

Good evening. Tonight we're looking at Acts, the book of Acts chapter two, at Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost from verse 14 through verse 41. The word of our God. But Peter, standing with the 11, lifted up his voice and addressed them. 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, that 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 on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Men of Israel, hear these words. 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, that 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 rejoice. My flesh will also dwell in hope. For you will not abandon my soul in 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 say to you with the 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 Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus God raised up, And of that, we are all 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, that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself said, The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my feet 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. Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, brothers, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself. And with many other words, he bore witness and continued to exhort them saying, save yourselves from this crooked generation. So those who received his word were baptized And there were added that day about 3,000 souls. Here we have the explanation of Pentecost, the significance of the events that were happening among them. And Peter expresses this through a speech. a sermon, perhaps a word of testimony. The Book of Acts is known as the Acts of the Holy Spirit, or the Acts of the Apostles. But it's also known as the Book of Apostolic Preach, Speeches, or Apostolic Sermons. There are 19 addresses in the Book of Acts. Eight by Peter. Stephen and James each have one. The Apostle Paul has nine. 25% of the entirety of the book of Acts are sermons, are gospel speeches. And

to me, I'm struck by the one who is speaking. We read early on in this sermon that it is Peter, but Peter standing with the 11 lifted up his voice and addressed them. And to me, this is shocking that Peter is now preaching. The one who four weeks before denied he knew his Lord, even to a little servant girl, He turned his tail and ran, as it were, from his Savior, Jesus. And we read in John's Gospel of how our Savior was very intentional, how that he went to him, that he might be restored, reminding him that God had a work for him to do. And what a great reminder that the Lord is willing. He's willing to forgive. He's willing to use His people. Though we are imperfect, though we fail, though we may in some ways even deny Him, our life, our ministry in His name is not over. He's able to work in and through the worst of sinners. Isn't that marvelous? The gospel hope that there is for you and certainly for me. And think about the boldness that Peter now has. No longer possessed by cowardice, we find him standing up in the power of the Holy Spirit, where a few weeks before, He was fleeing from the Lord. Now he's confidently standing for Christ, even graciously, lovingly confronting the Jews who crucified Jesus of their sin and of their need to repent. Now what we have in this sermon is a summary. It's like a cliff, cliff notes. of Peter's bold address to the large crowd that was gathered on Pentecost. I believe these are the words that he spoke, but not all the words. For we read in verse 40 that he exhorted them with many other words. So for just a few moments tonight, I want us to look at just two things concerning this speech or this gospel sermon. The first is the theme of fulfillment. We see fulfillment in the first half of the sermon from verse 14 through verse 21. And then picking up at verse 22, I think a word that captures verses 22 through the end, through verse 41, is that of testimony. Fulfillment and testimony. And it's very clear as the people are there having received the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the gospel was being proclaimed in known languages that people could understand, as people were gathered in Jerusalem at this Pentecost time, that Peter makes it clear that what was happening was a fulfillment a prophecy that God himself said would occur, and that this prophecy is traced ultimately to Jesus. In a very clear and orderly presentation, he explains that what is actually happening, And then he gives testimony to the one who has brought all of this about. He points to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now one of the striking features of this sermon is that he points his hearers to scripture. In verse 16 he says, this was what was uttered through the prophet Joel. But throughout his sermon, And much of it is scripture. He refers to scripture repeatedly. He weaves together Old Testament passages that speak about Christ and about the day of Pentecost. Joel chapter two, Psalm 16 is quoted extensively. A portion of Psalm 110 is also used. What we have here in this first gospel speech is an example of what good and faithful preaching ought to be. Turning people's attention to the biblical text, explaining the scriptures, that text, applying it, and then calling the people to a response to God. The apostles were engaged in expository preaching, opening the word of God and making it real and applicable and meaningful in a transformative way by the power of God by his Holy Spirit. with a particular focus upon the person and work of our savior Jesus Christ. How that he is the fulfillment of God's promises and that his work is one that was spoken of in the old covenant. Now the people hearing the message, I mean observing rather, what was happening on Pentecost and hearing people speak in various languages made the assumption as we read in verse 13 that the early believers and the apostles were drunk and that was the human explanation of what was happening. Of course, Peter makes it clear that it's only the third hour of the day, which would have been

nine-ish or so in the morning. And people were not drunk. Instead, what we find happening is a fulfillment of the book of Joel. Joel predicted these bewildering events, Pentecost, as miraculous signs that would accompany the pouring out of God's Holy Spirit in the last days. These are the days that point to the inauguration of God's kingdom in Jesus Christ, the establishment of the new covenant through the promise deliverer. an anointed Messiah, Jesus Christ. Great preaching focuses upon Jesus. Here we have in this passage a focus upon fulfillment, but we also have Peter's testimony of the person and work of Jesus Christ. And this is in verses 22 through 41. Here, this sermon marks the beginning of the church's witness and fulfillment to the commission of Acts chapter one, verse eight, where the gospel is preached, beginning at Jerusalem and then spreads out to the ends of the world. And it's a reminder for us today that we are to make the good news of our Savior Jesus known. Now you may not be called to preach. None of us are apostles in the same sense that Peter himself was an apostle. But God has raised you up. He has placed you in your families, as needy perhaps as they are. He's put you in the places where you study or where you work. that you might be there, be a witness for him. He's giving you children and grandchildren that you may point them to the Lord Jesus Christ. And so this passage is so relevant and a refreshing challenge that we too may boldly and lovingly make the gospel of Jesus known. Well, as he talks about the message of life, of salvation, of the person and work of Jesus Christ, he focuses particularly upon God's sovereignty and the great events of Jesus's life and of his ministry. We read in verse 22 of the life and ministry of Jesus, of the works, that he did works demonstrating the truth, his miracles, that they themselves had witnessed. They could not dismiss the mighty acts of the Lord Jesus Christ that bore witness to the truth of who He is as that promised Messiah, that long-awaited Deliverer. And it's very likely last week you may have heard that God oftentimes would bring miracles or perhaps even visions when God was doing a work of revealing himself, revealing particularly a work of redemption and of salvation. And here, Jesus' own life and ministry is depicted in those very words in verse 22. 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. But the focus of the message of the gospel is not only on the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, but upon his righteous and sacrificial death, which is where Peter goes next. This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. He acknowledges that the death of Jesus was not an afterthought on the part of God, but it was God's design. It was his intention. It was his plan even from all eternity. It was the predetermined plan of God that God Almighty is the one who is in control of history. He's the one who is sovereign and mighty over our own lives, over our own circumstances. And what comfort this brings to us to know that God is the one who is graciously and lovingly in control, that he orders all things after the counsel of his own will, that his acts in history reveal his omnipotence, and his love and his might and his power. And yet, the Bible teaches not only that God is sovereign, but that man is responsible. Notice he speaks here in verse 22, not only of, I'm sorry, verse 23, not only of God's definite plan, But he also speaks, not only of God's sovereignty, but of these lawless men who crucified Jesus. One of the challenges I had in my teenage years as a Christian was trying to sort out God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. There were times in my early high school years I couldn't match it, I couldn't figure it out how God could both be sovereign and yet man entirely responsible. But then I came to understand that the

Bible is my authority. And the Bible clearly teaches that God is altogether sovereign. And yet man is altogether accountable and responsible. And it's maybe a mystery. And I appreciate the reformed faith. I wasn't raised in a reformed church or in a Presbyterian. I was raised in something very different. But I came to understand that the Bible teaches both. And we teach and hold what the Bible teaches, even if our minds cannot fully get around it. A previous pastor of our own congregation once said, Dr. Ferguson once said, God's sovereignty and man's responsibility are like two parallel lines. Now I wasn't a math major, but I know parallel lines never meet. But he says there are two parallel lines that meet in heaven. Right now, we can't fully understand. The Bible clearly teaches that we're responsible and yet God is sovereign. But a day will come when all will fully be revealed to us as we know the glory and grace of our mighty Redeemer. He speaks of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, but then he continues in verses 24 through 32 in this section speaking about Jesus's resurrection, that his resurrection is a vindication of his work, of his sacrifice that was acceptable by the Father, that he had power over death, that he truly crushed the serpent's head. And here he draws from Psalm 16 extensively to show that the Old Testament anticipated the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that his soul would not be abandoned in hell, that his body would not see corruption. And here Peter points that this was fulfilled not in the historical person of King David, for he is dead and he is gone. And David's tomb, as Peter says, is with us to this day. But instead, David was speaking as a prophet, looking down the corridor of time to one of his descendants. That descendant is the one who is here with us today. He foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But the Lord Jesus, as Peter describes his person and work, was not only risen, In verses 33 to 36, Peter describes that with his resurrection, that Jesus is triumphantly exalted to the right hand of the Father. And there he is given the promised spirit. That Jesus is the one who is greater than David. He's the one who fulfills the prophecy of David, the Lord said to my Lord. He's speaking of the Lord Jesus himself. And he culminates this in verse 35, how that the Lord, that, I don't, I think I have that wrong, I'm sorry. Verse 36. Let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified. He indeed is the Lord of glory. He's the anointed redeemer, Jesus Christ, the Messiah of God. So he begins speaking first of all of fulfillment, and then in bearing witness in his testimony, he speaks of the person and work of Jesus Christ. But like every faithful preacher, he wants his hearers to embrace, to respond, to be changed by the truth, of the Word of God. And in verses 37 to 39, we have this focus upon salvation. That at the end of the sermon, the response of the crowd is they turn. They turn to one another. with great spiritual concern in light of the truth of what was said, spoken, and preached. What shall we do? They were cut to the heart like the Philippian jailer. Like Lydia, as the word of God came to her heart, as she prayed by the river, we find a genuine response to the word of God with gospel clarity and power. Is there any hope? What can be done about all of this and our situation? Peter said to them, repent. and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. He invites, he exhorts, he summons people to come to trust in Jesus Christ, to come in true, genuine repentance of forsaking sin. Sin demands repentance because it is a violation of God's command and of his true character. To mentally assent to the truth about our sin, to just acknowledge that it exists, isn't enough. To feel bad about our sin, to have a sense of remorse or regret is not sufficient. It is a

genuine repulsion, a genuine disgust or hatred, I'll say, of sin with the spirit-empowered desire. to never engage in that sin, to look to Jesus, to be yoked with Him, to be bonded with Him by faith in a Spirit-determined ambition to obey the Lord Jesus instead. This is what He means when He says, repent. Oftentimes the word repent stands for the words repent and believe, repentance and faith. It's a call away from ourselves and our sin and a call to the Savior and then he calls them to be baptized. We're not saved by baptism. The thief on the cross was never baptized physically. but as a call of Christian discipleship to be identified with Christ, to receive the sacrament of baptism, symbolic of the cleansing of our sins and our forgiveness. This promise is not only for us, but it is a covenant promise here spoken as a word of promise to you and to your children. It is a blessed promise for us. We're to the end of our time, but I'd be remiss not to speak very briefly of the new community of those who are united to Jesus Christ. Peter gave additional summons. Save yourselves from this crooked generation. Those words may sound strange to our ears, but is it not true of our own day and of those who live in our own generation? And we read, and there were added that day about 3,000 souls. Jesus healed Jesus fed 5,000 people, at least, on more than one occasion. A great miracle. Is not new life and new birth on this day of the church, this inaugural day of Pentecost of the church being fully, duly established, is it not a great miracle? An evidence of the power of the gospel, of the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ. And though perhaps indeed it was the greatest of all working of revival, do we not continue to yearn that God might do something like that again? Though it was unique, but that there might be a turning of men and women to the Lord, of young people, to have a heart inclined towards Jesus with the understanding that they had because of the grace and truth of the Savior. God is able to do it. He's able to do beyond all that we can ask or think or imagine. So as we begin our prayer time, let's begin with a season of praising Him for the glory and the wonder of the gospel the greatness of our Savior, the majesty of His working in our lives. Let's have a season of giving our joyful and grateful praise to our God. Let's all pray together as His people, one at a time during this portion of our prayer. Let's bring our praise to Almighty God.