

"Peter's Second Sermon"

Acts 3

Introduction: In the past several studies we have been looking at Acts 3:1-12a and it is in these verses that God sets the stage for Peter's second sermon in the book of Acts. In the first twelve verses we met the lame man who was healed by God through Peter and John. After his healing the man went into the temple walking and leaping and praising God. This man was well known and when the people witnessed that he was healed they were filled with wonder and amazement. The people then ran to Solomon's porch looking to understand what had happened to bring about this miracle. This is what sets the stage for Peter's sermon.

I. The Sermon

Notice Acts 3:11-12

Peter asks two questions in this verse. Why do you marvel? Why do you think this was done in our power? Peter's idea here was that this miracle was not out of the ordinary, for Jesus performed many miracles while He walked the face of the earth. The miracles that He performed were for the purpose of proving who He claimed to be.

Matthew 9:1-7

And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

² *And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.*

³ *And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.*

⁴ *And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?*

⁵ *For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?*

⁶ *But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.*

⁷ *And he arose, and departed to his house.*

His miracles proved He was God in the flesh for only God had the power to forgive sins. One of the last miracles that Jesus performed was the raising of Lazarus which would

have been widely known, therefore these people should have connected this miracle to what Jesus had done while He walked the earth. This miracle also confirmed that Peter and John were true Apostles.

Notice Acts 3:13a

Peter was very quick to give all glory to Jesus Christ for this miracle. This miracle was done to glorify Jesus. After all the Jews had seen and heard and because of what was written in the Old Testament they should have known that Jesus was the Messiah.

Isaiah 52:13

¹³ *Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.*

Now Peter will go on and he will deliver sledgehammer blows to help the Jews see their guilt.

1. **They demanded His death when Pilate tried to release Jesus.**

Notice Acts 3:13

Pilate could find no fault in Jesus, and it was his desire to release Him.

Luke 23:4, 5, 14, 16, 21-23

⁴ *Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.*

⁵ *And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.*

¹⁴ *Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:*

¹⁶ *I will therefore chastise him, and release him.*

²¹ *But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.*

²² *And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.*

²³ *And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.*

2. They denied Jesus and demanded that a murderer be released.

Notice Acts 3:14

When Pilate wanted to release Jesus, the Jews cried out for Him to be crucified and that Pilate should release Barabbas.

Luke 23:16-21

¹⁶ *I will therefore chastise him, and release him.*

¹⁷ *(For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)*

¹⁸ *And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas:*

¹⁹ *(Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)*

²⁰ *Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.*

²¹ *But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him.*

3. They killed the Prince of Life.

Notice Acts 3:15

Peter did not soften the Truth when he preached to the Jews. He dropped three heavy sledgehammer blows upon the Jews. They were guilty and they needed to know they were guilty in order to be saved.

Application:

We have talked about this before, and we will again because it is so important that we do not forget it. People **MUST** hear the Truth that they are sinners and that all sin must be paid for. They need to know that they have sinned against God who is holy and righteous. They must understand that in their present state they are on a path leading directly to hell. Now, I know that this message is not always appreciated. There are many people who despise this Truth and when it is preached to them, they are like rattle snakes, and they want to strike out. Let me show you a verse from Hebrews.

Hebrews 4:12

¹² *For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

The Word of God is a twoedged sword which means it cuts two ways. With some people it cuts and brings about conviction and repentance. With others it cuts and brings about conviction and anger. Let us keep in mind how the Jews responded to Stephen's sermon.

Acts 7:51-54

⁵¹ *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*

⁵² *Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:*

⁵³ *Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.*

⁵⁴ *When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.*

Notice Acts 3:15 again.

The Jews killed Him, but God resurrected Him. The title "Prince of Life" means "Giver of Life". The very ONE who gave them life was the ONE whom they crucified. Can you imagine the conviction that is sweeping over these people?

Notice Acts 3:16

This man was healed by Jesus and through faith in His name. But who had the faith here?

Notice Acts 3:2-6

This man was expecting alms, not to be healed. So it does not appear to be that it was his faith that brought about the healing.

Notice Acts 3:16 again.

The faith that was exercised was given by the Lord for this very time and miracle. Let me give you a possibility.

1 Corinthians 12:4, 8-10

⁴ *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.*

⁸ *For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;*

⁹ To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

¹⁰ To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

There is a gift of faith that is pointed out here in 1 Corinthians 12. This is not the faith that is required for salvation. But this is a gift to the believer after he or she is saved. It is very possible that Peter had this gift of faith, and it was his faith that God honored to heal this man.

Notice Acts 3:17-18

These verses are words of encouragement to every sinner. Peter tells those who crucified Jesus that they did it in ignorance. How can he say this when these people had listened to the Words of Jesus, they had witnessed the miracles of Jesus, and they had the Old Testament that told of the Messiah? We must understand that they had different expectations of what the Messiah would do when He came. They were looking for Him to overthrow the Roman Empire and set up the Kingdom. They were looking for a King that was militant. But when Jesus came, He was meek not militant. They believed He was an imposter and not the real Messiah. Notice the words of Phillips:

"There was no excuse for the Jews. They were looking for a Messiah, but they wanted a militant Messiah, one who would smash the power of Rome and make Jerusalem the capital of a new world empire. They were not interested in a meek Messiah. What they were looking for was a ruler; God sent them a Redeemer. They wanted a sovereign; God sent them a Savior. Their Scriptures prophesied both, but they blindly overlooked such references to the Sufferer as were to be found in Psalm 22, Psalm 69, and Isaiah 53.1"

They were so desiring a King to free them from the Romans that they missed the Old Testament verses that spoke of the Messiah's suffering and death. It is difficult for us to understand what they did was in ignorance, but we see their ignorance brought to light in many verses.

Luke 23:33-34

³³ And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

³⁴ Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

1 Corinthians 2:7-8

⁷ But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

⁸ Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

1 Timothy 1:12-13

¹² And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

¹³ Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

Conclusion/Application:

The Jews crucified Jesus, Paul persecuted the church and yet grace was extended to all. This tells us that there is not one person on the earth who has sinned beyond the grace of God. No matter what the sinner has done, if they repent and believe on Jesus Christ they will be saved.

John 3:16-18

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

¹⁷ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

¹⁸ He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Revelation 22:17

¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.