

Acts 2:29-41 – The Promise Is For You – Feb. 4, 2024

1. Very exciting Sunday as we have the privilege of baptizing three adults today!
2. VV.29-37 – *““Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, 31 he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. 32 This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. 34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, “The Lord said to my Lord, “Sit at my right hand, 35 until I make your enemies your footstool.” Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.” 37 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?”*
 - a. Peter has just spoken with a tremendous amount of boldness after the events of Pentecost
 - b. He tells his audience that the Pentecost events they’ve just witnessed is the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy in the OT, and then He connects Jesus to David
 - i. He is showing that Christ is greater than David even in His death
 1. David’s tomb is still there for Peter’s audience to see, approximately 1000 years after his death

2. But as a prophet of sorts, David knew that one of his grandsons would be resurrected to take David's throne and exalt it to even more cosmic and eternal glory
 3. David's tomb is still there; David's body and soul are still divorced from one another
 4. But as the greater David, Jesus's soul and body were knit back together and He came walking out of the grave
 5. Peter is presenting Christ Jesus as the better David on the better throne, and he is leaving his audience without excuse – they've been witnesses to all of this
- ii. This clearly forces the Jewish listeners into a serious decision
 1. If Christ is who He says He is, and who the OT says He is, they must bend the knee to Him, or be faced with being condemned by the prophets, by David, and ultimately by God
 - iii. Peter closes his sermon in vv.34, 35 with "God's favourite Bible verse", Psalm 110:1, when He tells them "*The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.'*"
 - iv. Christ ascended to heaven 10 days before Pentecost, and now at Pentecost, Peter is forcing his audience to acknowledge the significance of the events that they've just witnessed. He's pushing them for a response.
- c. The people, when forced to see the kingship and the sovereignty and the dominion of Jesus, respond favourably
 - d. V.37 says they were '*cut to the heart*'

- e. The Holy Spirit wasn't done yet – He clearly had convicted them of their sins, so they're left asking what they should do
3. V.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.”*
- a. Peter's response is that they need to repent and be baptized
 - b. Notice how naturally these two are linked
 - i. Baptism and water don't do anything magical or superstitious, but baptism is an outward symbol that signifies what Christ has done in the heart of those who repent
 - ii. Repentance comes first, and this is what connects us to Christ
 - 1. Repentance and faith are opposite sides of the same coin
 - a. Repentance – turning from
 - b. Faith – turning to
 - 2. This is why these terms are interchangeable
 - iii. Just as Jesus Himself went down to be baptized, so now we too follow Him in that act
 - 1. OT baptism was a symbol of purification
 - a. Jews would sometimes practice this to make themselves clean before entering the temple
 - b. Gentiles would be baptized when converting to Judaism
 - c. Jesus was baptized by John so that He could fulfill the requirements of the Gentiles as they would come in

- iv. Peter's method of showing Christ's authority, getting the audience to reckon with this authority, convert, and then be baptized is completely consistent with Jesus' word in the Great Commission
 - 1. Matthew 28:18, 19 – *“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.””*
 - 2. Jesus doesn't just tell them to go. He says *“therefore”* go. We go make disciples and baptize because all authority here on earth has been given to Jesus.
 - 3. Jesus also closely connects disciple making with baptism and obedience
- c. Being baptized is just as much an act of obedience as restraining our anger or telling the truth or anything else. If we acknowledge the dominion of Christ over all earthly and heavenly matters, we acknowledge that He has commanded baptism as well.
 - i. Baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Spirit is a symbol to the world that shows we have changed allegiance
 - 1. We have been transferred from the family of Adam and have been adopted into the family of God

- ii. It's like a soldier putting down the flag of one nation and taking up the flag of another
- iii. Today there are different modes of baptism which are practiced by different branches of the church, but the word *baptizo* literally means to immerse, dip, or submerge.
 1. The word was used of pickles being put in vinegar, or of ships sinking, etc.
 2. We should be gracious with other Christians who practice a different tradition ("Reformed catholicity"), but the language of the Bible itself seems consistent that the person is going under, just like Christ did
 3. The symbol of the old man going down in death, and then coming up in new life is also fitting
- d. The water itself isn't magical or superstitious, but it is a fitting symbol of death and resurrection, of cleansing from sin, of faith and repentance, and it is an act of obedience that is so closely tied to conversion that to say someone is baptized is to say that they have been saved.
 - i. Of course, people can be saved without being baptized, like the thief on the cross, but under normal circumstances, this is a natural step of obedience after we've put our faith in Christ
- e. And while baptism is symbolic and doesn't do anything in itself, it's also not just a bare symbol that we do. In a spiritual sense, because it's an act of obedience, the

Holy Spirit is closely tied to it as well. God is spiritually present with us when we are baptized.

- i. This means you can look at this not just as a symbol of your obedience, but also as a symbol and a seal of God's promises
- ii. He has promised to save to the uttermost everyone who puts their faith in Him, and to empower them with the Holy Spirit to enable us to live a life of obedience to Christ

4. VV.39-41 – *“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.” 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.”*

- a. These promises that God gives believers are no longer just for the Jews as we've already seen
- b. It's for future generations and for those who are far off, that is Gentiles
- c. It's for all those who God is going to call to Himself
 - i. He's calling all kinds of people into the light and out of the darkness of a crooked generation
- d. Notice also that there seems to be a very tight correspondence in v.41 between those who received the word and those who were baptized
- e. But because these are adults who are being baptized here this morning, I want to draw special attention to v.39 which says that *“the promise is for you and for your children”*

- i. Some seem to assume that because their parents are Christians, they are too, or that because they are Christians their children will automatically turn out to be Christians
- ii. This isn't the case, because the language at the end of this verse limits these promises to "*everyone whom the Lord our God calls to Himself*"
- iii. But there is still an obvious connection between parents and children, and God ordinarily works with families. Most of the growth of the church through history has been through Christians having children and handing the gospel down to them

5. For everyone else here

- a. If you know the Lord, then let this baptism remind you of your own salvation, and how God put His sign and seal on you at your baptism. If you know the Lord and have yet to be baptized, then we trust this morning will encourage you to take this step of obedience
- b. If you do not know the Lord this morning, then think through what God thinks of your sin, and how badly you need cleansing. Baptism is a graphic picture of going down in death and coming up in new life. *All of us will descend into the water of death; this is not negotiable. The question is if you will come back up in new life. Christ promises that all who are His will come up! Those who persist in their sin sink into the lake of fire, but those who are raised with Christ come out of the water symbolically at baptism, and physically at the return of Jesus! Those who are born once will die twice; those who are born twice die only once.* If you have

questions about how to be cleansed from your sin, please come talk to one of the elders.

6. CHARGE – *Baptism is a symbol. It isn't magic. It's not superstitious. But it is real. It is a potent sign and seal in which God truly ministers to us. In baptism, we have a physical reminder of God's promises that death is followed by resurrection, that repentance is completed with faith, and that the old man is replaced by the new man. In our baptism, we aren't so much giving something to God as we are receiving something from Him. He seals us as we enter His kingdom and gives us His name as we are adopted into His family. Our baptism reminds us of God's promise to save to the uttermost all who put their faith in Him; He will make sure we get all the way home. As we leave the assembly of God's people this morning, we are also reminded of our task of evangelism, knowing that these promises are not just for us, but for our children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord calls to Himself.*

7. BENEDICTION – Matthew 28:18, 19

a. *“And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*