

Introduction—Jump right in. What is being revealed?

The miracle revealed a living God. 1-12

I.

Context—The baptism of the Holy Spirit has come. Peter preached his first sermon, interpreting the baptism, speaking in tongues. He told the people that they were responsible for Jesus' death, even though it was part of God's plan, that Jesus had risen from the dead, and that the resurrection had been prophesied. Jesus was Lord, and He was alive. The people responded, knowing that they were in trouble. This audience was devout Jews and was receptive. They said, "What do we do?" Jesus responded that they were to repent and be baptized. He spoke a long time to them, and about three thousand were saved.

This created a community of people who worshipped together, ate together, and learned together. They sold what they had to meet the needs of those Christians who had nothing. Their testimony was such that they had favor with the people, and God kept adding to them who would be saved. The people around them are all on board.

They went to the temple at 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon, to pray. The temple was still very much central to worship for the Jewish Christians when a man who was lame from birth was at the beautiful gate. We aren't quite sure which one that was. There are a few good guesses, but nothing directly linking it to what we know. But he was lame from birth. What would his legs look like? He is carried out there. He needs to beg to stay alive. He asks for alms from them. Alms are not an amount of money. It is any money that is given charitably to those who are in need. He needs this money to survive.

Peter tells him to look at them. We don't have money, but we have something else. In the name of Jesus, rise up and walk. He commands him to walk based on the authority given to Him by Jesus, who is God, who is this crippled man's creator. By the authority of your creator, I tell you to rise up and walk. Peter reaches out and pulls him to his feet. The man responds, pushing back against the ground, not expecting his feet to do anything, but then suddenly they can. His feet and ankles are suddenly strong. Muscles and nerves have suddenly re-woven themselves, and he is able to stand up. He pushes himself up suddenly, overcompensating. He was walking and jumping, some of that intentional, probably some of that just learning to use it all over again. He is praising God.

People see what is going on. They know who he is. He has been there for years, if not decades, and he is walking on strong, developed legs. They are filled with wonder and amazement. Look at what has happened. This is beautiful. It is amazing. To witness this miracle must have been incredible, to see something so obviously supernatural, and gracious and kind. It could have only come from the hand of God. Peter knows this. He is going to use this miracle as a means of explaining their lives to them. (Definition of worldview)

The crucified Savior revealed rebellious hearts. 13-17. In verse 12, Peter rhetorically asks them two questions. Why are they amazed at this type of miracle? This seems like a silly question at first. Why wouldn't we be amazed? This question is important, and we will address it later. But then he asks, Why do you think that I have the power to do this? Why do you think that it was my power or my personal holiness that made this happen? There was this mistaken belief that somehow personal holiness

or teaching gave someone supernatural abilities in and of themselves. Peter is saying both of these thoughts are irrational. They are silly.

He identifies who God is by showing that this is the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all of the other fathers of the Jews. This is the God of the covenant. This is the God of the Law. He glorified Jesus. By that, he meant that God raised Him from the dead, giving Him authority over all creation. Remember Matthew 28? All power has been given to me in heaven and in earth. We don't understand how this works, but the Father gave Jesus authority He did not previously have because He lived as a servant and submitted Himself to the Cross. Paul really digs into this in Philippians 2. Peter has to focus on this because the fact that Jesus died was an obstacle for a lot of the Jews. Their Messiah surely could not be someone who was actually crucified. It was that submission that actually allowed Jesus to take on the full role of the Messiah.

The audience was among those who had Him killed. They delivered Jesus over. They denied Him in the presence of Pilate and asked for a killer instead. And they killed the author of life, the Creator, whom the Father raised from the dead.

We saw this. We bear witness to your crime. Under the authority and faith in this resurrected God man, this man was made strong because of his faith in the authority of Jesus to heal him.

The people who killed Jesus did not fully know what they were doing, nor did their rulers, but God used their sin to fulfill the plan He had laid out in eternity past. They are still responsible, though. As we've discussed before, it is not just individual responsibility, but also the responsibility of the community. There is a tension between God's sovereignty and our responsibility that we cannot resolve. God used their sin to

bring salvation. He had always planned for it. Even though they had acted in ignorance, it still revealed their hearts against God. Jesus points out again and again that if the Jews and their leaders had truly been pursuing the God of the Covenant and the Law, they would have accepted Him. So even though their actions were in some ignorance, it still revealed rebellious hearts against a loving and powerful God. Remember that they had evidence of miracles and powerful teaching, and they still acted against Him. Their actions revealed a sinful heart. That sinful heart condemned them.

All things being equal, it is always rebellion against God.

Prophecy promised a returning King. (vs. 19-26) He had revealed their sinful heart to them. The miracle showed that Jesus, whom they thought they had destroyed, was still alive and working miracles through others. You tried to kill Him. It didn't take. He is alive, so repent.

Repentance is agreeing with God about sin, and in this context, it is repenting of the heart that wanted to crucify Christ. Turn from their wickedness, which led to them crucifying Christ, and turn to Christ as the Messiah, as their Savior. Repentance meant not just saying "I'm sorry I killed the Messiah." It is acknowledging the Messiah's authority over them. He is the Messiah, and they were to submit to Him.

They would receive forgiveness. Their sin would be blotted out, which included their crucifixion of Christ,

Their sins were forgiven so that times of refreshing would come from the presence of the Lord. The miracle is a quick snapshot of what that relief is going to look like. The man is physically relieved of his crippled condition. But we know that is temporary. Age,

weakness, and death will appear again. The refreshing is the promise of being indwelt by the Spirit right now and then growing in Christ, and then entering into His Kingdom.

Peter speaks of Christ's return. Why did Peter have to heal the crippled man? Why isn't Jesus doing it since He has risen from the dead? He is currently in heaven until the time comes for the restoration of all reality.

This was promised by all of the prophets. It is all over the Old Testament. Peter narrows in on a few of them. He quotes from Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18-19, that there is a prophet coming whose revelation is going to change everything. To ignore what that prophet says means that those who are not listening are going to be destroyed.

The other prophets proclaimed this. You have come from this tradition and these teachings. You should know this. This is all about you. And then he ties in the Abrahamic covenant, quoting from Genesis, "All of the families of the earth will be blessed. God blessed the Jews by sending Jesus to them first."

Our testimony reveals God's power. Miracles confirmed a new revelation. Our Christ-honoring response to our circumstances confirms God's power. When we respond to suffering or hardship with joy and peace, many times people get it wrong, and we need to correct them. This is from God.

Relatively, there are good people and bad people. But in God's eyes, all that are not for Christ is against God. There are no exceptions. That has to be pointed out. That is part of the Gospel message. God is telling others through us where they are in relation to Him.

Christ's return—He is coming back to judge, bless, and restore.