

# Pentecost: The First Gospel Sermon

## Text: Acts 2

Introduction: The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) each end with a similar version of the Great Commission to the disciples of Jesus to “go into all the world” (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19; Luke 24:47). Luke specifically records, “...repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (24:47). So, as we come to Luke’s second narrative, the book of Acts, we find its text picking up where Luke left off at the end of his gospel. At the end of his gospel, the disciples are told to “tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high” (24:49). In Acts, we find the disciples gathered in Jerusalem waiting for God’s perfect timing to share His message of the Savior with the world (Acts 1:13, 26).

What better time to share the “good news” with many souls than Pentecost when “Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven” would be gathered in Jerusalem (Acts 2:5, 9-11)? At Pentecost, Jerusalem became a melting pot of diversity and it was this specific time God picked to unleash the power of the Spirit and the message of the risen Lord to the world (Acts 2:16-21)!

In today’s lesson, I’d like to look at The First Gospel Sermon and its content to answer three vital questions which still are raised in the minds of men today.

### I. Why Should I Believe Jesus is Lord (Acts 2:22-36)?

A. The key thesis statement of Peter’s speech is that Israel can “know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (2:36).

B. The key evidence for this assertion is laid out in Peter’s speech beginning with verse 22.

1. “Jesus of Nazareth, A Man...”—Jesus was a real, historical person from a real city.

2. “...attested by God to you...”—God used certain proofs to exhibit the unique, divine nature of Jesus when He walked this earth!

3. “...by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst...”—these supernatural and awe-striking acts were for a purpose—to elicit belief (cp. Jn 20:30-31).

i. Nicodemus made the obvious conclusions about Jesus (Jn 3:1-2).

ii. Jesus himself pointed to his miraculous “works” as proof (John 5:36).

iii. The prophets also used the Messiah’s “works” as proof (Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 7:22-23).

4. “...Him... you have taken... have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up...” (2:23-24)—the greatest, irreplicable proof of all was the resurrection of Jesus!

i. This resurrection was preceded by a very public death (2:23-24).

ii. This resurrection was a subject of prophecy and made Jesus a greater king than one of the greatest kings of Israel—David (2:25-35; Psalm 68:18).

iii. This resurrection was witnessed by multiple eye “witnesses” who had been entirely emboldened by the fact of the resurrection (2:32; Luke 24:48; Acts 1:8).

C. “...know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ” (2:36)—These proofs make faith not a “blind leap” but a logical conclusion based upon the facts.

1. To be “Lord” is to be “supreme in authority” as a “ruler” (Strong’s).

2. The term “Christ” means “anointed one” (Strong’s).

3. In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, kings and judges were all anointed by God before doing their work—Jesus fills all of these roles as our Anointed One!

## II. What Must I Do To Be Saved (Acts 2:37-41)?

- A. When one understands what being “*Lord and Christ*” means and is convicted of their sin then it will necessarily lead to the question of verse 37—“*what shall we do?*” (2:36-37).
- B. Peter responds with two conditions which are equally important—“*Repent, and let every one of you be baptized*” (Acts 2:38).
  - 1. “*Repent*” means to “think differently or afterwards; reconsider” (Strong’s)—their thinking about Jesus needed to change!
  - 2. “*be baptized*” was what Jesus commissioned the apostles to do to new converts—this is not Holy Spirit baptism but water baptism (Acts 2:38, 41; Matthew 28:19-20).
- C. Furthermore, Peter pronounces two blessings upon those who obey these commands—“*the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*” (Acts 2:38).
  - 1. The murder of God’s Son was a high crime—sin—yet God offers “*remission of sins*” when we respond in obedient faith (2:38).
  - 2. Furthermore, the “*Holy Spirit*” had prophesied through Joel that one day “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved*” (Acts 2:16-17, 21) and now that “*gift of the Holy Spirit*” could be given to all who trust and obey these commands (2:38-39).
- D. Though Peter spoke “with many other words” these were the primary instructions of the message and this plan of salvation is “to all who are afar off” even us (Acts 2:39-41).

## III. How Should I Continue After I Have Been Baptized (Acts 2:42-47)?

- A. The chapter does not end at baptism and neither should our Christian walk.
- B. Their next steps are detailed in verse 42: “... *they continued steadfastly in...* ”
  - 1. “... *the apostles’ doctrine...*”—not men’s teaching, but the “*apostles’ teaching.*”
  - 2. “... *and fellowship...*”—from the Greek KOINONIA indicating a spiritual partnership, perhaps indicated by monetary support KOIN=COIN (cp. Philippians 4:14-15).
  - 3. “... *in the breaking of bread...*”—this would seem to be distinct from the “*breaking bread from house to house*” mentioned in Acts 2:46.
  - 4. “... *and in prayers*” (2:42)—prayer is the mechanism which gives vitality to the church.
- C. The early church not only engaged in these areas of spiritual growth but their friendship and bond with one another was expressed through...
  - 1. A common willingness to share with fellow believers in need (Acts 2:44-45).
  - 2. A hospitality and willingness to know one another in their homes (2:46).
- D. The consequences of such continued growth in the church was...
  - 1. “... *fear came upon every soul...*” (Acts 2:43).
  - 2. “... *having favor with all the people*” (Acts 2:47).
  - 3. “... *the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved...*” (2:47).

Conclusion: You can still be a part of the 1<sup>st</sup> century church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We preach the same Jesus, the same plan of salvation, the same work of the church! Though you are “far off” can be saved in the same way as those first 3,000 were. Today! “*Be saved from this wicked generation*” (Acts 2:40)!