

Jesus Exalted, Spirit Sent, Promise Offered

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- [0 : 0 0] Heavenly Father, by your Spirit now, be at work in our hearts as we reflect and ponder and marvel at this great event of which we are a part and are connected to.
- And I pray that you will shape this church by the event of Pentecost. I ask in Jesus' name. Amen. Please have a seat, friends. Imagine no possessions. I wonder if you can. No need for greed or hunger. A brotherhood of man.
- Imagine all the people sharing all the world. So sang John Lennon with his vision for world peace, for his vision for harmony in our world.
- Sounds a bit quaint now, a brotherhood of man. But you could say, as many there are people in the world that have been schemes for bringing world peace or world harmony.
- One way to read history is to read history as basically the history of failed human attempts at world peace or world harmony or justice and kind of utopia in our world.
- [1 : 1 9] Some of the more famous failed attempts we have in our recent history. So last century, we had a massive rise of atheistic communism.
- Now, it's one of those ideas where you would say it sounded like a good idea at the time. But history showed that that produced some of the most massive human atrocities and genocides of all time.
- They happened under those kind of regimes. Alongside atheistic communism, we have the rise of kind of democratic capitalism as a kind of a gospel, a kind of a means of bringing blessing to the world or peace to our world.
- And if you ask some people, they say democratic capitalism will promise us affluence around the world and freedom and happiness that we're all longing for.
- Though I'm personally a bit sceptical about that. And I think, well, maybe so far, it's only really served the rich nations. It hasn't really served the whole world.
- [2 : 2 6] And we could go on. There are more and more failed or unproven human schemes to bring peace to our world. And so now as we come to God's word, we want to ask God, what is his scheme for the world?
- What is God's plan for the rescue of the world and for the harmony of our world? What is God going to do to bring about the kind of peace that we all long for?
- And so today as we look at the event of the day of Pentecost in the early church, 50 days after Jesus rose from the dead, we are not only going to see God's plan for the world, we are actually going to see it enacted.
- We are going to see God's purpose actually begin to come about. We are going to see God get runs on the board. This is an amazing event and we would do well to be familiar with the day of Pentecost.
- We would do well to be inspired by it. We would do well to be hungry for it, hungry for its continuation today. This event is going to help explain how you can get from a crucified leader to a movement of thousands that is going to transform the world.

- [3 : 43] This is going to be a turning point in the ongoing acts of Jesus. We should read it expecting to see Jesus at work. And what we'll do friends is look at four aspects.
- An amazing event, an amazing message, an amazing significance and an amazing response. So event, message, significance and response.
- Well, the event was amazing, no doubt friends. You cannot argue with me. It's nothing less than what Jesus promised to do. He said, wait in Jerusalem and I will send the Holy Spirit and you will be my witnesses to the ends of the earth.
- And so they wait and they pray. And it appears they're praying and waiting somewhere near the temple. And while this is going on, there's a Jewish festival going on called Pentecost.
- It was originally an old covenant event. Fifty days after the Jewish Passover, which is also when Jesus died, the Jews would bring the first fruits of their harvest and celebrate and commit it to God.
- [4 : 53] And so what we find then is that there are Jewish people in Jerusalem at this time from all the nations of the world because they've all come from around the Mediterranean and northern Africa and kind of come to Jerusalem.
- And so there are foreigners in effect come to the temple for this festival of first fruits for Pentecost. And while the Christians are waiting and praying, suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind.
- And it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues as of fire appeared among them. This is amazing. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability.
- This is an amazing event. A roar like a violent wind. And somehow fire appears above people's heads.
- Christians have tried to draw paintings of this. They kind of just look corny. You just have a sense of acts that this is both mysterious and shattering. It's astonishing what happens.
- [6 : 08] The images are of God's Spirit as a wind and also of God's presence. It's in fire as in the book of Exodus where God was present in the fire by night.
- And the idea is that God's Spirit and God's people are coming together in a way like they've never come together before. And somehow they began in a house but it must have broken out onto the street or near the temple.
- And those Jewish people from around the nation saw them and they were bewildered and they were astonished. But friends, we need to ask what amazed the people who saw this?
- What amazed the observers? Was it the wind? Was it the noise? Was it the fire? Well, it was none of those things. What amazed them was verse 6.
- At this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. So Luke makes it very clear.
- [7 : 11] The most amazing thing about Pentecost was the languages that were spoken. It was the fact that these uneducated country Galileans, these followers of Jesus, were speaking the most sophisticated languages of the world with good accents and the right dialects.
- And they were declaring God's deeds and power. They were declaring the mighty works of God. That's what it means to be prophesying, declaring God's deeds.
- The first thing we need to just point out is that what we have at Pentecost is not some special angelic language like angelic tongues of 1 Corinthians 14 and so on.
- That's the kind of language that you need an interpreter for, that no human speaks. What we have at Pentecost is not that. We have human languages. All the languages of the nations present there were spoken and God's deeds were declared.

What we have is global communication. We see acted out God's plan for his good news to go to all the nations of the world, to the ends of the earth.

[8 : 28] The day of Pentecost is like a reversal of the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11 where humanity united arrogantly against God and God dispersed them and confused them and gave them different tongues and languages.

But here we have humanity coming back together to declare his praises, to speak of his mighty deeds. What we have in effect is God's plan for the transformation of the world.

Now if you didn't understand any languages, and I don't really speak many languages, and I'm not very good at recognising a language. You know how you can't speak Mandarin but you can recognise Mandarin.

Well I can't even do that. And so to the onlookers there, they heard all these different languages and they just said, they sneered. They said, are they drunk? You know this just sounds crazy, chaotic. And so Peter, in the power of the Spirit, responds with the amazing message.

And he says, this is not an alcohol issue. It's too early in the morning. This is that which was prophesied by the prophet Joel.

[9 : 42] And these people would have known about this prophecy, that one day, on the day of the Lord, God would pour out his Spirit on all people.

God would give his Spirit and he would dwell with his people and they will prophesy. Sons and daughters will prophesy, declare God's praises.

And so Peter says, this is that. God has kept his promise, given the book of Joel, and we now have the Spirit. This time has come. And Peter calls them the last days.

In the last days, God will pour out his Spirit. And so what Peter is saying, the last days have arrived. If this was a football game, Peter would be saying, we are now in the fourth quarter of God's football game for the world, of God's grand final.

We are now in the last quarter. And God has poured out his Spirit. And now all his people will prophesy. And we are now in the age of evangelism. We are now in the age where all God's people can declare his mighty works to the ends of the earth in all languages.

[10 : 52] Now is not the time, friends, to be lukewarm about God. Now is not the time to be apathetic about things of God and Jesus. We are in the last quarter.

And Peter goes on to continue to prophesy, that is to declare God's works by telling about Jesus. And so the Spirit of God empowers Peter to witness to Jesus.

And he says, you know who Jesus is. You've been around here the last 50 days. He did miracles in the power of God. You killed him.

You killed him. But what you didn't know was that that was God's plan. You did evil, but it was God's plan for good.

God's purposes are never stopped by evil people. And what Peter says uniquely as an apostle, what he gives to them is this, that God has raised Jesus from the dead, and for it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

[12 : 01] And this is, in effect, the Pentecost gospel, the death and resurrection of Jesus as the rescue plan of God for the nations of the world. And in the power of the Spirit, Peter goes on to give, in effect, a Bible study on two psalms.

He gives an exposition of two psalms, Psalm 16 and Psalm 110. And to sort of summarize those points quickly, what he says is, in Psalm 16, King David was made glad.

He had a great hope. And his hope was that one day, one of his descendants, a king, would be resurrected. One of his descendants would not see decay in the grave.

And Peter's able to say, it's a tale of two tombs, because everyone knows in Jerusalem, there's a tourist spot of King David's tomb, and his body is in there, decaying, rotted.

But also, there is Jesus' tomb, where 50 days before, they could go and see it. It's empty. And no one can find the body, for he's risen.

[13 : 12] And so, Peter concludes that, Jesus is the king, that David looked forward to. Jesus is the risen king, that God has raised from the dead.

Jesus is the Messiah, the one who will bring about, God's transformation of the world. That's Psalm 16. And similarly, he argues from Psalm 110, where there's a promise, that somebody will sit at God's right hand.

And Peter says, well, Jesus promised he would send the Spirit, and clearly the Spirit has now come. You've seen it. You've heard it.

Therefore, we must conclude that, Jesus must have ascended to God's right hand, and has received from the Father, and has poured out, what they see and hear.

Why has the Holy Spirit come? Because Jesus has ascended, and sent it. The exalted King Jesus, has poured out what he promised he would do.

[14 : 14] Therefore, for Peter, the point of Pentecost, is not the arrival of the Spirit. The point of Pentecost, is the kingship of Jesus, the exaltation of Jesus, the ascension and lordship, and the reign and the rule, of King Jesus.

And his first act, of pouring out the Spirit, is evidence of his lordship. Peter's not drunk on wine. He's actually drunk on Jesus.

He's intoxicated with Jesus. The Pentecost sermon, is all about the Lord Jesus. Later in the book of Acts, it's awesome, because they just keep preaching, the lordship of Jesus, and the salvation that Jesus brings.

And the authorities, the police, they beg Peter, stop speaking about this name. Jesus, stop speaking about it. And they say, we can't. We can't.

Jesus said, the Spirit would empower them, to be his witnesses, and that's exactly what is happening. An amazing event, and an amazing message, and an amazing significance.

[15 : 28] And you should have caught it already, the significance of Pentecost. It's there in verse 36, crystal clear. Peter says, in conclusion to his sermon, therefore let the entire house of Israel know, with certainty, that God has made him both lord and messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified.

That's the significance, that God has made Jesus lord and messiah, or lord and king. He sits at God's right hand.

Jesus is in effect, to use another football analogy, in the coach's box of the universe. And he's running the show. He's cleaning up house.

He's transforming the world. And he's inviting people, who have rejected God, to come into his lordship, and be forgiven. A new age has begun.

The last days. The days of telling the world about Jesus, and of an opportunity for people, to come under his rule. So the significance of Pentecost, is the announcement to the world, that Jesus reigns.

[16 : 42] And he wants, in the power of the spirit, that to be proclaimed, to the end of the earth, so that you, can come under his reign, and forgiveness, and rule, and so that your friends, and neighbours, to the ends of the earth.

What does Christianity mean to you? What does it mean to you? Does it mean, and it should mean, an ongoing relationship, a trusting, obedient relationship, with our risen lord, who is alive, who you can pray to, and who will answer your prayers, and who you can thank, whose word you can read, to know his will.

Christianity is not, a moral code, it's not a philosophy, it's not a political manifesto. Christianity is not, just a set of teachings, or a club, for people who want, to pretend to be nice, and kind of play dress ups.

Christianity is not just, for the social benefits, it's about a holy spirit, empowered relationship, with an ascended, merciful king. Christianity is meant, to be life changing.

How could that not, be life changing? Is that what, Christianity means to you? And lastly, we have the amazing response, because the significance was, Jesus is now Lord, and Christ, this one, you killed.

[18 : 15] And so, there's a sense in which, the audience here, at Pentecost, feels and knows, that they are in deep trouble, with Jesus, because they are the very crowd, that cried for his death, and got it, they killed him.

They are in deep, deep trouble, with Jesus, and now he's a risen king. And I think there's a sense, in which we should all feel, that sense of, I'm in deep, deep trouble with Jesus, because I live, to rule my own life, I live, to please myself, I live for pleasure, and I should be living, for the one, who is truly Lord.

I'm not Lord, I don't deserve that. We are all in deep trouble, with the Lord Jesus. And so Peter says, these beautiful words, repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus, and you'll receive, two things, the forgiveness of sins, and the gift, of the Holy Spirit.

This promise is for you, and for your children, and for all, who are far away, everyone whom, the Lord our God, calls to him. The Lord our God, I take it being, the Lord our God, Jesus.

So friends, Pentecost, is not just, a closed, one-off event. It's an ongoing reality, promised today, to all who will trust, in Jesus.

[19 : 36] Even today, if you call on the Lord Jesus, at the right hand of God, you'll, have your sins forgiven, and receive, the Holy Spirit. Peter says, this will supersede, the family structures, of the Old Testament.

This is for you, and for your children. This is for those, who are close, and also those far away. Not just for, Jews, but also, all the nations of the world. Even secular, Australians, living in Melbourne.

And the result is, 3,000 people, baptized, stand up, and publicly, declare their allegiance, to the Lord Jesus. This gathering, that begins, that is born that day, will be unstoppable, because the Lord of Heaven, is adding to their number, daily those who are being saved.

Friends, are you part, of the Jesus movement? Are you under his rule? Are you part, of his gathering? Are you added, to the number? The gathering, is really key here, and we have this beautiful picture, of, not just the response, of people in conversion, but, of the early, Christian community.

They are, in a sense, I think, the real first fruits, of the harvest, that Jesus, is bringing, around the world. They are just the beginning, of what will happen, in the book of Acts, and into our world.

[21 : 06] And this gathering, are characterized, by a number of things. They're characterized, by devotion, to the apostles teaching. And the apostles, in Acts, teach in the Old Testament.

So, they're devoted, in a sense, to the scriptures. They share their lives, and possessions. They care for those, in need. They meet daily.

And it seems, they have two kinds, of meetings. They seem to be meeting, publicly, in a public gathering, like this is a public gathering. But they're also meeting, in people's homes, and, and praising God, there in people's homes, with, and eating together, with glad hearts.

And they're reaching out. They're, they're telling the good news, of the Lord Jesus. And the Lord is adding, to their number, whoever he calls. And Luke also tells us, two things about, what, what the outsiders, are feeling.

He says, in verse 47, that, the gathering, of Christians, has the goodwill, of all the people. So, so those who are outside, have this sense of goodwill, that they see that, from a distance, something good is happening here.

[22 : 14] There's something good, in their lives. God is, at work somehow. And also, in verse 43, there's a negative thing, as well. All came upon everyone, because of the many signs, and wonders, that were being done, by the apostles.

That is, literally, when he says, all, literally, it's fear. So, this gathering, produced fear, in those around. They unnerved people. They, they, they gave people, a sense that, God is at work, and, I'm not sure I like it.

This threatens me. This threatens us. This is something new. And I think, there's a sense in which, that's what outsiders, to, the Christian faith, feel like.

They see that, something good is happening, but also, there's a sense of fear, that, that, the Christian has a relationship, with God, that I don't have. And that, if I come into that relationship, I'll have to change my life.

And, I have to live differently. I'm threatened by that. So, there's both goodwill, and fear. Friends, today, where are you? Are you an insider, or an outsider, to that gathering, of Jesus?

[23 : 22] Do you have a real knowledge, a personal, link, and connection, with the Lord Jesus? Do you want to have that? Well, you can claim that, today. And even for those of us, who have been Christians, for a long time, we need to ask the question, are we truly living, under the rule, of Jesus?

Or is that rule, only a part time, or a compartment, of our lives? Is it only a Sunday thing? If Jesus is Lord, of heaven and earth, then we are serving him, when we're working, Monday to Friday, and so how does that, how does Jesus Lordship, transform the way we work, and serve, Monday to Friday?

Are we controlled, by temptations? Are we controlled, by habits, that are sorted, or addictions, that are unhealthy? Shouldn't the Lord Jesus, be the one controlling us?

There should be no other, little lords, in our life. Do we sometimes, willingly, knowingly, disobey him? We know what's right, and we know he is Lord, and reigning, and watching, and yet we blatantly, disobey him.

Well that's wrong friends. Are our thoughts, as well as our actions, loyal to him? It's very easy, to have, a veneer of right action, to the Lord Jesus, but he knows our thoughts, he wants our thoughts, to be, submissive, and loyal to him.

[24 : 49] Do we find it hard, to pray to Jesus, for say more than two minutes? Do we find it hard, to sing to Jesus, for more than five minutes?

I have the impression, from the book of Acts, that the gathering, was doing that for hours, and hours on end, and loving it. Friends, we've got a long way to go, we have a long way to go, I think as a church, and as individual Christians, to relish, and to grow, in the service, and the love of, being a follower of Jesus, being under his rule.

One thing is clear, from the day of Pentecost, that we all have the gift, of the Holy Spirit. If you trust, and follow Jesus, you have the Spirit. God dwells in us, and we are in the fourth quarter, of God's plans for the world.

The Lord Jesus himself, wants to use us, as his instruments, as he continues to reign, and spread that good news, to the ends of the earth.

Under King Jesus, see the world can be united one day. Under King Jesus, the world can, in effect, be at peace, can have the harmony, that it longs for.

[26 : 08] That harmony, cannot be found from within us, but we must look to him, and serve him. This is God's plan, for the world, through the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus.

Friends, may Holy Trinity, become a place, where people from all around the world, and we are from all around the world, where we can gather, under the common bond, of the Lord Jesus.

May Holy Trinity, be a place, where people can hear, the good news, for the first time, and come under his rule, and have their sins forgiven, and receive the Spirit. May Holy Trinity, be a place, where the Holy Spirit, is at work, producing passionate, intoxicated, followers, of the Lord Jesus.

May we become, his means, for the transformation, of our city, and to the ends of the earth, the transformation, of our world. Why don't we bow our heads, and he's reigning and ruling, let's address him now, and bring our hearts, his eyes to him.

Risen, exalted Lord Jesus, we worship you, and we thank you for, the giving of your spirit. We pray Father, that we would, live under your Lordship, all of our days, and all of our, all the hours of the day.

[27 : 33] Lord Jesus, please forgive our sins, and please help us, to live as forgiven, followers of you. We praise you Lord Jesus, that you are not a, dictator, but you are a, merciful ascended king.

We praise you Lord Jesus, that you have a plan, for the world, and that the time is short, and that great things, are happening, even in this place. And so Lord Jesus, help us to be part of them, and help us to live for you, and for the glory, of your Father.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.