



Introduction to Acts 2:31-39

Sunday, April 8, 2018
Pastor Doug Phillips

The Bible is ultimately about the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom was founded in the Garden of Eden, but through sin it was corrupted and destroyed. The downfall of Paradise brought with it sin, death, and destruction. The Cross is the decisive moment in regaining the Kingdom. At Golgotha Satan and his minions threw everything they had at Jesus. They did all they could to destroy Him. But because of (not in spite of) the Cross Christ conquered death. God raised Jesus and this changes everything. Despite persecutions faced by the early church and deaths of people like Stephen and James, the disciples are confident that Jesus wins.

Peter's sermon is one of the earliest recorded examples of "witnessing". However, Peter's witness is not like our own. He saw, spoke with, ate with, and learned from the risen Christ. Peter has firsthand knowledge of Jesus and the reinstatement of God's reign. First the people must repent of their sins. This is not a mere declaration of wrong doing, but actively changing one's mind and actions.

Context

Last week we reflected on the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus. Those events are the ultimate turning points of the Christian faith and all of history. This week we turned our attention to the day of Pentecost. The day was a Jewish festival which meant that Jews from around the world were in Jerusalem. For Christians it is when Jesus' promises for the arrival of a Comforter came true. Filled with the Holy Spirit Peter preaches his witness to the Resurrection of Christ. More than that he calls upon the people of Jerusalem to repent from their sin and follow the man they killed only weeks before.

Read and Reflect (*Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.*)

Kingdom of God

- Pentecost: Witnessing the Kingdom

Peter's Sermon

- Believing
- Baptizing
- Belonging

God Raised Jesus, This Changes Everything

- Jesus Wins
- Guarantees Final Victory
- Good will Ultimately Win

No Amount of Witness is Insubstantial

Discuss

- 1) Peter's sermon called on the people to repent. What does true repentance look like?
- 2) Are there any areas of your life where you need to repent?
- 3) What would it look like for you to "witness" to the Resurrection of Jesus in your life? Remember, no word of witness is insubstantial.
- 4) Despite martyrdoms and persecutions Peter is convinced that God will win over all forces (political, spiritual, economic, etc.). Do you have the same faith as Peter? Do you place your hope in Christ or worldly forces?
- 5) Pentecost is often described as the birth of the Church. In the church we believe in Christ, are baptized in His name, and we also belong. What does it mean to belong to a church? What do you expect of church? What should the church expect of you?