

Sermon Title: Jesus Is Lord And Christ
Scripture Text: Acts 2:22-36 (Acts #6)

Speaker: Jim Harris
Date: 2-19-23

I invite you, please, to join me at Acts Chapter 2. Today we are going to look at the middle section of the record of the first evangelistic sermon preached after the arrival of the Holy Spirit. Peter is the preacher; I will try not to mess up what he said.

I was thinking this morning about what it must have been like when Peter preached. What a unique guy he was, even before! He was the strongest personality among the twelve Apostles; we know that. He is listed first in every list. When the group was there, he was always the one that would speak out first—good or bad; and that was even *before* he had stumbled and fallen (Matt. 26:75), and the Lord had restored him (Jn. 21:15-17; cf. Lk. 22:32); and now, we get to see the Spirit-filled version of Peter preach this. And I was just thinking: Who knows what it is going to be like when we get to Heaven, other than perfect and wonderful and glorious?—But I would like to meet Peter; I'd like to spend a little bit of time with him.

And I don't know how you perceive him. I remember, there's this popular TV series called "The Chosen" where they are fictionalizing the ministry of Jesus Christ. Our elders did a recommendation on it, and we recommend: *Don't use it!* Don't view it. There are *many* problems with it. I had heard a little bit about it, so I recorded one session, and I went and watched that one episode; and not *five minutes* into it, they inserted something that *completely* was fantasy—*totally wrong* about Peter! I said, "I'm done. I don't need that! We have the Bible, which is 'perfect' (Ps. 19:7), and 'everything' we need for 'life and godliness' (2 Pet. 1:3)." We recommended that you just don't bother with it, after Season 1. I think it's now in Season 3; and Season 2 and Season 3 have gotten progressively *worse* in fictionalizing things in the Bible. It's one thing to say, "Here is what it might have looked like in Israel in the First Century." It is something quite different to make up things that are not true about people, to put words into their mouths.

And the latest thing that I heard is that the actor who plays Jesus—now, I have some *fundamental* theological problems with doing that; I could *never* do that, and I don't think anyone should; but, even granting grace, if you are going to do that—the actor who plays Jesus has now produced a podcast or some videos or something, explaining how to use "The Chosen" in order to become a better Roman Catholic! *That is blasphemy!* The Roman Catholic Church is the largest pseudo-Christian cult in the world; they stand in *vocal*, written, never-changing opposition to the Gospel of salvation by "grace" alone through "faith" alone (Eph. 2:8) in Christ alone (Eph. 2:9). The LDS Church recommends "The Chosen," and they will help you become better Mormons through "The Chosen." If the Mormons and the Catholics are recommending something—*don't go there!* And that was impromptu; we'll see if it makes the cut onto the recording that goes online.

But today, we are going to look at what Peter *actually said*—the "inspired" inerrant record of that (2 Tim. 3:16; cf. 2 Pet. 1:21).

Now, as Jesus had repeatedly promised, the Holy Spirit arrived; that's at the beginning of Acts Chapter 2. Jesus ascends in Chapter 1; the "hundred and twenty" believers that are gathered together choose Matthias to replace Judas as the twelfth Apostle. And then, gloriously, the Holy Spirit comes and indwells and fills those hundred and twenty who were gathered in Jerusalem at that time.

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The arrival of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by miracles. It started with this spectacular deafening "noise" like a mighty "rushing wind" (Acts 2:1)—without any air moving. It was so loud, it began to gather a "crowd" from the city (vs. 6), who came to see what was going on.

And then, what would they see? Well, if they could see the people inside, there came a *visual* manifestation that looked like "tongues as of fire" coming and "resting" on each of the hundred and twenty (vs. 3). I picture one ball of flame, and then those tongues of fire splitting off of there, and showing this was for every single one, individually, to receive the Holy Spirit.

Then the third miracle: All hundred and twenty began speaking in languages they did not know (vs. 4), declaring "the mighty deeds of God" (vs. 11). At least 16 languages—which were the native or home languages or dialects of people who had travelled to Jerusalem for the Feast of Pentecost—were spoken on that day. And the ever-growing crowd was "amazed" and perplexed (vs. 7), and asking one another, "What does this mean?" (vs. 12). That's the very logical question! Something *enormous* is happening here! "What does this mean?"

So the twelve Apostles took their stand together; and guess who was the mouthpiece? It was Peter, of course. And Acts Chapter 2, Verses 14 through 36, is Peter's sermon in reply to that question: "What does this mean?"

We saw the beginning of it last time, where Peter began by connecting this phenomenon of the Holy Spirit coming, and the miracles associated with it: he connected that with the kingdom program of God; and he quoted a passage from Joel Chapter 2—you'll find it in Joel Chapter 2:28-32; Peter quoted it verbatim. And when we do meet Peter, you'll find out he knows his Bible pretty well. And he said, "This is the next step in the program of God"—that is, in essence, what he was saying.

Our passage for today is the inspired record of the core of that sermon that Peter preached on that day. It summarizes the life, death, resurrection, and aftermath of Jesus' First Coming. We are going to look at 16 verses in this powerful sermon that is *tremendously* logical—it leads you on a logical path to the truth that *everyone* must deal with.

Now, don't be intimidated by an eight-point sermon outline; you'll be home for dinner. But I want you to see how *tightly* this is reasoned.

- Number 1: Jesus Lived (vs. 22)
- Number 2: You Nailed Him To A Cross (vs. 23)
- Number 3: God Raised Him Up Again (vs. 24)
- Number 4: David Predicted The Resurrection (vss. 25-28)
- Number 5: David Is Still Dead (vs. 29)
- Number 6: But Jesus Is Alive (vss. 30-32)
- Number 7: He Sent The Holy Spirit (vss. 33-35)
- Number 8: Therefore, Know For Certain That Jesus Is Lord And Christ (vs. 36)

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On our last Lord's Day, we wrapped up with Verses 22 and 23, but we need to overlap today. I want you to go back and look at them again.

Point Number 1: Jesus Lived

Peter begins the body of his sermon in Verse 22—"Men of Israel, listen to these words..." That's just a way to announce that *this is really important!* This is what you need to know. Do you want to know what is happening here? Here's the answer! "Listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene"—the man you know as Jesus, who came from the town of Nazareth—"a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know..." (NASB-1995, and throughout, unless otherwise noted)

So Peter is saying, "What is going on here? It is all about Jesus! It's bringing you to be introduced to Jesus." And after he used Joel to show that this amazing, mind-boggling splash of three miracles back-to-back-to-back signaled the next step in God's program, now Peter is going to focus in on Jesus.

There is no way to enter the Kingdom of God without coming through Jesus. As He put it: "I am *the way*, and *the truth*, and *the life*; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (Jn. 14:6; cf. Jn. 3:16, 18, 36; 10:7, 9; Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Jn. 5:12). So you're going to have to see that it is because He is the One who died in your place so that you can have eternal life by believing and trusting in Him (2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:9; 1 Pet. 3:18); it's all about Jesus.

And his point is: Jesus was a real man; He lived a real life (Gal. 4:4). Oh, it was different from every other life that has ever been lived, but He is God who took on human flesh (Col. 2:9); He lived a perfect, sinless life (1 Pet. 2:22); and it was "attested to you" by many "miracles."

And Peter did not hesitate to say, right there at the end of Verse 22—"just as you yourselves know." Because most, if not all the people there that day had encountered Jesus during His ministry. He was all over Israel. He spent most of His time in Galilee, but He came to Jerusalem several times. He ministered in Jerusalem and Judea. He ministered even down farther south than that, and over to the east toward the Decapolis and in Perea. And He even went up north of Galilee, and He crossed the Jordan River up to the north as well.

Very few people who were there that day had not met Jesus; and if they hadn't met Him, they talked to somebody who did—who said, "You wouldn't *believe* this! There were these lepers, and they were healed! There was this guy who had been born blind, and Jesus gave sight! There was this guy who had been crippled for more than three decades, and he jumped up and danced and praised God!"

This is Jesus, "just as you yourselves know." This amazing man Jesus Lived.

Number 2: You Nailed Him To A Cross

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Verse 23—"This Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death."

Last time, when we finished up in these verses, we emphasized "the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God." I won't review all of that, but just understand: Jesus going to the Cross was *not* God doing damage control after the Jews rejected Him. That was *not* "Plan B"—it was the plan of God from "before the foundation of the world" (1 Pet. 1:20), just as Peter said that Joel had said. This was the sovereign plan of God: to send His Son to die for our sins (Jn. 3:17), just as He promised in His Word. You can go look at it in Isaiah 53: God "was pleased to crush" His Son for us (vs. 10). Now, that may cause your mind to do a little bit of a meltdown, but understand: God is in control.

But now, I want you to notice the last half of that verse, where Peter zeroes in on the responsibility of man. Last time, we said this is "the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God"—God is sovereign (e.g., Prov. 16:9; 20:24; Eph. 1:11)—but the responsibility of man is always proclaimed in the Bible side by side with the sovereignty of God (e.g., Gen. 50:20). "This man...*you* nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death."

Peter is saying: "We all in Israel, *you* that I'm preaching to, are guilty of sending this man to the Cross!" Now, the leaders of the Jews had manipulated the Romans into doing their dirty work for them, to actually get Jesus crucified, because they didn't have the legal authority to do that (Jn. 18:31). But God used evil, "godless men" to accomplish His purpose—and *at the same time*, He never overruled their decisions; He never made anyone do something they did not choose to do; and He never took away their guilt for what they did. They were responsible for putting Jesus on the Cross. The Bible constantly presents the total sovereignty of God, and the complete responsibility of man side by side. Both of them are true *all the time* (Ps. 103:19; Rom. 1:18a).

Now look what Jesus said when Judas went out to commit the most dastardly betrayal of all time. It was at that Passover meal the night before He went to the Cross, just before He went to the Garden of Gethsemane before He was arrested; then Judas left, and in Luke 22:22, Jesus says this: "For indeed, the Son of Man is going *as it has been determined*"—you might say, "the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God"—"but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" "Woe" is the word declaring damnation (e.g., Jn. 17:12; cf. Matt. 23:13-16, 23, 25, 27, 29, 33). "Look: This is the plan of God, but betraying Me is *wrong*, and Judas is responsible."

So Peter can look at that crowd, and he can say, "*You* nailed Him to a Cross." Now, if Peter were here, he could point his finger at *me*, and say, "*You* nailed Him to a Cross!" Metaphorically speaking—I mean, it was for my sin. You could say that to any sinner anywhere, because it *was* for our sins that Jesus died. Paul said, "I came to you and I preached the message": "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3; cf. Matt. 20:28). But in Jerusalem, just 50 days after the crucifixion, those words—"You nailed Him to a cross"—were all the more poignant. Some of the people who heard this sermon from Peter on that day may have been among those people in the crowd that shouted, "Crucify Him!" when Pilate asked, "What shall I do with Jesus?" (Matt. 27:22)

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Now, keep following Peter's impeccable logic here: Jesus Lived. You Nailed Him To A Cross. Number 3: God Raised Him Up Again.

Under the influence of the apostate Pharisees and Sadducees—the primary groups that led the Jews—the people had been swept along toward demanding that Jesus be crucified. But the plan of God was *not* thwarted, His glory was only *magnified* by what happened next: Verse 24—"But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power."

As we work through the Book of Acts, you are going to see that the theme of the preaching of the Apostles—and everybody else that proclaimed Christ in that first generation of believers—is *always* the resurrection of Jesus, because *that* was what confirmed all of His claims to be God in human flesh (see Rom. 1:4; cf. Jn. 10:17-18).

The resurrection puts the exclamation point on the Gospel. The Gospel is "good news" (Is. 52:7; 61:1; Lk. 2:10); and the word "Gospel" is used, even *in* the Gospels, before the death and resurrection of Christ because that was the proclamation of the coming of a king—the "good news": the King is coming! Well, Jesus is the King; He is here. But *now*, not only has He arrived, not only has He offered the Kingdom—He has died and risen again! And so, *that* is the exclamation point.

The resurrection proves that God the Father accepted Jesus' sacrifice for sin "once for all" (Heb. 10:10; 1 Pet. 1:18; cf. Rom. 4:25). The Resurrection is at the *core* of Christianity (1 Cor. 15:13-14). Belief in the Resurrection is *essential* for salvation. Romans Chapter 10, Verse 9—"If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord"—we'll come back to that word at the end of Peter's sermon—"and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Now, you could take that verse and work it backward: You *will not* "be saved" if you *do not* "believe" that "God raised Him from the dead," or you *do not* "believe" that He is "Lord." This is *essential*.

So Verses 23 and 24 put it together in one complete thought. Acts 2:23-24—"This Man... you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power." For Jesus, the Resurrection was when the Father "put an end to the agony of" His "death."

The word translated "agony" is a really interesting word. It is usually used for "birth pangs" (Matt. 24:8; Mk. 13:8)—for contractions, if you will, that lead to the birth. What a great word picture that is! Like "labor pains" (1 Thess. 5:3)—I've never had them, but they don't look like any fun, from the description that I've heard—but they're temporary, and they lead to a great thing when the baby shows up (Jn. 16:21).

Well, the pain of death for Jesus was temporary; it resulted in the Resurrection. And it was "impossible" for Jesus to be "held" in the grip of the "power" of death, because He is the One who *overcame* "death" (1 Cor. 15:56-57). Jesus, as He said at the resurrection of Lazarus—in John 11:25, He said, "I am the resurrection and the life." Then He goes over to Lazarus' tomb and He says, "Lazarus, come forth" (vs. 43).

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And some people, I think perhaps logically, said it's a good thing that He said "Lazarus," or He would have emptied every tomb in the whole cemetery! He is the power of life, the power of resurrection (Jn. 5:25-29).

Hebrews 2:14-15 says it in different words: "Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same..." That's saying, "Jesus lived." He came as a man; He took on humanity (Phil. 2:7; 1 Tim. 2:5). He "partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives."

Peter quoted Joel; Peter did not quote John—it hadn't been written yet; Peter did not quote Hebrews—it hadn't been written yet. But he's on a roll. He showed that the arrival of the Holy Spirit was a vital step in the kingdom program of God (Ezek. 36:27); it was *not* a surprise—it was as predicted by the Prophet Joel. And now he turns to *another* Old Testament source; he's going to use three altogether—here comes the second one.

Jesus Lived. You Nailed Him To A Cross. God Raised Him Up Again. And Number 4: David Predicted The Resurrection.

And it is very important, very significant, that Peter chose David, because David is *the man* for Israel. They knew that it was to King David that had come the promise that there would be Messiah who would come and reign on his throne forever (Is. 9:6-7; cf. 2 Sam. 7:16; Ezek. 37:25; Matt. 1:1).

And this time, the prophetic passage that Peter chooses is Psalm 16, Verses 8 through 11. As I said, it is the second of three Old Testament quotations in this sermon. And as we saw last time with the quote Joel, this was written in the form of poetry; that's why it is written in your Bible in a line-by-line format rather than a paragraph format; and the parts from the Old Testament are written in all-caps in the New American Standard to show that those are the Old Testament words.

So look at it with me: Acts 2, Verses 25 through 28—"For David says of Him..." What is Peter saying? "This is all about Jesus!" "David says of Him"—Jesus—"I saw the Lord always in my presence; for He is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted; moreover my flesh also will live in hope; because You will not abandon my soul to Hades, nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of gladness with Your presence."

David is putting words into the mouth of the Messiah; he is speaking prophetically. Jesus always kept the Father in His sights; He was always "before" Him (Ps. 16:8; cf. Jn. 16:32). He knew that because His Father was at His "right hand," He would "not be shaken." To be at the "right hand" of someone is to be the protector. Some even say that there is symbolism in that: that at a wedding you put the groom to the right of the bride, because he is the protector; he is "at" her "right hand."

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You see, not even the specter of the Cross could keep Jesus the Messiah from having His heart *full* of joy, always exulting in God the Father. And He knew that His "soul" would not be "abandoned" to death. He knew that His "soul" would not be "abandoned" to "Hades"—that's the word used here, in the most general sense of the abode of the dead. The Greek word "Hades" is the New Testament version to the Hebrew word "Sheol" in the Old Testament. It means a lot of things, but the most core meaning is that it is the place of the dead (Ps. 6:5). And He said, "I knew You would not leave Me dead."

"Your Holy One" there is one of many titles for the Messiah. You know that even *demons* used that term to describe Jesus! They said, "What have we to do with You...Holy One of God!" (Lk. 4:34, NKJV), when He was coming to chase them away.

Peter—of course it was Peter—one day spoke on behalf of the rest of the disciples in John 6:68-69. Some people had heard Jesus' call to total commitment, and they just slithered away. And remember, Jesus said, "Well, guys, it's just us now! Are *you* going away, too?" And here is Peter's answer: "Simon Peter answered Him, 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life. We have believed and have come to know that You are *the Holy One of God.*' " That is one of the times that Peter said, "We know You are the Messiah!" (e.g., Matt. 16:16).

So now, Peter's point in quoting from Psalm 16 is that David spoke prophetically of the Messiah with *full assurance* of His resurrection (cf. Is. 53:12). You can read the spectacular promise to David—we call it the Davidic Covenant, the promise of the descendant of David who would reign on his throne in an everlasting kingdom: that's Second Samuel 7:11-16. It is true that David expected *his own* resurrection; but *these words* that come from the psalm, he puts into the mouth of the Messiah.

Hence, his next point. This all hangs together. Jesus Lived. You Nailed Him To A Cross. God Raised Him Up Again. David Predicted The Resurrection. And Number 5: David Is Still Dead.

Look at Verse 29—"Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day." If you go to Israel, you can go to a place labeled "David's Tomb," and you can pay your price and get in to see the shrine that is there, commemorating that that is David's tomb. The only problem is: it is not believed by anybody credible that that is the actual tomb of David—hey, but it makes for great marketing and a good chance to teach about King David.

But that was not the case when Peter preached. They *knew* David's tomb. They *knew* David had been buried right around Jerusalem. We may not know the site, after Jerusalem has been beaten up many times, and all these different levels of excavation. Maybe someday we will find David's tomb; we don't know for sure. But the point of Verse 29 is that David was used by God to write the prophetic words of Psalm 16 (2 Sam. 23:2), and he was not referring to his own resurrection—he was referring to the Messiah; and so Peter said, "Should I take you over to David's tomb? You'll find that there's a 'No Vacancy' sign! David is still there, because David is still dead."

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Jesus Lived. You Nailed Him To A Cross. God Raised Him Up Again. David Predicted The Resurrection. David Is Still Dead. Number 6: But Jesus Is Alive.

And here again, we have another example of the consistency and the unity and the inerrancy of the Bible (Ps. 12:6; 19:7; 119:128, 160; Prov. 30:5; 1 Pet. 2:2). All that Peter is preaching about here is the unfolding of the plan of God, exactly as He designed it (Prov. 33:11; Prov. 19:21).

So look at Verses 30 and 31—"And so"—notice again: connecting—"And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of *the resurrection of the Christ*, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay."

Now, you would have to be God, you would have to know "the end from the beginning" (Is. 46:10), you would have to not be bound by the progress of time in order to describe things before they happen! That's part of the testimony of the Bible: absolute, one hundred percent perfect accuracy in the fulfillment of everything that has been predicted and has been "fulfilled" (Lk. 21:22; 22:37; 24:44; cf. Jos. 23:14; 1 Sam. 3:19; 1 Kings 8:56; Is. 55:11)—and there are still some things *yet* to be fulfilled; and guess how they are *going* to be fulfilled? *Just as predicted!*

That is precisely what we have in these two verses. Notice the words "prophet," "knew," "looked ahead," and "spoke"; they are all related, because David, as a prophet of God, was given this prediction of the resurrection to come in the future, when the Messiah would rise from the dead.

Peter is preaching about the fulfillment of David's words; so, if you notice very carefully, Peter changed the tense of the verbs: David made it present tense; Peter made it past tense—because David was looking *forward* to the resurrection of the Messiah; Peter was preaching about how He's that guy who just ascended a few days ago.

Do you see the reasoning? Psalm 16 speaks of a resurrection. David wrote the psalm, but he hasn't been resurrected yet. The prediction cannot be about him; and based on the promises about David's descendant, the Messiah, we discern that he wrote a prediction of the Messiah's resurrection. And the argument is conclusive: "Jesus the Nazarene" *is* the Messiah! (cf. Jn. 1:41, 45)

Look at Verse 32—"This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses." Now, "to which we are all witnesses"—that would refer *specifically*, most directly, to the Twelve Apostles; but many more—maybe all, possibly—of those "hundred and twenty" that were gathered in that room had seen Jesus alive after the Resurrection (Acts 1:15). And we know that Jesus appeared to a total of over "five hundred" people after He was raised from the dead (1 Cor. 15:6); there may have been many of those in the crowd. So again, Peter could preach in a way we can't: "to which we are all witnesses." Now, I can bear witness: Jesus rose from the dead. I *know it*. I know it *for sure*. But *I* know it because God wrote it in His Word. Peter said, "We know. We are witnesses."

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But there is something even more marvelous about the certainty with which Peter and the others preached on the Resurrection. Anyone there that day, as I said—Peter could have led a field trip over to David's tomb; it's full. And you know what? You're going to see it over and over again through Acts. They could preach: "Jesus rose from the dead."

He could have taken them to that tomb where Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took Jesus' body after they took it down from the cross, and they could all go there and see that that giant stone had been removed from the entrance to the tomb; they could interview the women who had been there and seen Jesus in person; they could see that the tomb is still empty.

Oh, and by the way: It's pretty powerful preaching, because nobody ever produced a *dead body*! That would have ended the whole thing! He was resurrected.

And by the way, I should point out: No one was dumb enough to buy the story that the Pharisees and Sadducees had bought and paid for—that story that says that the "disciples" had "stolen" the body while the Roman soldiers were "asleep" (Matt. 28:13). Scared, fearful disciples don't tippy-toe past soldiers trained to guard things. Soldiers trained to guard things don't fall asleep, and they don't all come up with the same story *that describes exactly in detail what happened while they were sound asleep!* I think God put that in Matthew 28, just so we would have some humor in the Bible to illustrate the *absurdity* that people who hate God will go to (cf. Jn. 12:9-11; Acts 4:13-17).

Jesus Lived. You Nailed Him To A Cross. God Raised Him Up Again. David Predicted The Resurrection. David Is Still Dead. But Jesus Is Alive. And Number 7: He Sent The Holy Spirit.

At this point, Peter circles back to what it was that attracted the crowd that day—that "noise," those "tongues as of fire," those "languages" being spoken. And look at Verses 33-35—"Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet." ' "

That is the third Old Testament reference—this one from Psalm 110, Verse 1. And this one, Jesus Himself had quoted, to respond to and to refute one of the sinister questions asked Him by the Pharisees. That last week before the Cross, He went to the Temple every day, and they took turns coming at Him. The Pharisees tried to trip Him up; the Sadducees tried to trip Him up; the Herodians tried to trip Him up—and Jesus won every one of the arguments.

But look over at Matthew 22:41-46, and you'll see Him use this same quote from Psalm 110. It says: "Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus *asked them* a question: 'What do you think about the Christ [the Messiah], whose son is He?' They said to Him, 'The son of David.' He said to them, 'Then how does David in the Spirit call Him "Lord," saying, "The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, until I put Your

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enemies beneath Your feet' "? [Psalm 110, Verse 1] If David then calls Him "Lord," how is He his son?' No one was able to answer Him a word, nor did anyone dare from that day on to ask Him another question."

I promised you this sermon from Peter was going to lead us where everyone needs to go. Let's go there. Jesus Lived. You Nailed Him To A Cross. God Raised Him Up Again. David Predicted The Resurrection. David Is Still Dead. But Jesus Is Alive. He Sent The Holy Spirit. Number 8: Therefore, Know For Certain That Jesus Is Lord And Christ.

This is the point to which *every single person on the planet* needs to be brought (cf. Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 17:30-31). Verse 36—"Therefore let all the house of Israel know..." Now, He was preaching to a Jewish audience; we could say, "Let the *whole world* know." "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified."

Yeah, it's all about Jesus; it all centers on Him (cf. Col. 1:18-20). Peter has laid out precise—and I would say, *overwhelming*—evidence from Jesus' life and death and resurrection and exaltation, and from the Word of God: He *is* the Messiah!

Now, there's that little phrase "for certain"—that's a translation of a form of a Greek word that is really cool; it's one of those words that you know the root of, even though you don't know it's the root of this word: It's the root from which we get "asphalt." This is in an adverb form: "in an *asphalt-like* way." This is a *rock-solid argument* from Scripture! You can know, just like a giant block of asphalt hitting you in the head: *This is real!* This is a *solid* argument.

And from those people who had seen and heard everything that day, you can know *for certain*...but he doesn't say "you *can* know"; "let all of them *know*"—he is *commanding* you: "*Know* this is true! *This is what you have to deal with!* Jesus *is* the Messiah!" (cf. Deut. 18:15, 18-19; Lk. 9:35)

The word "Lord" means "Master" (Jude 4). "Jesus" *is* the "Master" (Lk. 17:13; cf. Jn. 15:20); He "purchased" us from our slavery to sin (Acts 20:28; Rev. 5:9), to set us free so that we can now call Him "Lord" (Jn. 20:28; 1 Cor. 12:3b); and we are His "slaves" (Eph. 6:6)—we do His bidding (Heb. 5:9) for His "glory" (1 Cor. 10:31; cf. Col. 3:17).

The word "Christ" is the Greek word that means "Anointed One," which is the meaning of the Hebrew word "Messiah" (Dan. 9:25-26; Matt. 1:1, 16; Jn. 1:41; 4:25-26).

Here is where Peter was taking everyone on that day: What you believe about Jesus of Nazareth—and what you *do* about that (Lk. 11:28; Jn. 13:17)—determines your eternal destiny (Jn. 3:18, 36). Now, you already *have* an eternal destiny; the grave is not the end. There *is* life after death (e.g., Lk. 16:22-23). The *default* setting for every person since Adam is that we *all* deserve eternity in "the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:10) because "all" of us "have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23), and "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23; cf. Ezek. 18:4).

Sermon Title: Jesus Is Lord And Christ
Scripture Text: Acts 2:22-36 (Acts #6)

Speaker: Jim Harris
Date: 2-19-23

That word that is translated "sin" there in Romans 3:23—as in, "all have sinned"—is that archery term; you have heard it before: *hamartia*. If you have *ever* missed the center of the bullseye—even once, *even* for a millisecond on *any* subject *anywhere* in word, thought, or deed—you have *missed* what it takes to be in Heaven (Jas. 2:10). To be in Heaven, you have to be *perfectly* holy, *perfectly* righteous, to have fellowship with a perfectly holy and righteous God (Ps. 5:4; 11:7).

So the default setting is: "God is righteous" (Dan. 9:14); He *always* does the right thing (Ps. 119:68); He *always* does what His righteousness and holiness demands (Ps. 145:17), and that means that He has to punish all unholiness and all unrighteousness (Ecc. 12:14; Nah. 1:3), or *He* would not be holy and righteous! (Ps. 9:8; Rom. 3:25-26)

So, *that's what we deserve!* That's what we have *earned* (Is. 3:9, 11). Romans 6:23, that I just alluded to: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Your "wages" are *owed* to you (Rom. 4:4). If I own the company and you work for me, and I decide I am going to pay you—well, let's take my first job: \$1.65 an hour—and you work ten hours (you are probably going to say, "That wasn't worth it!"), I *owe* you! I *must* pay you your wages!

So, "the wages of sin is death"—that is what God owes you. If you ever hear someone say about God that something is *not fair*, remind them what "fair" is! "Fair," for you, is "the lake of fire"! (cf. Ezek. 18:25) "But"—oh, isn't that a wonderful word in that verse! "The wages of sin is death, *but* the free gift of God is eternal life..." The "wages"—that is what you are owed. The "free gift" is what you could *never* buy; it's a gift! And if you *try* to pay for it, you're slapping the face of the One who gives you the free gift! "The free gift of God is"—not death—"eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." *That's the good news!* (cf. Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:8-9)

You have probably heard it in the form of John 3:16—"For God so loved the world"—*every member of which* deserves His "wrath" (Rom. 1:18; 5:9)—"that He gave His only begotten Son"—Jesus lived—"that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." He lived and died and rose again so *you* do not need to be in the Lake of Fire (Matt. 20:28).

So, what say you? Jesus is the only way to God. He *is* the only Savior. Now, there have been *countless* other religious leaders—and their tombs all have "No Vacancy" signs on them! Jesus conquered death. He *proved* He was who He said He was. He is the *only* "mediator...between God and men" (1 Tim. 2:5). He *is* the Anointed One, the Messiah! "He *is* Lord of all" (Acts 10:36). He is—and He will be named this when He returns next time: "King of kings and Lord of lords" (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 19:16). He *will* return and "reign" on King David's throne for "a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4, 6; cf. Lk. 1:32), and then for all of eternity (Dan. 2:44; 7:14).

You *will* bow to Him; you *will* acknowledge Him, in one way or the other. Either you do it now, voluntarily—acknowledging that He lived and died and rose again to give you the "free gift" of "eternal life"—*or*, you will bow before Him when you are *forced* to bow before Him as your Judge (Rev. 20:11-15).

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The Apostle Paul, some years later, would write this, in Philippians 2:9-11—"For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth"—in other words, "the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5)—"and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

My dear friend, this might be the 959th time you've heard the Gospel; but I can say to you today: If you are trusting in *anything* other than Jesus, or anything *in addition* to Jesus to save you, drop everything else and bow your heart to Him in simple "faith" (Gal. 2:16; cf. Phil. 3:3-9).

Now we are going to see *Peter's* invitation at the end of this sermon, next time. He is going to call you to "repentance" (Is. 30:15; Lk. 5:32; 24:47; Acts 20:21; 2 Pet. 3:9). You don't have to wait a week, though, for that.

And I had something running through my busy little mind when I got to this point in the sermon. I said, "I sure hope Christian is there at the end of the service." He is. Favorite little chorus. And if you are as old as dirt like me, this will be very familiar to you; and I want us to sing it together. I love you so much, I'm going to turn off my mike. Follow Christian:

Christian [singing]: He is Lord, He is Lord. He is risen from the dead, and He is Lord. Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

And you can know for certain that He is Lord. I think I just got a snippet of Heaven, because Christian was singing in this ear, my mike was off, and I heard him from the monitor—*it sounded like me!* No, no, it *didn't* sound like me, but it sounded like it was *coming* from me!

Well, my friends, what is coming from me is exactly the words of the Apostle Paul. If you never have, I "beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).

Let's pray:

Father, thank You for Your glorious Gospel. Thank You for Your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank You for the joy of being in the company of those who have been adopted into the family of God, and for this sweet fellowship. Please, our Father, do not let anyone go from here trusting in anything other than or less than Your crucified, risen, coming-again Son, in whose name we pray. Amen.