

AN OVERWHELMING RESPONSE (vv. 37-41)

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

³⁸ Peter replied, “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. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

1. Luke tells us, those who heard Peter’s message “were cut to the heart.” What do you think that means? Why is it important?
2. Jesus’ message to those who heard him was “The Kingdom of God has come, repent and believe the good news (Mark 1:15).” The foundational response to the gospel throughout Scripture is to “repent and believe.” Sometimes we see the command to “repent” as a stand alone response to the gospel, and at other times we see word “believe” as a stand along response to the gospel. The one always implies the other.

Repentance is a change of heart that leads to a change of lifestyle and direction.

Belief is far more than mere assent to a few theological propositions. James forcefully calls out our tendency toward superficial faith, when he challenges us, “Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder... As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead (James 2:18-19, 26).”

- a. Why are both “faith and repentance” critical in our response to the gospel?
 - b. How do the two complete and complement one another?
3. Briefly describe how the Holy Spirit works in the life of believer?
 4. Why is the gift of the Spirit so incredibly precious?
 5. What if anything, does baptism add to genuine expressions of “faith and repentance?”

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MESSIAH AND LORD | ACTS 2:14-41

God announces the birth of his Son in dramatic fashion to a handful of shepherds on a lonely hillside outside the tiny village of Bethlehem. God announces the birth of the church in dramatic fashion to the widest audience possible in the heart of Jerusalem.

Luke goes out of his way to tell us, those who experienced this extraordinary event were “from every nation under heaven.”

That initial pouring out of the Holy Spirit came in dramatic fashion.

“Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:2-4).”

Wind is often used to portray the work of the Holy Spirit in some of the most powerful stories in the Bible. It is appropriate that the sound they heard was not the sound of a gentle breeze, lightly pushing back the curtains, but of a powerful and raging storm. Throughout Scripture fire represents the powerful, cleansing, holy presence of God. In this particular instance he was not simply present with his people as a whole, but with every individual that makes up the people of God. While the nations were formed through the confusion of languages (Genesis 11) they are being reunited in Christ through a miracle of languages.

Peter stands up and vividly describes everything the people are seeing and experiencing. More than three thousand people responded to the message and were baptized. And the church was born.

A POWERFUL MESSAGE (vv. 14-36)

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: “Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning!

A. An Appeal to the Prophets (vv. 16-21)

¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ “ ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. ¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke.

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. ²¹ And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

1. What is the significance of the pouring out of God’s Spirit in the last days?
2. Describe the breadth and scope of the people on which God would pour out his Spirit? Why is this particularly significant?
3. How was this prophecy being visibly fulfilled in the events of Pentecost?

B. An Appeal to Jesus’ Life, Death and Resurrection (vv. 22-24)

²² “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

1. Luke places a strong emphasis on both God’s sovereignty (that these events were unfolding according to “God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge”) and human responsibility (“you put him to death by nailing him to a cross”)
 - a. Why are each of these concepts important?
 - b. Why is it often difficult to keep the two in balance?
3. What did Jesus accomplish on our behalf in his death?
4. Why was it “impossible for death to keep its hold on him?”
5. What did Jesus accomplish on our behalf in his resurrection?

C. An Appeal to David and the Psalms (vv. 27-25)

²⁵ David said about him: “ ‘I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. ²⁶ Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, ²⁷ because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. ²⁸ You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.’ ”

²⁹ “Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. ³⁰ But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. ³¹ Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay.

³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. ³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. ³⁴ For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, “ ‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand ³⁵ until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.” ’ ”

Psalm 16 was fulfilled in a partial and limited way in the life of David. He was not overtaken by his enemies and as a result did not suffer a premature death. Though his body was buried and experienced decay it would one day be renewed at the end of the age. The promises are fulfilled in a far greater way in Jesus. While Jesus was overcome by his enemies and experienced a premature death, God raised him from the dead and his body never experienced decay. This is one of the many ways that Jesus is the greater David—a king after God’s own heart.

While David did subdue Israel’s enemies, Psalm 10 points to a Greater Son of David that would vanquish all of God’s enemies once and for all. Jesus defeated God’s enemy on the cross and has been exalted to God’s right hand until all God’s enemies are finally and forever vanquished.

What are some other ways Jesus is the ideal king that David merely foreshadowed in a limited way?

D. The Final and Definitive Verdict (v. 36)

³⁶ “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

What is significant about the titles and the position God has assigned to Jesus?