

Christ, the Risen Lord

Acts 2: 22-24

Consider for a moment, the intense emotion Peter and the other disciples must have felt at this moment in life. For some three and a half years they had walked with the Lord. They enjoyed the year of popularity and then watched as the tide of public opinion began to turn. They were there in the Garden of Gethsemane as Jesus was led away, accused of crimes He had not committed. They dealt with the awful crucifixion and death of Christ. Their hearts were broken as they contemplated His death. But then, news came that the tomb was empty and Jesus was alive! During the following forty days, Jesus appeared at various times with them, providing further instruction and encouragement. Ten days prior, Jesus ascended back to the Father, and the disciples have been in the Upper Room praying and seeking the Lord's direction. At Pentecost, the Spirit descended, filling every believer with power and great assurance. This is the setting for our text today as Peter steps forth to preach Jesus as the Christ, crucified, buried, and risen.

Today we celebrate the resurrection of Christ our Lord. This is the day we rejoice in His triumphant victory over sin and death, fulfilling God's eternal plan for the salvation of mankind. The message Peter preached at Pentecost is a message of Easter, the message of the Gospel. Let's take a few moments to consider the [certainties](#) Peter revealed as we consider: [Christ, the Risen Lord](#).

I. The Confirmation of Christ (22) – [Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know](#). Calling the attention of all close enough to hear, Peter began to preach a message that confirmed Jesus was the Christ. He spoke of:

A. His Identity – Lest there be any confusion, Peter immediately revealed the identity of whom he spoke: [Jesus of Nazareth](#). Few there would have been unfamiliar with Jesus, but Peter wanted to ensure their understanding. Jesus was a common name then, but the one of whom he spoke was known as Jesus of Nazareth. This would have dispelled any confusion or misunderstanding.

- He is the one I preach and present today! He is the Son of the living God, the only begotten of the Father. He is the Savior and Redeemer of the world. He is the giver of eternal life and Anchor of men's souls. He is King of kings and Lord of lords, coming again in great power and glory! He has a name above every name, at which every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord for the glory of God.

B. His Approval (22) – [a man approved of God](#). While many in and around Jerusalem were unsure of Jesus and His claim of deity, Peter proclaimed He was approved of God. The word approved means “*to point out, display, show, attest, accredit, sanction, certify, endorse.*”ⁱ He was denied and rejected by His own countrymen, but He received the approval of God. Some present may have continued to doubt, but those who did stood in opposition to God Himself.

- Many continue to deny and reject Jesus as the Christ. He stands as the major point of contention in the world today. Many will agree that He lived and died, a good man and prophet, but they refuse to embrace Jesus as the Christ. Regardless of what the world believes, Jesus enjoys to approval of God the Father. In the end, God’s approval is all that matters. The world continues to reject our Lord, but one day they will bow in humble recognition!

C. His Authority (22) – [Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you](#). While some may have denied Jesus was the Christ, they could not deny the great miracles, wonders, and signs He performed. He had authority over sickness, infirmities, nature, and death itself. He spoke with wisdom that could not be explained. They may have ignored it, or refused to admit it, but they could not deny the great power Jesus possessed.

- His authority and power remain today. Few acknowledge it, but Jesus still has the power to heal our bodies, comfort our fear, move our mountains, and deliver us from the bondage of sin! He has authority over the enemy, providing victory and a means of escape from temptation. We do not serve a weak, powerless god. We do not serve and worship the memory of one who lived and accomplished great things. We serve the risen, living, all powerful Christ!

D. His Notoriety (22) – [which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know](#). Many may have wanted to appear naïve of this man, but Peter puts that to rest as well. Jesus had not lived separate from society. His life had not been hidden or obscure. He walked among them, performing miracles in their midst. They may have desired to ignore Jesus, but His life and influence could not be denied. He had proven, without doubt, that He was the Christ!

- For many, Easter is just another holiday, a time when many get a vacation from work and school. For most, it is more about eggs, outfits, and bunnies. This world may choose to ignore Christ, but He cannot be denied. He stands as the sole means of salvation. He alone purchased our redemption as He offered Himself the atoning sacrifice for sin. The claim of ignorance will not be sufficient when men stand before God in judgment. He is the central figure of time and humanity. Never has there been one greater than Christ Jesus the Lord!

II. The Crucifixion of Christ (23) – Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. The crucifixion of Christ created quite a stir in Jerusalem. The majority consented to His death. Most present that day would have been familiar with this monumental event. Peter refers to:

A. The Reasoning – Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.

Some may have thought Jesus was the victim of unfortunate circumstances. Others may have believed He was nothing more than an impostor, claiming to be someone He wasn't. Peter wanted the crowd to understand that Jesus had not died to satisfy the demands of an angry crowd. He was not crucified because the Sanhedrin called for His death or because of Pilate's order for execution. His death on the cross was according to His divine will and purpose. This all happened as God had planned. Jesus had come to earth to die for the sin of humanity. Somewhere in eternity past the plan was made for Jesus to come as the redeeming sacrifice for sin! This was all according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. [Luke 24:45-46](#) – Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, ^[46] And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.

B. The Rejection – ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. This is a far cry from the man who refused to identify with Christ on the night of His betrayal. Peter is now filled with the Spirit, full of boldness, and proclaims the wickedness of those who consented to Jesus' death, crucifying Him on the cross. While His death was fulfilled in accordance with the plan of God, their guilt in denying Him remained. They had rejected the Lord and Savior of the world. They refused to embrace Jesus as the Christ! These stood guilty before God.

- I rejoice that Christ was willing to die for our sin, but I also realize the responsibility we all have to receive Him as our Savior. Many today have heard the Gospel, seeing the undeniable evidence, and yet they continue to reject Christ. Those who deny Christ, refusing to receive Him by faith in salvation, remain guilty before God and condemned in their sin.

III. The Resurrection of Christ (24) – Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. Jesus had been crucified, enduring death on the cross, but His death was not final. Peter speaks of His glorious resurrection. Consider:

A. The Power Involved – Whom God hath raised up. They laid His lifeless body in the borrowed tomb, but death nor the grave had the power to hold Him. God raised Jesus from the dead, just as He had promised. The Lord had died, and yet He lived again forevermore!

- What comfort that affords every believer. Just as Christ was resurrected from the dead, we too shall be raised in great power. Death is something we all must face, unless the Lord returns very soon, but it will not be final. By His abundant power, the dead will come forth from the grave in Christ! [1 Cor.6:14 – And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power.](#) [Rom.8:11 – But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.](#)

B. The Grace Displayed (24) – [Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death.](#) Peter declares that Jesus loosed the pains of death. He knew men feared death. Likely he had witnessed the anguish suffered by those who experienced death. He declares there is no reason to fear death. Death had been defeated by Christ as He rose from the grave! Death no longer has power of the believer. All who come to Christ in faith are set free from the agonies of death. We have the promise of eternal life in Christ our Lord. Death is certain, but it is not final. When a believer departs this life, they enter the glorious presence of the Lord. Through His death and glorious resurrection, we have the means of escape from eternal death unto eternal life!

C. The Triumph Gained (24) – [Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.](#) Most likely believed the death of Christ on the cross was the end of the story. Even the disciples were filled with fear and dismay. Jerusalem set about her normal routine following the crucifixion of Christ. The Sanhedrin breathed a sigh of relief while the disciples mourned. Christ had died and was buried in the tomb. However, Sunday would come! Just as Jesus had promised, death could not hold Him! On that third day following His death, He came forth triumphant from the grave. The icy grip of death could not overcome the power of Christ! He came forth alive and well, risen to die no more!

- The resurrection we celebrate today stands as our means of triumph as well. I am thankful Christ died for our sin, but had the cross been the end, we would have no hope of life beyond the grave. We may have been able to lie in the grave for eternity, pardoned of sin, but there would be no hope of eternal life in heaven. Because Jesus came forth triumphant, every believer has the promise and assurance of eternal life! It is not possible for the grave to hold any who have received Christ as their Savior! Death may be certain, but it certainly isn't final for the saved! [John 11:25 – Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.](#)

Conclusion: We have discussed the fundamental truths of the Gospel. Our Lord came to earth, robed in flesh, to die for our sin. He fully satisfied the righteous demands of God, atoning for the

sin of humanity, as He died on the cross. He rose again in resurrection life to secure eternal life for all who believe.

I am certain the audience was mixed the day Peter delivered this message. Some were already believers, others would receive Christ in salvation, and there would be those who walked away in unbelief. If you have received Christ, rejoice in your salvation. If you are yet an unbeliever, come to Christ for salvation today. He alone can pardon from sin and grant eternal life!

ⁱ Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – Acts.