay. In other words, He would go to the grave but the grave would not have the normal destructive effect upon Him that it has on everyone else who has died. God would not allow His flesh to suffer decay because in three days, He raised Christ from the dead.

When Peter says in Acts 2:29, ***“and his tomb is with us to this day”***—he probably intended to remind them of the empty Tomb which Peter would remember so vividly. It suggests also that the account of Jesus' empty tomb was not only common knowledge (as we know it was, otherwise the soldiers would not have been bribed to put the blame on the disciples - [Matthew 28.13](#)), It was only 53 days later. Plenty of time for the story to get around Jerusalem, and not long enough for it to have been forgotten. He believed that they would automatically draw the parallel.

Did Jesus go to Hades? Most Christians believe that He did. One of the earliest Christian creeds, the Apostles Creed, teaches that He did:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. The third day He arose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

In the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, we read, "As Christ died for us, and was buried, so also it is to be believed that He went down into Hell."

By “hell” they don't mean: “tortured by fire” but more likely “hades” the abode of the dead.

So, did Jesus go to hades? Well I'm not sure. If He did it seems like it was only for three hours. I believe that Christ died spiritually on the cross.

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "ELOI, ELOI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" which is translated, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?" (Mark 15:34 NASB)

This is the only time throughout His entire life when Jesus speaks directly to the Father, but addresses Him impersonally as "God." Here was God the Son, the Word made Flesh. He was one with God. There had never been a time in all of history, there had never been one instant, not one billionth of a second when the Father and the Son had ever been separated. From before the foundation of the world, Jesus had enjoyed perfect and unbroken communion with His Father. But now, because He had taken our place on the cross, and had borne in His body the sin of all mankind, the Father, too holy to look upon sin, had turned the countenance of His glory away from His Son. Jesus experienced spiritual death; He was separated from the Father. Jesus died physically and spiritually for us.

His grave was assigned with wicked men, Yet He was with a rich man in His death(s), Because He had done no violence, Nor was there any deceit in His mouth. (Isaiah 53:9 NASB)

Here Isaiah uses the intensive plural of "deaths." We have spiritual life because Jesus endured a spiritual death, a separation from the Father as the sins of the human race were poured out upon Christ.

So Jesus was separated from the Father which is spiritual death—but only for three hours. He bore spiritual death while He was physically alive. Notice what happened at death:

And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, INTO THY HANDS I COMMIT MY SPIRIT." And having said this, He breathed His last. (Luke 23:46 NASB)

It seems that at death Jesus spirit went to the Father. Notice what Peter says in quoting Psalm 16:

BECAUSE THOU WILT NOT ABANDON MY SOUL TO HADES, NOR ALLOW THY HOLY ONE TO UNDERGO DECAY. (Acts 2:27 NASB)

The word “abandon” here is the Greek word *egkataleipo*, [en-kat-al-i'-po] which means: “to leave behind in some place, to desert, forsake, or leave.” In the NASV it is most often translated “forsaken”. So God “would not” abandon/forsake His soul to hades. But He did abandon/forsake Him for three hours on the cross:

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "ELI, ELI, LAMA SABACHTHANI?" that is, "MY GOD, MY GOD, WHY HAST THOU FORSAKEN ME?" (Matthew 27:46 NASB)

The word “forsaken” used here is the same Greek word us in [Acts 2:27](#). So Jesus was forsaken by the Father for three hours while on the cross. So if Jesus did go to hades it was only for three hours.

"And so, because he was a prophet, and knew that GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE, (Acts 2:30 NASB)

Speaking of David, Peter says, “*he was a prophet*”—is this true? We know that David was the anointed king of Israel but was he a prophet?

Now these are the last words of David. David the son of Jesse declares... "The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue. (2 Samuel 23:1-2 NASB)

That David was inspired is clear, from this text. David was a prophet. Many of the prophecies relating to the Messiah are found in the Psalms of David.

Peter goes on to say, “***GOD HAD SWORN TO HIM WITH AN OATH TO SEAT one OF HIS DESCENDANTS UPON HIS THRONE.***” David wanted to build a temple for the Lord but the Lord wouldn’t let him. But He gave David a promise:

"When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³ "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴ "I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, ¹⁵ but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶ "And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever." (2 Samuel 7:12-16 NASB)

God promised David that one of his seed will be set on David's throne and rule and reign forever.

(A Maskil of Ethan the Ezrahite.) I will sing of the lovingkindness of the LORD forever; To all generations I will make known Thy faithfulness with my mouth. ² For I have said, "Lovingkindness will be built up forever; In the heavens Thou wilt establish Thy faithfulness." ³ "I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, ⁴ I will establish your seed forever, And build up your throne to all generations." Selah. ⁵ And the heavens will praise Thy wonders, O LORD; Thy faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones. (Psalms 89:1-5 NASB)

Notice also:

The LORD has sworn to David, A truth from which He will not turn back; "Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne. (Psalms 132:11 NASB)

God promised David that one of his seed will be set on David's throne and rule and reign forever. The Jews understood that the Messiah was to be descended from David, [Matthew 12:23](#); [21:9](#); [22:42](#), [45](#); [Mark 11:10](#); [John 7:42](#),

he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that HE WAS NEITHER ABANDONED TO HADES, NOR DID His flesh SUFFER DECAY. (Acts 2:31 NASB)

David's own flesh having seen corruption, as they themselves admitted, and his soul being still in hades, there was no alternative but to admit that he spoke of the Messiah. This brief argument not only refuted the supposed objection, but opened the minds of his hearers, to an entirely new conception of the prophetic throne of David, and of the Messiah, who was to occupy it; showing, that instead of being the ruler of an earthly kingdom, however, glorious, he was to sit upon the throne of the whole universe.

Thus far in his argument, Peter has proved that the Messiah must rise from the dead to ascend his throne. Now he proves that Jesus is this Messiah of whom David had spoken. He proves the resurrection by the testimony of himself and the one hundred and nineteen other witnesses standing with him:

"This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. (Acts 2:32 NASB)

One hundred and twenty eye witnesses—that is strong proof.

After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; (1 Corinthians 15:6 NASB)

We know that Christ was raised and so now he goes on to prove that after He arose He ascended to heaven and sat down upon his throne.

"Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. (Acts 2:33 NASB)

The present pouring out of the Spirit that they were all witnessing was proof positive that He has been exalted by God's powerful right hand.

Peter says, *"having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit"*—

I think the meaning here is that, he received the promise made through the Holy Spirit of resurrection and enthronement. Peter is saying that the promises made to David about Messiah sitting on his throne were being

fulfilled that day.

If prophecy was one line of evidence, pointing to the resurrection, Pentecost was another. Pentecost was not just a fulfillment of God's promise, it was the pouring out of the Spirit as proof that Jesus had risen from the dead. John the Baptist had said that Jesus would pour out the Spirit, that He would baptize with fire and with the Holy Spirit.

"For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, 'SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I MAKE THINE ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR THY FEET.'" (Acts 2:34-35 NASB)

What Scripture is Peter quoting here? He quotes here from **Psalm 110: which is the most frequently quoted, sited or alluded to First Testament text in the New Testament.**

David had prophesied that his superior "son", Who was really his Lord, would rise to heaven and take His place at God's right hand, there to await the submission of those who opposed Him.

Being "exalted to the right hand of God," implies the position of authority. That's why Peter quotes from [Psalm 110:1](#), You put your heel on the neck of your enemies. This is a picture of dominion. You can read about that in [Joshua 10:24-25](#).

The picture of making the necks of enemies to be a footstool was a common one in ancient times. A king would demonstrate his victories by having all of the conquered kings come and kneel before him. The conqueror would then place his foot upon the head or neck of the vanquished, showing to all that a victory had taken place.

The Pharisees themselves admitted that in this passage David referred to the Messiah, and had been much puzzled by the admission in a memorable conversation with Jesus;

saying, "What do you think about the Christ, whose son is He?" They said to Him, "The son of David." ⁴³ He said to them, "Then how does David in the Spirit call Him 'Lord,' saying, ⁴⁴ 'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD, 'SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND, UNTIL I PUT THINE ENEMIES BENEATH THY FEET'?" ⁴⁵ "If David then calls Him 'Lord,' how is He his son?" ⁴⁶ And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question. (Matthew 22:42-46 NASB)

"The Lord [God] said to my Lord [the Messiah]." When Jesus asked how David could call his descendant "Lord," he was not simply making *Messiah* and *Lord* synonymous titles. When the One who is literally exalted to the right hand of the Father is called "Lord," he is addressed as more than an honored human descendant of David. The way Jesus formulated the question implied as much. Peter, unveiling what Jesus' question hinted at, declares him to be Lord in the sense of Yahweh. Jesus is God!

And just who might those enemies be? The answer to this question was all too clear from Peter's message. They had rejected and crucified the Messiah. God had raised Him from the dead, and He was soon to subdue all of Messiah's enemies. God was soon to bring judgment upon this generation. Jesus had spoken of this. Joel foretold it. And [Psalm 110](#) spoke of it as well. The outpouring of the Spirit was not good news, for Messiah's enemies.

And so because of His life, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension He is accredited to be the Messiah and Peter comes to an overwhelming climax in verse 36 and listen to what he says.

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified." (Acts 2:36 NASB)

"Therefore, on the basis of everything that I have said, let all the house of Israel know assuredly," ***"All the house of***

Israel—is an expression only used here in the New Testament but common enough among the Jews for it is contained in a number of synagogue prayers, and occurs over twenty times in the First Testament (interestingly in [Ezekiel 37:11](#) the dry bones are *“all the house of Israel”*).

It was “this Jesus,” the same One that God promised, David foretold, and who had lived among them healing the sick, feeding the hungry, raising the dead, and proclaiming the kingdom of God. “This Jesus” was betrayed by Judas Iscariot, arrested by religious zealots, jeered by the multitudes, condemned by Pontius Pilate, scourged by Roman soldiers, bore His cross to Golgotha, crucified between two thieves, and cried with His last breath, *“It is finished!”* *“This Jesus God raised up again!”*

“This Jesus whom you crucified” is “both Lord and Christ.” In other words, He is the eternal, sovereign Lord who reigns over all creation without end. *“All things have been created through Him and for Him”* (Col. 1:16). He is Lord of all!

Do you notice that all through this, it is God who's been doing the declaring? It is God who did the works in His life, verse 22. It is God who determined the counsel that brought His death, verse 23. It is God who raised Him up, verse 24. It is God who exalted Him, verse 33. And it is God who declares Him to be Messiah and Lord. This is the work of God and He's saying that to show them that they are far from God.

These are religious people that Peter is talking to. They are worshiping people. They are people who know hundreds of verses in God's Word by heart. And he is telling them that their minds are totally at odds with God. They claim to know God. They claim to love God and worship God and follow God. And Peter says that they are diametrically opposed to God. They are anti-God.

If a person says they know God and rejects God's Jesus, then they don't really know God. In fact they are against God. They are anti-God.

This is so important for us today. Because in our live-and-let-live pluralistic society hardly anyone would dare say to another person, "You claim to know God, but in fact you are anti-God; you are against God." Why? Because you do not embrace God's Son Jesus. Jesus is the test of all true knowledge of God.

Dr. David Seamands tells of a Muslim who became a Christian in Africa: *“Some of his friends asked him, ‘Why did you become a Christian?’ He answered, ‘Well, it’s like this. Suppose you were going down the road and suddenly the road forked in two directions and you didn’t know which way to go, and there at the fork in the road were two men, one dead and one alive. Which one would you ask for directions?’”*

God endorsed him as Christ—the Messiah—by raising him from the dead. God endorsed him as the Lord by exalting him all the way to the highest place in the universe and making him supreme over all his enemies.

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37 NASB)

Notice that Peter offered absolutely no invitation, merely a declaration of truth, but the listeners themselves gave the invitation! He never got the chance to finish his message He was interrupted by the crowd. The reason for this interruption is because *they were pierced to the heart*.

The facts announced placed the hearers in the awful attitude of the murderers of the Son of God, who was now not only alive again, but seated on the throne of God, with all power in his hands, both on earth and in heaven. The belief of these facts necessarily filled them with the most intense realization of guilt, and the most fearful anticipation of punishment.

They had just heard Peter, in the language of Joel, speak of a possible salvation; and the question, *“What shall we*

do?” unquestionably means, what shall we do to be saved? What shall we do to be delivered from the judgment of Messiah?

Can you imagine how they felt? It would be like if you had been accused of murder and on the way to court you got into an accident. And when the other driver got out, you started beating and cursing and kicking him in anger. Then you got into your car and drove off, and went on to your meeting in court. When the judge entered you realize he is the man whom you had just beaten and cursed out in the street. That is what these people felt. No wonder they were cut to the heart and cried out, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

Let me say this in closing. Peter did not prepare for this sermon; he wasn't home the night before getting his sermon notes ready. He quotes the Scripture over and over—he knew the word from memory and so did his audience. We for the most part don't!

Here's the first sermon of the infant Church: and we see that the aim of Peter's kerugma is to declare Jesus Christ as Lord. That message hasn't changed. This is our message; this Jesus whose name you use as a cures word, who's teaching you ignore, whose resurrection you mock is LORD of the universe to whom you must someday give and account.

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