

## To The Ends Of The Earth

### LESSON 2: THE CHURCH BEGINS, PART 2 (ACTS 2:14-47)

The Messiah (Jesus of Nazareth) had come to earth and fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures. Jesus instructed His apostles to wait in Jerusalem to be empowered through the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:44-49; Acts 1:4-5). Now, the Spirit had come on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13).

#### PETER EXPLAINS THE EVENTS TRANSPIRING (ACTS 2:14-21)

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**2:14-21.** Peter stood up with the eleven other apostles and raised his voice to the crowd. He wanted them to know that they were not drunk (as some claimed, Acts 2:12-13), since it was only about 9:00 in the morning (earlier than Jews would have typically eaten and drank). Instead, what was happening was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy (Joel 2:28-32) about the last days (last time/period; the age of the Messiah, Luke 9:27; Isaiah 2:1-4; Micah 4:1-8; Daniel 2:31-45). During this time, the Holy Spirit would be poured out on people of all backgrounds (though miraculous gifts of the Spirit would later cease, 1 Corinthians 13:8-13). Furthermore, God would cause great change (depicted through apocalyptic language of signs in the heavens and the earth – blood, fire, cloud of smoke, sun darkened, moon turned to blood). This could refer to the judgment God would bring on Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (Luke 21:5-33; Isaiah 13:1-10), the final judgment when Jesus returns at the end of these last days (2 Peter 3:1-10), or to the momentous events that began on Pentecost. Finally, everyone (both Jews and Gentiles, Romans 1:16) who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. To call on the name of the Lord is to call upon Him for help in reliance on Him. Peter will teach what is involved in doing this at the end of the sermon (Acts 2:37-41; 22:16; Matthew 7:21-23).

#### PETER PREACHES THE GOSPEL (ACTS 2:22-36)

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**2:22-31.** Peter preached that God demonstrated Jesus to be His Son, the Messiah, by miracles, wonders, and signs (John 20:30-31). Many of the Jewish people had witnessed such things during the time Jesus walked the earth (Luke 4:40; 5:15; John 9:16; 12:37). But, this Jesus was put to death on the cross. This was both according to the eternal plan God had determined according to His perfect foreknowledge (Ephesians 3:11; 2 Peter 1:20-21) and accomplished by the Jewish

people who used the lawless Romans to nail Him to the cross (Luke 23:13-24). Yet, God raised Jesus from the dead, ending the pain (suffering) associated with death because it was not possible for death to bind Him (Psalm 18:5; 116:3). This was all according to the prophecy of David fulfilled in Jesus (Psalm 16:8-11). It stated the nearness of the Lord to always help (as an advocate at His right hand) so He would not be shaken and could be glad in His heart, rejoice with His tongue, and rest in hope in His flesh because God would not abandon Him in Hades (the realm of the dead, where Jesus's Spirit went to Paradise when He died, Luke 23:43; 16:19-31) nor allow Him (the Holy One) to see decay in His fleshly body that was laid in the tomb (Luke 23:52-53). God had revealed the paths of life to Jesus and would bring about the cause for rejoicing again (Luke 24; Acts 1:9-11). Peter then demonstrated David was certainly not talking about himself because his body was still in his prominent Jerusalem tomb (1 Kings 2:10; Nehemiah 3:16). Instead, David spoke by prophecy in connection to the oath God had sworn that One of his Descendants would sit on his throne (2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 132:11).

**2:32-36.** Peter definitively declares that God has raised this Jesus of Nazareth from the dead and that he and the other apostles were all witnesses of this (Acts 1:8, 21-22; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-29; 21:1-14; 1 Corinthians 15:3-8)! In Jesus's ascension, He was exalted to the honored position of King at the right hand of the Father (Daniel 7:13-14; Acts 1:9-11; Philippians 2:5-11; Ephesians 1:20-21). He received the promise of the Holy Spirit (that He would be raised and exalted) and had now poured out the Holy Spirit so they both saw and heard what they did (Acts 2:1-4; 1:4-5; John 16:12-15). For, David did not ascend to the right hand of God, but the Lord (Jehovah God) declared to David's Lord (Jesus) that He would sit at His right hand until all enemies are made His footstool (Psalm 110:1; 1 Corinthians 15:23-28). Therefore, all Israel must definitively recognize that God has made this Jesus of Nazareth they had crucified both Lord (authoritative Master) and Christ (Messianic King, foretold by the Scriptures)!

#### PEOPLE RESPOND TO THE GOSPEL (ACTS 2:37-41)

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**2:37-41.** This message pierced the hearts of some in the audience who now believed they were guilty of crucifying the Messiah. They cried out to know what they should do to avoid God's judgment for their wickedness. Peter replied saying everyone must repent (a change mind toward sin that produces a change in life toward God) and be baptized (immersed in water)

in the name of Jesus Christ (by His authority to enter allegiance with Him, Acts 4:12; perhaps implying a confession of faith, Romans 10:9-13) in order to receive the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 22:16). These would also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (what the Spirit gives, e.g. salvation; Acts 2:21; 1 Peter 1:10-12; John 3:3-7; 1 Peter 1:22-25). This promise would be for everyone God would call through the gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; Romans 1:16). Peter continued preaching with many other words, testifying as a witness of Christ and strongly urging them to be saved from the corrupt generation who had rejected Jesus as the Messiah (implying they had not yet been saved)! Those who gladly welcomed/received the message as truth were obedient in baptism to be saved and forgiven from their sins! About 3,000 people were added to the followers of Christ that day (thereby forming the first church, Matthew 16:18)!

### **THE FIRST CHURCH (ACTS 2:42-47)**

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**2:42-47.** Those who were obedient to the gospel devoted themselves to learning the apostles' teaching (which revealed all truth, John 16:12-15), to the fellowship (sharing in all that is in Christ, 1 John 1:1-7), to the breaking of bread (observing the Lord's Supper, Luke 22:19-21), and to prayer (communication with God, Hebrews 4:14-16). The apostles worked many wonders and signs that filled people with awe and confirmed the words they spoke as being from God (Mark 16:19-20; Hebrews 2:1-4). Then, the Christians addressed the needs among them by holding all things in common (considering whatever they had as being available to the entire group), even selling their possessions and property to give the proceeds to the needy (Acts 4:32-37). These new disciples continued to be devoted to serving and praising God, including by meeting together in the temple (likely in the temple courts) as well as in each other's homes (sharing meals together). They were joyful and enjoyed the favor of the people at that time, and the Lord was adding to the number of disciples in His church (collection of saved people) every day as people were being saved through obeying the gospel!

### **CONCLUSION**

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The gospel that proclaims the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ, the King, had now been preached. Jesus was now reigning as King at the right hand of God and people were invited to be part of His kingdom. Thus, the church had now begun!

### **DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONS**

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How did Peter explain the significance of the events transpiring on Pentecost?

What did God promise concerning the last days?

How had God testified concerning Jesus as the Messiah?

Why was Jesus crucified?

What did God do after Jesus was crucified?

What must everyone recognize about Jesus?

What does the gospel require for forgiveness and salvation?

What did those who were saved do after their baptism?