

08a ACTS

Study of the Word of God this evening by pausing for a moment to clear our minds, prepare our hearts, and remember that it is only through the power of God's Holy Spirit that our Bible study does us any good. Not only does he help us to understand what we see in the Bible, but he will bring it to our minds at the time that we need it. One of the things that we have often observed, both in the pages of Scripture and in our own experience, is that once we cover something in the Word of God, we very soon after seem to have the practical test.

We get the chance to put it into practice. This is one of the ways you know that the Heavenly Father is paying attention to us, is that he keeps track of where we are and what we're studying, and then he sends the little practical exams our way. So we don't want to fail those.

We want to be sure that God's Spirit is with us and is activating and making the Word of God useful and powerful in our lives. Which, by the way, is a point to remember in the other times of the week. We're careful to stop and to pray and to seek the ministry of the Spirit before we study, but it is equally and perhaps even more useful to stop and pray and seek the ministry of the Spirit as we engage in tasks before we begin a new project, as we go into a conversation or into a room full of people, as we wind up talking with someone and maybe something of spiritual import comes up, to stop and just acknowledge in our own soul the importance of the work of the Spirit.

That is the power of God. We are going to be no different than any of the 400-odd denominations in the United States if we don't use what we know, and we know that the power of God is only effective in our lives when we are enabled by the Spirit and are prioritizing His work. We're going to see an interesting Greek term tonight, at least I hope we are.

If all goes well, we will. Of course, we have to cover about eight chapters in Acts to get there, so without further ado, let's pause for a moment and pray, and then we'll begin. Father, we know that we accomplish nothing meaningful without the presence and the power of Your Spirit and the wisdom and knowledge that comes from Your Word.

We thank You for the Lord Jesus Christ, who, through His death and through His faithfulness to You and His love for us, has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints and the light. We pray that our study tonight will equip us, will conform us to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ, that we may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. We pray it in Jesus' name.

Amen. Well, we continue tonight our fascinating study, I think it's fascinating, in the book of Acts. We're in chapter 2. We're closing in on the last part of that chapter.

We've dwelt here a little bit. We did a special last week and did four lessons in a row looking at the phenomenon of tongues. We knocked tongues out, I think.

We also took a look at...I started to say a look at the role of women in the church, but we took a look at the role of women in the church. There is a matter of how women look in church, but we're not there yet. But we saw the biblical idea of what women are to do in church and what it means when it talks about them asking their husbands at home and keeping silent and so on.

And just by way of summary, you'll remember that we observed that this is in the context of prophesying. There is a role for women prophesying, if you go back to 1 Corinthians chapter 11. But it is to be done under the auspices of...is everything okay over there? Okay, just checking.

Under the auspices of a husband or father or some other authority, things are to be done decently in good order and for better or for worse through no qualitative difference, but God just assigned. The tribe of Levi...I always think about this when I think about men and women in the church, when I think about officers enlisted in the military. God arbitrarily...not arbitrarily, but He selected one tribe that was no better, no worse than the other tribes of Israel to be the priests.

Levites were not smarter, they weren't prettier, they weren't better muscled up or something for handling the sacrifices. God just said, you Levites are going to do the sacrifices. You cannot say, well, oh, he's a Levite.

He's intrinsically more valuable than another Israelite. He's just been assigned a particular role. In the same way, men have been assigned this role of being the head of a house, being the head of the woman in the sense of being assigned responsibility for spiritual leadership.

It's a responsibility. It's not something to gloat about. It isn't something to stick your nose in the air and lord it over people about.

It's just a responsibility. Every marriage, people divide up responsibilities. They don't always do it the same way.

Somebody has to do the bills. Somebody has to take out the trash or do the dishes or keep the cars maintained or mow the grass or whatever. People just say, well, you do this and I'll do that.

You do this and I'll do that. We'll do these things together. It's a division of responsibility.

It doesn't mean that one is intrinsically, qualitatively superior. Somebody may be better at something than someone else. I think I'm amazingly good at mowing the lawn, but it doesn't mean that Patty can't do it just as well as I can.

I choose that for myself. I maintain it as my sole domain for better or for worse. The way the lawn looks is my deal.

In the same way, when God assigns functions in the church, when he assigns roles in marriage, in the family, in the nation, he assigns them not based on our quality or our superiority. He assigns it based on his own good pleasure. It has symbolic value.

It has teaching value, but it says nothing about the individual who fulfills that role. So we covered that last time. Now we are at the section in chapter two where Peter is delivering the first of three great speeches that he gives in these early chapters of Acts.

They are substantially the same. They make the same point, but each is to a different audience. This is the first speech.

It's on the day of Pentecost. It is delivered to the assembled crowd who is attracted by this speaking in foreign languages by uneducated men. It draws a huge crowd, and so Peter stands up with the eleven.

He raises his voice and said to them, now, you know, I have to, this is an aside, but I want to say it at least once. You know how we have big churches, and there's a platform, and there's a rostrum, there's a pulpit, and usually they have chairs on each side, and it's sort of considered to be an honor and a privilege to be able to sit up in the chairs. You're up there in view, and you're somebody special because you're sitting up in the chairs, and what I find interesting is that the men up on the platform, if the preacher, if the speaker is going to have to stand, all the other people ought to stand also.

Look at this verse 14. Peter stood up with the eleven, so the other ten are standing behind him as he delivers this long, windy speech. They're standing.

They don't speak. They're just standing. Well, they stand for the whole speech, so I think from now on, when people get the honor of being up on the platform, they should stand.

They should stand for the whole service, and then we'll see if they like it as well or not. Standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, men of Judea, by the way, the reason I bring that up is there's an awful lot of false glory that goes on in a lot of highly structured churches. We're fortunate we don't even face that issue because we don't have a platform, so we don't have to worry about anyone feeling honored or dishonored by being invited to sit or not to sit or to stand or anything else.

These are not drunk as you suppose, and he goes on and gives this speech. He quotes from the Old Testament. He quotes from Joel, and he says this is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Look at verse 22. Who is he speaking to here? Men of Israel, hear these words. Now, just for fun, if you don't mind marking in your Bible, start here in verse 14 and make a little

note, a star or a circle around the addressees, the audience in verse 14.

Who does Peter address? Men of Judea, all who dwell in Jerusalem. Okay, come down to verse 22. Men of Israel, hear these words.

Talks about Jesus of Nazareth, delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God. You took him by lawless hands, crucified him, put him to death. God raised him up, having loosed the pangs of death.

This is the same word that's used for birth pains. I would think he would say something like loosed the bonds of death or the shackles of death or broken through the bars of Hades or some such thing. But he says, having destroyed, this word is used for abolishing something, doing away with something.

It's also used in combination with the preposition *apoluso*. This is just the word by itself, *luso*. But *apoluso* is the one that says, is the one that there's a controversy about.

Can you, are the dead annihilated? It's translated annihilate, *apoluso*, to destroy from, to remove from, to obliterate from. *Apa* means away from. So that's another subject.

We've talked about it before, but this is just the verb itself, *luso*. But it means to abolish, destroy, do away with, make of no effect. And our English word loose, I think actually derives from *luso*, but loose used to mean something a little bit different.

Having abolished the pains of death because it was not possible that he should be held by it. And you get the idea. These are two different concepts.

Death holds you and as it holds you, it inflicts pain. So we're not talking about bonds of death and those are broken, but death has a grip on us and it causes pain. We see the phrase, the sting of death and so on.

But he says, Jesus could not be held by death. And so God abolished the pain of death. And this is something we experience as believers when we attend a funeral.

Sooner or later, all of us lose loved ones. And if they are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not the painful experience that it is for those who will never see their loved ones again in any sort of happy circumstance. We have a great reunion to look forward to.

We will dwell together. We will be reunited. And it is just a separation.

It reminds me of when I first got sent overseas. It was the longest I would ever go, I think, without seeing any of my family, being gone for an entire year. And as you leave, it's very heart-rending.

You look at people's faces and you say, you know, who knows what could happen. Maybe

when I come back, they might not all be here. Greet grandparents and say goodbye and so on.

You go halfway around the world for 12 months. But you have the expectation that you will see them again. When my year tour of duty is up, I will come back and I will see you again.

And we have that same view of death. It is just a temporary separation. It is not a permanent loss.

Jesus, having accomplished His work on the cross for us, qualifies us so that God, the Father, abolishes the pains of death. And this is severe pain. They say childbirth is the worst pain there is.

It is not possible that He should be held by it. He quotes the prophecy of the Old Testament from the Psalms. He is always at my right hand.

I may not be shaken. My heart rejoiced. My tongue was glad.

You will not leave my soul in Hades, nor will you allow your Holy One to see corruption. You have made me to know the ways of life. You will make me full of joy in your presence.

Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of David. And to make a long story short here, Peter says David wasn't talking about himself because he, in fact, has died and has not yet been resurrected. He says that David, being a prophet, knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne.

Verse 31, David foresaw this and spoke concerning the resurrection of Christ. Peter says David understood that he would have a descendant who would be raised from the dead in Christ, spoke that his soul was not left in Hades, spoke that his flesh would not see corruption. This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

Therefore, being exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he poured out this which you now see in here. And this, by the way, if any of you ever decide to delve into the deep theological writings about the Trinity, if you do a study on Trinitarianism or get Lewis Berry Chafer's first volume, you will find that there has been historically a great deal of thunder noised out about what is the relationship between the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. And they have what they call the doctrine of procession, where the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father.

And then other people said, no, he proceeds from the Son. And they get in this big controversy. To me, it doesn't make a hill of beans of difference.

If Grandma arrives at the station, do you really care if she left from Schenectady or Albany? I mean, she arrived. She got here. So why would you ignore Grandma and leave her standing on the platform with her bags saying, oh, I think she came from Schenectady? No, no, no.

This train came from Albany, but it went through Schenectady. Oh, no. And you sit there and argue and argue.

Here's Grandma with the bags. Well, this is what a lot of, in my opinion, this is what theology has done. We start trying to define and categorize and doctrinify and do all these.

See, I made that word up. There is no such word. Create doctrines that deal with where did the Holy Spirit come from? Well, he's here.

Why don't we pay attention to him now that he's here? But this is one of the passages that comes up because it says that Jesus received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father. And Jesus poured out this which you now see in here, the gift of the Spirit. And there is a subordination within the Trinity.

Is Jesus equal to the Father, qualitatively, in his essence? He absolutely is. Is God the Holy Spirit equal to the Father and equal to the Son, qualitatively, and in his essence? He absolutely is. The Trinity gives us a picture of voluntary subordination, voluntary submission that says nothing about quality, nothing about smarts, nothing about abilities.

It is a functional relationship. The members of the Trinity got together and said, as we operate this great human race experiment, let's organize ourselves this way. Member number one will be the Father, the planner, the organizer, the one who sets the times and the dispensations and maps out the plan.

Member number two will be the Son. He will be the revealed member. In him, people will be able to see what the entire Godhead is like.

He will execute the plan. He will subordinate himself to member number one. Member number three will be the Holy Spirit.

He will provide the energizing power for the Son and for all other human beings to execute the plan of the Father. He will be the communication channel. He will enable human beings to understand the things of God.

He will enable God to hear and respond to the prayers of the human beings. You get this in Romans chapter 8. The Holy Spirit conveys our prayers to the throne of God in groanings which cannot be uttered. They are equal.

You could interchange them. The Holy Spirit could have been the Father. The Father could have been the Spirit.

Any one of them could have taken on any of these roles, but they took on these roles and functions for the duration of human history and that is a model for us. Just because you are the wife and not the husband, do not assume and don't let anybody tell you, especially the husband, that he is qualitatively superior and that's why he's got the head of the house job. It says nothing about quality.

It says nothing about intelligence or aptitude or ability or anything else, but Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God having received from the Father the promise of the Spirit. He poured out this which you now see and hear. Jesus did.

Who sent the Spirit at Pentecost? The Lord Jesus Christ. That's why he told the disciples, wait here in Jerusalem until you receive power from on high. What they didn't know is he was going to go on high and send it.

He says, when I go away, John 14 and 15, he says, I will not leave you comfortless. I will send you another comforter. Jesus sent the Spirit.

Did the Spirit get offended? Say, what do you mean ordering me around? You think I'm not as good as you? Maybe I'll just go when I feel like going. Who died and left you in charge? Well, I guess he did die. You can't really say that to the Lord Jesus who died and left you in charge.

But it is a voluntary subordination. It's a functional, and this is how we have to view our families. This is how we have to view our marriages.

This is how we view our nation, our businesses. There is an authority structure. We honor it because we honor God and we honor the order that he has established in his word.

So he says, in case you think that David said all this about himself, David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool. Now, this quote is freighted with theological import for us because you will hear there's a new thing going around that's just come out in the last 10 or 15 years, saying that Jesus is already running the millennial kingdom. This is the kingdom now.

We're in it. This is the kingdom. Well, I am here to tell you that if this is the kingdom, I definitely missed out on the inheritance package, and somehow I missed the gates and all of the details, every man with his vine and his fig tree, and I thought that it was going to be a restoration.

It was going to be the Sabbath and a rest and sin, sinfulness and so on would be quelled. And one of the ways we know that this is bogus, and I mean, it is in even the

conservative seminaries, they say that Jesus sitting at the right hand of the father is sitting on the throne of his father, David, that that is the throne of David. What does Peter say here? David did not ascend into the heavens.

If you're sitting in the heavens, you're not on the throne of David because David never ascended to the heavens. Now, I have another piece of news for you. How long before Christ did David die? A thousand years, give or take.

David, at the point that Peter is speaking here, David's been dead a thousand years. What does Peter say about David in verse 34? David did not ascend into the heavens. Well, if David died and he did not ascend into the heavens, what does that say about the traditional model of where you go when you die? Somehow, most Bibles must not have this verse.

It says David did not ascend into the heavens. There you go. He will, but he hasn't yet.

Sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool. Where is the Lord Jesus Christ right now as we speak? He is at the right hand of the father. Stephen saw him there several chapters ahead of where we are now.

Stephen is going to look up and there's Jesus standing at the right hand of the father. Paul tells us Jesus is seated at the right hand of the father, making intercession for us. If he is seated at the right hand of the father, what does that say about his enemies? Have they been made his footstool? No.

God said, clear back in David's day, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. Once I subordinate the enemies and your kingdom comes in, you won't be sitting at my right hand anymore. You're going to go down and sit on the throne of your father, David.

That's what God the father says to the Lord Jesus. So everything meshes, everything coordinates, everything connects up and makes sense in God's plan. The Lord Jesus awaits the coming of the millennial kingdom in heaven, waiting for the timing that has been specified by his father.

He told his disciples, no man knows the day or the hour of the son of man's return, not even the son of man, but only the father. The father will speak the word, the son will collect his bride and have his seven-year honeymoon. Then he will return and his enemies will be made his footstool and he will go to Jerusalem.

He will sit on the throne of his father, David, where he and his bride, i.e. the church, will rule and reign for a thousand years. Very simple. I don't know how it got all fouled up as it has, but if you just read your Bible, it just lays down and makes sense.

Therefore, he says, and this is another thing to put a star or circle next to, who is Peter

talking to? Let all the world know, let all the nations know, let all the peoples and kindreds and tongues, let the 16 different kinds of people that we were talking in tongues to a minute ago know. Is that what he says? Verse 36, therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. What do we know about the word Christ? Christos, in Greek, is the translation from Hebrew of Mashiach.

Both of them mean what in English? Anointed One. The Anointed One, Mashiach. Christos, the Christ, the Anointed One.

What is the anointing? What has he been anointed to be? Head of all things to the church? Son of God in glory and power? What is the anointing? Little pop quiz here. King of Israel. Christ is the name of the Lord Jesus that applies to his kingship in Israel.

Christos, the Anointed One, the Mashiach, Son of David. God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Adonai, Lord, Kurios, in Greek, and Christos. Kurios and Christos, Lord and Christ.

All authority and King of Israel. So, they heard this and they were cut to the heart. We're going to see in the future when Peter gives his speech, people are going to be cut to the heart.

But being cut to the heart doesn't automatically cause a positive response. Being cut to the heart, what does this make us think of in terms of our scriptures? Over in 2 Timothy 3, 16, the Word of God is what? Alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder. It is a sword that pierces, splitting apart soul and spirit, joints and marrow, judges the thoughts and intents of the heart, right? So, they were cut to the heart.

They have heard the Word of God. Now, what is the response going to be? Here, they say to Peter and the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? Why do they say brethren? They're all Jewish. They're all Israelites.

Peter said to them, metanoete, in the imperative, change your minds. Metanoete and baptizete, be baptized. Change your minds and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are afar off as many as the Lord our God will call. Those two verses could easily take us the next two months to cover if we did a thorough job. We're going to do a thorough job, but we're going to do it much more quickly than two months.

So, I'm going to have to speak really, really quickly. First of all, it says, repent. Isn't this the message of the Bible from beginning to end? Have a change of mind.

More than that, change your mind. Change your mind. Well, change your mind about what? In this case, what has he been preaching about? They had misapprehended Christ.

They didn't recognize him as Lord and Christ. King of Israel, the coming one. They missed the message of John the Baptist.

They missed the message of Jesus while he was there. They missed the message of the 12 and the 70. Now, they're responding.

Now, they hear it. Now, they are saying, what shall we do? This answer that Peter gives reminds us of the answer of John the Baptist when the people responded to his message and said, what shall we do? He said, bear fruits in keeping with metanoeo. Bear fruit in keeping with change of mind.

If you're a soldier, if you're a merchant, live your life in keeping with change of mind. That's what Peter says here. Let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

Wow. There's a mouthful. What does he mean, let every one of you be baptized? Why does he say in the name of Jesus Christ? What does Matthew 28, 19 say about the apostles baptizing? What name do they baptize in? Father, Son, and Spirit.

Peter here, and you will find throughout the book of Acts, it only is baptism in the name of Christ. Baptism in the name of the Father and Son and Spirit is mentioned precisely once in the Bible, and it's Matthew 28, 19. Luke never mentions the Trinity.

He always says baptized in the name of Christ. We'll see that when we come back from the break. But here, the universal call of scripture to the Jews, the universal call of scripture to you and to me is change your mind.

Our mind is like an overly slept in bed. It needs changing. It needs making up.

It needs renovation. It needs renewal. We have to make that choice.

He doesn't say stand by all of you, elect and chosen and predestinated in the eternity past because God's about to change your mind. He says you change your mind. You've heard the word.

You're cut to the heart. You change your mind. You be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

He doesn't say stand by because a lot of you are elect and God's about to do a work in you, which would be the natural thing to say if it's all determined in heaven. Peter, the apostle, was not a Calvinist. He believed in free will, and he says you need to obey this command.

Change your mind. We need to obey the command to change our mind. Difficulty there is we don't have the power to change our mind without going to God and taking hold of His grace.

That's why we seek the ministry of God's Holy Spirit. That's why we expose ourselves to the teaching of the Word of God. Wherever we can find good, solid teaching, radio, book, pulpit, fellow believer, any place we can find the truth of God's Word, we want to absorb it.

We want to give it to the Holy Spirit to use in us. The promise is to you and your children and to all who are afar off. There's a little incipient prediction there.

But this is the call to us even as it was 2,000 years ago on the day of Pentecost. Change your mind. We're going to pause here and take a break.

When we come back, we're going to see with what other words he testified and exhorted them. And we're going to stop and take a look at the doctrine of baptism. What's up with baptism? That's what we'll see when we come back.