

Acts 2:34-40

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Date: 13 March 2016

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[0 : 00] We're coming to the end of a mini-series within the book of Acts, which is Peter's sermon at Pentecost in Acts 2. And I guess the title of that series would be Lifting Up Jesus the Messiah.

And I get that from a key verse in the text where it says in verse 22, Men of Israel, hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God.

And so I've been kind of repeating this, but the word attested means to lift up, to put on display, or to put on exhibition for one to look at and see and observe.

It also means to prove something or to proclaim something. And all these are true about Jesus. Peter is preaching this sermon.

He's like calling people to respond to the Scripture. He uses several different Old Testament passages to prove what he's saying. So just to remember that not even the apostles spoke on their own accord.

[1 : 11] They gave weight to what men had said before them. And he's putting Jesus on display. Like he's saying, God put Christ on display. So look to him and be convinced that he is the Messiah.

And he's doing that for everyone here today too. It's not just at this time. Like if you're struggling with where you are with God and who is Jesus, like God is not trying to hide that from you.

He's putting Jesus on display. And he's proving that Jesus was the true living Messiah. Last week we talked about how Jesus' identity, his life, his death, and his resurrection gave weight to the reality that he was the true Messiah.

And so he spoke of how Christ was... He came and he lived and he died and he resurrected according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God.

The predetermined plan of God. Namely that Christ coming to the earth was not plan B because man messed up. It was plan A to display the glory of his grace and salvation.

[2 : 21] And if you also remember the key term last week was that God used the greatest act of evil in crucifying Christ to destroy evil and to bring down the collapse of evil itself.

So that's kind of where we're at. He explains Pentecost. He kind of at the beginning of this starting in verse 14. He addresses the crowd and kind of says like the coming of the Holy Spirit, you should not be surprised at.

But this was foretold of by the prophet Joel. And so he explains the coming of the Spirit. And then he begins embarking on this exposition of who Jesus is and how he was the true living Messiah.

So a couple other points today. I am going to revisit the last point that we looked at last week just because I think it's definitely just sort of connected.

So number one, if you're taking notes, and all these are how did God put Jesus on display for us to see and for this crowd to see, is the resurrection of the Messiah.

[3 : 31] Okay? And look at verse 30. It says, So just revisiting this from last week.

Our main text is going to be 34 through 40. So I'll just revisit this for a second. But he's saying that David, you know, the king, shepherd boy, David, he prophesied about the resurrection of the Messiah.

And he kind of explains like David can't be talking about himself in Psalm 16 because he did die. He did see corruption. And his grave is with us today.

So go look at it. He's not talking about himself. He's prophesying about the Messiah to come. Then he says, God raised this man up. God raised Christ up from the dead.

Then he says, We are witnesses of these things. We've seen him. We've touched him. We've heard him. We've eaten food with him. And even later on in one of Peter's letters, in 2 Peter 1, verse 16, he says, We did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

[5 : 12] Like we saw this. We all saw this. So the resurrection of Christ, you do need to see through just faith to be a believer.

But you should know also that for 2,000 years, like this historical event has withstood the scrutiny of historians, scholars, archaeologists, archaeologists, for nearly 2,000 years.

Like it's withstood that scrutiny. You can literally prove in a courtroom that Jesus did rise from the dead. Biblical as well as extra-biblical evidence gives plenty of weight to this.

It's overwhelmingly revealing that Jesus of Nazareth was a real man who walked the earth and that he rose from the dead. Come and talk to me later. We'll get more in depth about that.

But many have sought to disprove the historicity of the identity of Jesus as well as the resurrection. And in the process of them trying to destroy that, they have become followers of Christ because they were just convinced by looking at all the stuff there that this actually happened, that Jesus rose from the dead.

[6 : 22] And so, what are some implications, I guess, of the resurrection? So, just keep this in mind.

If Jesus has simply been crucified, laid in the tomb, and is still there today, then everything that we believe is worthless. Everything that we do and say is worthless.

It has no point. Why? Because, again, there's nothing good about a dead Messiah. Yeah, he's no different than any other false prophet that's gone and started other religions.

But, if Jesus is alive, it's a big deal. It means like he is on the throne right now, that he is going to come back, and that we all are going to have to answer to him one day for how we've lived.

Neither you will belong to him or not belong to him. So, three days after he was crucified, God raised him from the dead. He came out of the tomb victorious.

[7 : 22] So, this is God's greatest validation of who Jesus said he was. Right? The greatest proof is the resurrection of the son of David. Right? Turn, hold your hand in Acts chapter 2, but there's just two other places for you to look.

But look at 1 Corinthians chapter 15 today. This is the hallmark chapter on the resurrection.

That Paul talks about the resurrection, expounds on the resurrection. 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 3. This is what Paul says.

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures. There it is, according to the old Scriptures.

That he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. And then he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

[8 : 40] Then he appeared to James, and then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. So he's like, we've seen him.

Like, he's appeared to all these people, even at one time. Well, they were just hallucinating. Well, no two people had the same hallucination. They all saw him. And they touched him.

So go on down to verse 6. And he's kind of getting to the implication here, but verse 6. For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised.

And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished.

If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we above all are the most... Excuse me, I can't talk. We are of all people most to be pitied.

[9 : 40] But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. So he says, like, you know what? If Christ has not risen, everything we're saying is worthless. It's meaningless. And then he says, but at the very end there, but in fact, I'm not just saying this, but in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead.

Because we've seen him. We've touched him. And it was promised in the Scriptures that this would happen. So this is how big it is. Everything we believe hangs on this. And he even says, if Christ is not risen, we apostles are above all the most to be pitied.

We are the most to be pitied. And I want you to, you who know Christ and belong to Christ, like, chew on this for a second. If you were to find out today that your faith in Christ has been in vain, that Christ has not risen from the dead, what would you say?

Would you be able to say, well, it's still been a good life anyway. It's been a lot of peace. It's been a lot of purpose and a positive life. Or would you say, wow, like, I'm to be pitied because I have

literally thrown my life, everything I have, into the cause of Christ.

I hope you can say that with Paul. Like, pity me if this isn't true. But guess what? It is true. That's why he says that. But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. So this is the greatest validation of the Son of God being resurrected.

[11:09] Some people may say, this is the most idiotic thing in the world to say, but you'll hear it. We talked about this when I was in school and some of my history classes.

But one of my professors said, you can't test historical events with the scientific method. People will say, I'll believe this if you just prove it scientifically.

But the idiocy of that is like you don't do history that way because historical events are not observable, measurable, or repeatable. You can't go back and look at a historical event.

Rather than that, we are to use the evidentiary method. We look at the evidence, facts, documents, accounts, archaeology, whatever, that lends weight to the reality that something actually happened. So, the resurrection of Jesus, a true historical event. But even bigger, it means that he is here with us now, that he always will be with us, and that he's coming back one day, and that we have not believed in vain.

[12:15] So, that's number one, the resurrection of the Messiah. And getting into the next part of this in Peter's sermon, kind of where we find ourselves today, is in verse 33.

Look at verse 33. I'll just go ahead and read this whole little section, and then we'll unpack. But it says, I broke one of the fundamental rules of preaching, which is read the whole text and then expound on it.

But, let's look at, start in verse 33. It says, It says, That's just so awesome.

And the same God is here with us today who worked this. So, point number one, the resurrection of the Messiah. Point number two is the ascension and exaltation of the Messiah.

[14:28] It's just right in our text, in verse 33, that he was exalted, and he ascended to the Father. So, he was risen from the dead. He walked among his disciples, and showed himself to many other witnesses.

And then, later on, he was taken back. He descended back into heaven, or ascended back into heaven, to be with the Father. And then it says right here that he was seated at the, exalted in the place of honor, right?

The place of honor and authority by the Father. Then he kind of brings it back full circle, and says, This is what you're seeing today, again, like the Holy Spirit coming on the people.

You're seeing this come to pass, this day. And he draws attention again to the Scriptures, to prove that this is the case. And this is the second place I want you to turn, but again, hold your hand in Acts.

This is a monumental text, Psalm 110. It's not very long, so we're going to unpack it. But Psalm 110 is another psalm of David.

[15:41] It's a messianic psalm about the Messiah. And astoundingly, like it's given so little attention in the church. Most believers have heard of the 23rd Psalm.

They've heard of, you know, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. But this particular psalm, Psalm 110, is quoted and referred to 27 times in the New Testament, which means that it was a big deal to the early church and the apostles.

Psalm 110, let's read it together. It says, The Lord says to my Lord, Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.

The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter. Rule in the midst of your enemies. Your people will offer themselves freely on the day of your power and holy garments.

From the womb of the morning, the dew of your youth will be yours. The Lord has sworn and will not change his mind. You are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

[16:51] The Lord is at your right hand. He will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses.

He will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. He will drink from the brook by the way. Therefore, he will lift up his head. And this psalm, again, is speaking, again, of the coming Messiah, the true Messiah. David is not referring to himself. He wasn't exalted to God's right hand. And this was a question that scholars of this time, Pharisees, scribes, they all asked this question.

Because they could look at the language and just say, Who is David talking about? Because it definitely is not him. But here is the question they were asking. How could one who is descended of David, who is a son of David, also be the Lord of David?

How could that be? Since David preceded Jesus by a thousand years, how could that be? So Peter explains it here. The Lord says to my Lord, and he uses like the sacred name of God here.

[18:04] It really says, Yahweh said to my Adonai, which is also like, God himself said to my sovereign, sit at my right hand.

So in the context, this is clearly a conversation going on within the Godhead, namely between God himself, the Father, and the one whom he was going to appoint to be David's Lord.

Yahweh said to David's Adonai, right, sit at my right hand, which the right hand is a place of power, and exaltation, and authority.

But it also, interesting enough, is a place of subordination. It's not on the top, it's a place of subordination. And as we know, even within the Godhead, the Son is perfectly, and happily submitted to the Father, to do the Father's will.

And that's what it says, like, God granted Christ that seat of cosmic authority at his right hand. And he, it says in Hebrews 1, after making purification for sin, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high.

[19:15] So then he goes on, just look at the psalm. It says, until I make your enemies your footstool. So this is an ancient figure of speech, denoting how a hostile, resistant, rebellious enemy is finally conquered and brought low, and is forced to submit to his conqueror.

That's what this is. And this is a picture of our Lord, again, sends forth from Zion, his mighty scepter, rule in the midst of his enemies.

So Christ will come back one day, is what this is saying. Like, one day, this Son of God, who's seated at God's right hand, He will one day return, and not as a baby, meek and mild in a manger, but as a conquering king that we just sang about a minute ago, who will crush all who have resisted Him, and who have rejected His terms of peace.

He died for them, but yet they reject Him. So He comes back to conquer. So, this is a reality.

This is what Peter is expounding on. He will make His enemies His footstool. So, when He returns, it goes on, it says, He will shatter kings on the day of His wrath, execute judgment on the nations.

[20:36] So those who hate Christ, again, will utterly be destroyed. All His enemies, visible, invisible. This is an unconquerable king. Yet, it goes on to say this, many of us on the earth who love Christ, and who belong to Christ, who have given our lives to Him, who are washed in His blood, it says this, His people will offer themselves freely on the day of His power.

Like, they'll want to give themselves to this king. So, that's a question to ask yourself this morning. It's, do you, like, eagerly await the return of Christ?

Do you long for it? Why did you come this morning? Because you were forced to, or because you wanted to? Did you come willing and freely, like this explains the people of God to be?

Offer ourselves freely on the day of His power. So we, His church, will rejoice at this time, with joy inexpressible. And then you see a really cool image at the end of the psalm.

It says, He will drink from the brook by the way, and therefore, He will lift up His head. Also, another ancient image of a conqueror returning from a conquest, and having exhausted himself in the process of that conquest, he stops and takes a drink from a cool stream of water to refresh himself after the conquest.

[22:08] It's a picture of having satisfaction of a mission accomplished, but still having a final goal to come. So, God's purpose in Christ will prevail. This was what Peter is saying to these people.

Like, He is this, He is the Lord that David is referring to, and He will come and make His enemies His footstool. In your bulletin, if you have one, a great commentator on the psalms was the reformer, John Calvin.

And this is what he said about Psalm 110 that we just read. He says, From this, let us learn that however numerous those enemies may be who conspire against the Son of God and attempt the subversion of His kingdom, all will be unavailing.

For they shall never prevail against God's immutable purpose, but on the contrary, they shall, by His greatness of His power, be laid prostrate at Christ's feet.

Footstool. However much the world may rage against Christ, they will never be able to hurl Him from the right hand of the Father. Moreover, as He does not reign on His own account, but for our

salvation, we may rest assured that we will be protected and preserved from all ills under the guardianship of this invincible King.

[23 : 40] Let that language just encourage you that this is who we worship, the King of kings and Lord of lords, the true and living Messiah who reigns on our behalf and for our good and for His glory.

So then Peter closes this little section right here. Let all the house of Israel know that God has made Him both Lord and Christ and you crucified Him. And so, know for certain, this means like without a shadow of a doubt, without any doubt at all, that Christ's life, death, and resurrection, and ascension has proven Him as the true Messiah.

Then He kind of adds in and you crucified Him. So, this is a guilty, guilty crowd that He's speaking to. Christ's blood is still on their hands, literally.

And, this is the response. This is the third thing. So, we have the resurrection of the Messiah, the ascension or an exaltation of the Messiah, and number three, the response to the true Messiah.

Verse 37. Verse 37. It says, 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?

[25 : 00] That was their response. They were cut to the heart. It means, the word cut means to stab, to pierce something, to abruptly get hit.

Unexpected, startling. That's like what this implies. And the word actually is only used at this place only in the New Testament. So, it makes me think that He's trying to get something across. They were cut, pierced, and stabbed in the heart.

They were shocked. Like they realized that this Messiah that had been promised for thousands of years in the Scriptures that they crucified Him.

They rejected Him. The very Messiah that was sent to save them rejected the prophets and then rejected Christ. So, imagine that.

Being that indicted in that way. Like you crucified Him. This one that I've been talking about that the Scriptures foretold, you crucified Him. So they are terrified.

[25 : 54] This isn't impersonal at all. So, they probably could even be asking this question. If this Messiah is alive, what is He going to do to us that we rejected Him?

They could be asking that so they're panicking. Like, what could they do? And that's what they said to the apostles. What shall we do? This is reminiscent of the Philippian jailer later on in Acts 16 where He says, brothers or sirs, what must I do to be saved?

So, listen, like everyone in this room has to answer that question at some point in your life. Like, what must I do? What shall I do to this reality of a living Messiah who shed His blood for me?

So, let's get into the application a little bit here. Look at verses 38 through 40. It says, Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Okay, so He says, okay, repent. This word literally just means to like, to turn away from something, to change the way that you think about something.

[27 : 13] It's not just, it's not just an action. So, just imagine like a sin that you struggle with a lot in your life. God's not just saying, stop doing that. He's saying, change how you feel about it.

Change how you think about it. Hate it. Despise it. And love me instead. So, it's a turning away from sin and turning to Christ and by His grace resorting not to go back to it again.

So, it's imperative. Repent. That's what He says. Then He says, be baptized. So, don't take this as like, well, you have to be dunked in water to be saved.

That's not what this is saying for a lot of reasons. But, one is, it goes against what we know in the whole of Scripture that one is not saved and made right with God through water baptism.

That would make it another ritualistic work that you had to do to be saved. And then even on the book of Acts later, it says that many people have been baptized but they really weren't genuinely saved by water, you know, in water.

[28 : 16] So, not saying that, but what He is saying that is this public baptism would not allow for them to have any secret disciples. Like, you couldn't just believe in the corner of your room.

He was saying, come out and show yourselves. Like, make this firm break with the old order, with the old Judaism of the day and come forward and be baptized proving that your repentance is true.

So, not necessarily like another work to be saved, but just come out and make a break. Don't hide. So then He goes on, He says, this promise is for you and your children.

So this was, this was a promise given to them to the nation of Israel. And He was saying that, come on, like, embrace this. It's here. It's been promised to you. Come and receive it.

It was for you and for your children and all that God calls to Himself. So, the result, 3,000 people are born again and baptized that day.

[29 : 17] So, just a couple things here in closing. So, if you're without Christ today, if you don't know where you stand, if you have doubts, or if you clearly know that you don't belong to Him, listen, like, Christ is a good, loving, and compassionate King.

And though you've been His enemy, He will treat with you kindly. He will come to you and He will heal you and restore you back to God and give you the life that you were originally created for, which was to know God and to walk with Him and to honor Him in all that you do.

Jesus said, I'm the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who is thirsty shall never thirst again. So, repent of your sin and cling to Christ.

And then He said, to save yourself from this crooked generation. There's a lot of junk in our world pulling you away, everything pulling you away from the reality of the risen Son of God.

So, go to Christ and have salvation and everlasting joy in Christ. But if you reject Him, know that this invincible King will be your enemy if you continue to revolt against Him.

[30 : 38] So, come and be His friend on His peace terms, His terms, not yours. You don't have a special deal with God. You don't. You treat people the same way.

Come through Him and Him alone or be separated for God in eternity. So, but if Christ is yours today, rejoice because it says that your sins are forgiven.

That's what it says right here. That all the stuff that you have done against God, that you have rebelled against Him, it is forgiven. You're not your old self anymore.

Though you loathe your sin and you hate it, your sins are wiped away and they've been put away as far as the East is from the West. So, rejoice in that. Rejoice that you possess all things in Christ.

As the old saying goes, who knows who coined it, but it's true. Christ or everything minus Christ. Right? Remember this?

[31 : 40] Everything minus Christ equals nothing. But Christ minus everything equals everything. You can have Christ, the most treasured possession, and literally lose all you have and still have everything in Christ.

That's how great He is. So, rejoice that because He lives, you will live. This world is tough. Like, it's rough.

You're going to suffer, like given. You're going to suffer, you're going to have pain, and you will die. It's just the reality. And it's a scary reality, especially if you don't know who you belong to and where you're going.

But if you belong to Christ, because He has risen, you will also rise and have life with Him. He says, hear His words to you, I am the resurrection and the life.

Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live. And everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?

[32 : 42] So, go to Christ, cling to Christ, and be transformed by Him. Look to this King. He's been put on display by God Himself. So, look to Him and be saved by Him.

Let's pray together. Amen. Let's pray.