

Introduction: Super Spreaders

Last time in our “Supernatural Church” series we saw the coming of the Holy Spirit, not only to give birth to the Church, but to empower Jesus followers to be super spreaders of the Gospel. When God’s gifting of his missional community, it was traumatic, dramatic, and emphatic: a violent mighty rushing wind which literally shook the foundations which housed the Upper Room. This physical disturbance catches the attention of the masses, and they are dazed and confused when they hear Christ followers praising God in a multiplicity of languages which they previously did not know or study. Some are “utterly amazed” while others are supremely skeptical. “These folk have been hitting the communion wine pretty hard and often this morning” they surmise. Others sincerely want to know what all this could mean.

Peter Preaches at Pentecost

You’ve heard the phrase, “Never ask a preacher a question because you’ll get way more than you expected.” Peter, the leader of the group, hears these questions and objections and launches into some impromptu street preaching. He starts,

The folks speaking in your native tongues are not tipsy. What you are experiencing right now is God’s ancient promise of filling his people with the Holy Spirit. In case you have forgotten your minor prophets, Joel was one of the earliest to pen this promise (2:28-32):

17 In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

“Yes folks, we are in the end game of salvation history now.” And then, like every good preacher, he races to the person and the work of Jesus Christ. What precipitated and necessitated, the universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit was Jesus’ sinless, substitutionary, and sacrificial death. This was God’s plan which he initiated, and implemented, through his fully divine and fully human Son (v22-24):

22 Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23 This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by

nauling him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

Conviction: Rejecting and Murdering God

Peter, then doles out a dose of heavy conviction. “You thought Jesus was a liar or lunatic, so you rejected him and conspired with evil people to have him murdered.” “Own it!” Peter hadn’t heard such crickets since the last time he passed the offering plates twice in the same service (lol). “But it was impossible for the death to hold him” (v24). “And in case you have also forgotten your psalms” (Psalm 16) Peter continues, “King David predicted Jesus’ resurrection a thousand years before it happened” (v25-28):

25 I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart is glad, and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, 27 because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. 28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.’

Peter then tells the crowd how he, along with the other 120, were eyewitnesses to Jesus’ resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God whereby he was declared “Lord and Christ” by the Father himself. If I ever received the response Peter did for his preaching at Pentecost, I would die a supremely happy preacher. According to the KJV we are told the people are “pricked to the heart.” NIV has “cut to the heart” (v37-stricken, pierced, convicted). Have you ever been panged with such throbbing guilt that you would do anything to drop it like a sack of potatoes or a bag of bricks? The deeply convicted people eagerly ask Peter “What should we do?”

The Way of Salvation

Again, what’s the rule when asking a preacher a question? Peter lays it on them, juicy and thick.

Just show up on Christmas and Easter or whenever you feel like it. Don’t smoke, drink, or chew, or run with people that do. Don’t cheat too much on your taxes, golf score, or spouse. Believe anything you want, just be sincere about it. Make Jesus an infinitesimal part of your belief system and everything will be fine and dandy.

Tragically, too many preachers preach a “gospel” that theologian Richard Niebuhr once described as [

A God without wrath who brings people without sin into a kingdom without judgment by means of a Christ without a cross.

Peter does not preach this kind of Gospel and I never will. Heaven and hell are hanging in the balance, and he wants to make sure they know the only way of salvation. Thus, he tells them (v38-40):

38 “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 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” 40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”

Repent & Be Baptized

Repent! Simply means to change your mind as the best way to change your life. Do a 180 on your thinking about Jesus, sin, and the direction of your life.

Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. This is water baptism which does not save us but, as Augustine once described, “is an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace” (like a wedding ring). Baptism is an induction into Christ’s church, a symbol of dying to self and resurrecting with Christ. Perhaps most of all, it is a personal declaration to heaven, hell, and earth that Jesus is your Lord and Savior.

For the Forgiveness of Sins. If you (or anyone else v39), repent and are baptized, your sins be forgiven because “anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (v21). This mean that no one is beyond saving. Salvation is a gift for all, even the most hard-hearted and hell-bent sinners among us!

In v38 Peter repeats something he already laid out in v17. Once our sins are forgiven, through repentance and baptism, we get the indwelling HOLY Spirit. When he resides in us, he, produces not only spiritual service gifts and Fruit(s) of the Spirit, but also something incredible. Paul writes about it in Ephesians 1:13-14.

13 You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a

seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

Christ in you (through the Holy Spirit) is the hope of glory” is how Paul put it in Colossians 1:27.

Conclusion

How do I know that my future is with the Lord forever?

I repented of my sins.

I have been baptized.

My sins, past, present, and future, are forgiven.

The Holy Spirit resides in me.

So, when I die or this old world is done, I know, without question what will happen to me. You?

Before we give you a chance to answer, let's conclude with the urgent warning Peter ends his message with, “Save yourself from this corrupt generation” (v40). Because of sin, this world is going to hell in a handbasket.

From the bottom of my heart, I beg you, don't go along with it. Respond, with repentance and baptism, to all that God has done for you in Jesus and you will be saved! A staggering 3000 people did when Peter instructed them, and heaven, hell, and this world has not been the same since (v40).