

Back to the Future; Acts 2:36

I. The Beginning

- A. When you get stuck in a problem one of the ways to get it figured out is to go back to the beginning
 - 1. With so many people saying so many things about Jesus and God, who They are or are not, maybe we should go back to the beginning
 - 2. With so many people saying so many things about Christianity, what it is and is not, maybe we should go back to the beginning
 - 3. With so many people saying so many things about salvation, how we are or are not saved, maybe we should go back to the beginning
- B. Acts is the short title of the book; the long title is The Acts of the Apostles
 - 1. It is a history book detailing how the church began and grew
 - 2. Through this book we know how the Gospel got to the Middle East, Europe, and Africa
- C. So with all the problems and denominationalism in Christianity, we should go back to the beginning and figure it out (so we have a future in the church)

II. The Holy Spirit

- A. Acts 2:1–4 (ESV); ¹ When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. ² And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³ And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.
- B. Who was “all together in one place”?
 - 1. Just before this event the apostles had to choose someone to take Judas’ place
 - 2. There were around 120 disciples gathered together (Acts 1:15) to see this choosing take place
 - 3. They put forward two choices and cast lots
 - 4. Matthias was “numbered with the eleven” (Acts 1:26)
 - 5. When Peter stood up to preach he was “standing with the eleven”
- C. What was their mindset about the Kingdom of God (remember, they had been preaching the Kingdom of God is at hand)
 - 1. Acts 1:6 (ESV); So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?”
 - 2. Every scholar I researched agreed that the Apostles were asking Jesus about the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel
 - a) “An earthly kingdom was never, in the long history of Israel, or at any other time, contained in the purpose of God for Israel.
 - b) Even the kingdom of Saul, David, and Solomon, which God permitted but never approved, was from its inception a rejection of God's government of the chosen people (1 Samuel 8:7)
 - c) Israel's desire for the restoration of THAT kingdom blinded their eyes to the Christ; and here it is evident that even the sacred Twelve themselves were contaminated with the earthly kingdom virus!” ¹
 - 3. There was about 50 days between the resurrection and the day of pentecost

¹ Coffman, James Burton. "Commentary on Acts 1:4". "Coffman Commentaries on the Old and New Testament". <http://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/acts-1.html>. Abilene Christian University Press, Abilene, Texas, USA. 1983-1999.

4. Luke takes care of 40 days in Acts 1:3
5. Acts 1:3 (ESV); He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.
6. So from the day Jesus ascended (Acts 1:9) to the day of Pentecost was only about 10 days
7. So, without so much as a word from Jesus, the apostles went from a nationalistic view of the Kingdom to a spiritual understanding
8. The only way that could happen is miraculously!
- D. John 16:12–13 (ESV); ¹² “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

III. The Sermon

- A. Acts 2:22–24 (ESV); ²² “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— ²³ this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. ²⁴ God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.
- B. Peter’s sermon starts in Acts 2:14 quoting the prophet Joel, but that quote is designed to get us to the Christ
- C. Peter focuses on Old Testament Scriptures as proof that Jesus is the fulfillment of Genesis 12:3
 1. Jesus will not stay in the grave but will be resurrected (Psalm 16:8-11)
 2. Jesus will ascend to the Father, or be resurrected (Psalm 110:1)
 3. Notice a theme?
- D. Peter Focuses on the miracle that is contained in all four Gospels, the resurrection
 1. Paul puts the resurrection at the top of the list
 2. 1 Corinthians 15:12–19 (ESV); ¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁴ And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. ¹⁵ We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. ¹⁷ And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.
 3. The empty tomb is one of the most important concepts in Christianity
 4. It is only by the resurrection that we have faith
 5. It is only by the resurrection that we repent
 6. It is only by the resurrection we confess
 7. It is only by the resurrection that our sins are washed away
 8. No wonder this is the main thrust of Peter’s sermon
- E. Acts 2:36 (ESV); Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”

IV. The Response

- A. Acts 2:37 (ESV); 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?”

- B. “Cut” — to be pierced, stabbed figuratively, of the feeling of sharp pain connected with anxiety, remorse, etc., stricken, taken aback; to be deeply moved ²
- C. The root word is used to describe the soldier “piercing” Jesus’ side to ensure He is dead in John 19:34
- D. Peter’s sermon had done its job!
- E. Acts 2:38–39 (ESV); ³⁸ And Peter said to them, “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 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”
- F. Most people don’t have a problem with “repent”
- G. But there are many who have a problem with “be baptized”
 1. “What if he/she gets hit by a car crossing the street to get to the baptismal?”
 2. “What if he/she is to ill/invalid to get into the baptismal?”
 3. “Do I really have to be baptized?”
 4. “Baptism is an work of obedience and therefore not necessary for salvation” (saved by grace, not works)
 5. We don’t see any of those questions raised by the people in Jerusalem when confronted with Peter’s words
 6. Acts 2:41 (ESV); So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.
 7. They accepted His (and the rest of the apostles’) words and obeyed them!
 8. 3000 people who listened to Peter’s words and were baptized were added to the church (implied)
- H. We respond to the Gospel they way God tells us to, not the way we want to
- V. Back to the Future
 - A. We must look back at the historical beginning of the church
 - B. We must understand the inspiration of the Apostles by the Holy Spirit
 - C. We must respond as they did in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost

² William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 523.