

Acts 3:312-26

“And when Peter saw *it*, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? 13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. 14 But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; 15 and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses. 17 And now, brethren, I wot [know] that through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your rulers. 18 But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. 19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; 20 and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. 22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. 23 And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. 24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. 25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. 26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquity.”

Introduction

[Audio version: <http://resources.ccphilly.org/SPM598>]

“The third chapter of the Book of Acts, no doubt there is great excitement in this brand new church in Jerusalem with the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, Peter standing up and sharing, ah, 3,000 souls coming in that day, the organization of a primitive and yet wonderful church, abiding steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine, the breaking of bread [fellowshipping] and prayers and so forth, you read through that structure. And then in the 3rd chapter it says that Peter and John were going up to the house of God at the hour of prayer. It’s all very Jewish still [and it was, which most Gentile Christians don’t realize, right up until around 325AD. For recent and very sound historic and archaeological proof of that, see and read through the entire article series starting at <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/index3.htm>]. We’re going up to the Temple at the hour of prayer. Now, certainly for these men, it’s very Jewish, but they understand that Jesus is the Messiah, the long-awaited Messiah of Israel. And the Jews, the religious Jews, had prayers for feasts, they had prayers for birth, they had prayers for death, they had many “canned, recited” prayers that were recited for certain things [later on, the Catholic church and the Church of England followed suit in these canned prayers, the English had their “Book of Common Prayer], and no doubt these men had watched Jesus pray, in fact they never said *‘Teach us to heal, teach us to walk on water, teach us how to multiply loaves of fishes and bread, that would be cool Lord,’* the one thing they said is ***‘Teach us to be praying,’*** in other words, ***‘Make us praying individuals,’*** it wasn’t how to, but they said ***‘teach us to be praying, Lord, make us, we watch you, we see it’s relationship, it’s not canned.’*** So they’re coming to the Temple at the hour of prayer, and yet their relationship now with heaven is vastly different than all those religious Jews that were gathered there. And of course as they’re coming into the Temple precincts, either up the southern steps or through the East Gate into the Court of the Gentiles, there then by the 14 steps that go up into the Court of Women by the Gate Beautiful, there sits a man, over 40 years old, crippled, born that way, who asks alms of Peter and John. And Peter, fixing his gaze upon him said ***‘Look at me, I have not silver and gold, but that which I have give I thee, in the name of Jesus Christ rise up and walk.’*** The man immediately jumps up, over 40 years crippled, no rehab, instantaneous, miraculous healing, muscle tissue, muscle tone, nerves, blood flow, things that had not been there a second before are all in place. The man is leaping and jumping and praising God, holding onto the apostles. And the crowds come running

together, no doubt this man is well-known. So, it seems that Peter and John, then back off into Solomon's Portico, which lined the whole east side of the Court of the Gentiles, looking over against the Court of Women. And no doubt there are thousands that come running together.

Peter's 2nd Sermon Follows This Amazing Healing

If you look in **verse 12**, it says **"And when Peter saw it,"** now what it's talking about is in **verse 11** it says **"as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John,"** notice, **"all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."** When Peter saw that, now we don't know the number. It's going to tell us a little further on in the study, that 5,000 men believed the things that they hear Peter preaching about. This is not 2,000 added to the 3,000, the language indicates 5,000 new converts. So, you figure what percentage, when the Lord tells the parable of the sower, it seems a fourth were sown on good ground, was there 20,000 individuals? how many people came together? I've been on the Temple Mount at Ramadan with 60,000 Muslims today, and there's still plenty of room, and the expanse of the Temple precincts were actually larger in this day. So, when these populations were swollen for the Feasts, and this is after Pentecost [Hebrew, Shavuot], we're not sure how many days, many have stayed there, thousands evidently come running, thousands, the ones who knew the man at the well, the ones that are saying that, *'I can't believe it, there's a miracle, those are the apostles, the men that were with Jesus,'* all of these people come running together. And when Peter sees that, when Peter saw **"it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?"** (verse 12) he asks two questions here, first **"Why do you marvel at this?"** and second, **"or why look ye so earnestly on us as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?"** He asked two questions, first, ***'Why are you marveling? You men of Israel, it's your God that parted the Red Sea, it's your God that brought people out from Egyptian bondage, it's your God who stopped***

the Jordan River and brought your ancestors into the land, it's your God that made the sun and the moon stand still in the valley of Ajelon, it's your God that worked through Elijah and Elisha, it's your God, why are you marveling at this? There's been a man whose crippled, whose healed, why marvel at this?

Secondly, *'Why do you look on us as though it's some power or holiness, something attached to us that was the means of this happening? We're just men, we're like you.'* Now look, great question today, because on some of the TV programs that we see today, fake healers, nobody's healed, you know the show ends with the individual, lighting behind them, with a glow around them, the emphasis is very much on the individual, these men [Peter and John] understood *'it didn't have anything to do with us.'* In fact, Peter, not that many days before this had denied Christ three times, we're going to see in his sermon, that's very much, something he understands in regards to his own infirmity. He says *'Why are you guys looking at us, there's no power invested in us, we're no reservoir of holiness or power,'* this answers the second question, *'Why are you looking on us? it's not by our own power or holiness we have made this man to walk,'* they didn't want to touch it. Wouldn't it be refreshing if everything you saw today was like that? [everything to do with these fake faith-healers, that is] *'Why look at us?'* He says this, **"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go."** (verse 13) this is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob doing this, it's not Peter and James, they didn't take off their sports jackets and swing them around and whack people down, they weren't slaying crowds in the spirit, there's none of that. And it's so different from so much of we see that goes on today. You know, there's none of that. I mean, it's so different from so much we see that goes on today. They said *'This is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, he has glorified his Son Jesus in this healing, whom you delivered up and denied,'* notice that, Peter keenly aware the human tendency to do that, he had done it himself, *'and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.'* **"But you denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you;"** (verse 14) he really lays it on here, he's not trying to be friendly. Peter twice mentions that they had denied Christ, I think he's got a sensitive spot there relative to that. And I think, look, I don't think

he's being condemning, I don't think he is damning them, with his attitude because of their denial, I think he's trying to make a point with them, so they understand. Because he's going to bring them around to God's grace. And who knew better than Peter, because he had denied him three times, and the Lord had restored him. And he had walked in more light certainly than they did, he was with Jesus for three years before he denied him. So Peter, who better to bring this message of God's grace and forgiveness to this crowd as they run together. He says **'You've denied him, you've denied that Just One, and worse than that, you desired a murderer instead to be granted to you.'** So he's still chopping off ears, only with a better sword now, the Sword of the Spirit.

*'You Killed The Author Of Life, The One Who
Created And Holds The Universe Together'*

And remarkably he says **"you killed"** the King James says **"the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses."** (verse 15) that's their central message. This is a remarkable verse, **'You killed the Prince of life,'** it's really **'you killed the author of life, the origin of life, the author, the one individual,'** doesn't it seem like a contradiction, **'you killed the author of life, and then God raised him from the dead.'** John tells us at the beginning of his Gospel, you know **'In the beginning was the Word, the Word was God, the same was in the beginning,'** he says **'all things were made by him, nothing was made except it was made by him.'** he made everything. It tells us in **Colossians**, in fact it's easier for me to read it than to take a shot at it, speaking of Jesus he says **"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, for by him, or in him, are all things created that are in heaven, that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions or principalities or powers, all things were created by him, and for him, and he is before all things, he's the origin, and by him all things consist."** I mean, if you break those things down, he's saying he's the origin of all things, he's the Creator of all things, all things were made by him, made for him, all things exist in him, and more than that, he says "by him all things consist," it's a Greek word which means "all things are held together, the universe is held

together.” Look, one of the things we see in nuclear fusion and fission, we see the incredible amount of force that’s released when that structure is split. Again, scientists are still queried by the atomic structure itself, why in the center of the atom, if there’s a neutron, that’s basically made of protons, why aren’t they pushing apart, positive forces repel, if you take two positive ends of a magnet they push apart, and rotating around them are electrons that have negative charges, why aren’t they pulling the protons out, why aren’t the protons pulling them in, we don’t know what holds all that together. The Bible says it’s Christ that holds everything together. One day he’s going to loose it, it tells us [cf. Revelation 20:14-15 and 21:1]. He holds it all together, all things are by him, all things are for him, and by him all things consist. Now he is the author of life. And sin enters into the world, and instead of just releasing everything [in one Big Bang in reverse], and going with plan B, he’s slain before the foundation of the world, he gives himself, he enters into his own creation and takes upon himself the sin of fallen humanity. It’s a mystery, it’s a mystery almost in, it says as he is beaten, according to Colossians, he’s holding together the knuckles in the Roman soldiers’ hands that are beating his face, as he is spit upon, he holds together the spit that flies through the air. As his hair is ripped out of his head and his beard, he holds together the nerve endings that are feeling the pain. As the thorns are pushed through his brow he holds together the thorns that afflict him, the iron spikes that go through his wrist, he holds them together. He is bearing complete responsibility for his fallen creation, he is maintaining it as it works itself out on him, and then bearing the sin of mankind, he is the author of life, no life without him. All things were made by him, nothing was made that was not made by him. And here he says ***‘You have killed the author of life,’*** what a crime, ***“whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.”*** (verse 15) ***“And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.”*** (verse 16) He does something wonderful here, we’re told in Hebrews Jesus is the author and the finisher of our faith, he kind of lays it out here in the verse, he says first of all ***‘Why do you marvel? why look you on us as though there’s some power or holiness that’s part of our being, it has nothing to do with this,’*** and then he removes it all from human energy and says ***‘it is in his name, through faith in his name that this man is made strong,’*** and he says ***‘not only that, yea, through faith***

which is by him.' So he says, yes, it's the faith of him, it's the faith in his name, and he says even that faith you can't have, because that faith is by him, he's the one who gives the faith itself to have faith in his name, he's the author and finisher, Peter says ***'it has nothing to do with us.'*** ***"And now, brethren, I wot [know] that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."*** King James, you have to love it "I wot that through ignorance" it's not like Elmer Fudd *'I wot you a weely wong letter,'* it's ***"I wot, I know"*** is the idea, ***"that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers."*** ***"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do,"*** as the nails are going through his wrists.

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God In Miniature, Short-form

"But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled." (verse 18) All of these things were told by the prophets. And now the crowd is listening, there is a great sense of that, we're going to see. Listen to what he says then, this is a very clear message. He doesn't say *'You know, this will be mentally stimulating for you if we talk about these kinds of things,'* he doesn't say *'Jesus is one of the ways, there's lots of ways to approach God,'* he doesn't give some kind of fancy-shmancy, friendly, non-offensive kind of message, he doesn't do any of that at all, and he's talking to religious people in the Temple precincts. He says to them what's necessary, he says ***"Repent ye therefore,"*** because in his death there was a fulfillment of things, he had come for a purpose, and he had accomplished all that God spoke of through the prophets, therefore the payment is made, he says ***"Repent ye therefore, and be converted,"*** there's no mental assent to Jesus Christ, there is a brokenness, there is a repentance, *metanoia*, it's not even just a feeling, it's a decision, *metanoia*, to change the mind. You know, a life that's been going away from him, changing and coming to him instead of away from him, that's when your ***"sins may be blotted out,"*** I love that blotter, don't you? ***"when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;"*** and that's what comes, as we're saved. I remember the second that I was saved, his presence, the tears, it was a new-birth, it was a phenomenon in my life, it was real, and refreshing, when I woke up the next day I was alive, I had been dead up until that time, it was just so different. It

says **“when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;”** look, let me tell you something, I need to remember that, not you, I’m just telling you so you can pray for me. I get so busy sometimes, with the work of the Lord, that it can become the greatest enemy in regards to my communion with the Lord. I can be so busy doing, and he’s way more interested in the servant than in the service. I have, you know, raised four, and I didn’t want them as servants, I was so interested and I am still so interested in their lives, their feelings, I am an observer, watching them, listening to them, taking internal inventory of things, loving them, and I want my presence to be a blessing to them. Here, he says there are times of refreshing that come from the presence of the Lord. And if you’re anything like I am, when you have one of those times, and the Lord’s presence blows your mind, and there’s tears, and you come away, and you kind of say to yourself, *‘Duh, why don’t I do this every day, why don’t I do this all the time, I’m so stupid, I come back here, and Lord your presence blows my mind, and I remember what this is all about Lord, and when I’m with you I’m overwhelmed, your love and your power,’* and he says there are those times of refreshing that then will come, when there’s repentance, there’s conversion, your sins being blotted out, **“times” plural “of refreshing that shall come from the presence of the Lord;” “and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (verses 20-21)** “whom the heaven” now he’s not talking about your salvation, he’s saying *‘in this process, we’re waiting, he’s going to send Jesus Christ,’* **“which was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.” (verses 20b-21)** [Comment: while as Pastor Joe points out, we can all experience *‘times of spiritual refreshing,’* which is true, but also when verses 19-21 are taken as a whole, in context with each other, as a complete unit they apply to a message calling for repentance now, when someone hears the Gospel as Peter’s preaching it back then, and for whenever we may hear it, so that when the major times of refreshing come from and as a result of the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ, we may be in the condition of having had our sins blotted out, so we’re ready for when Jesus will restore all things to the way they should be, Garden of Eden conditions across the planet (cf. Isaiah 11:1-16). At this point in time, at Jesus’ 2nd coming, we will become as Jesus is,

truly born-again, immortal beings possessing eternal life as Jesus does (cf. 1st Corinthians 15:49-54 and 1st John 3:1-2). One leader of a major denomination said these three verses were the Gospel of the Kingdom of God in miniature.] Now, the only other time you have this word “restitution” is in chapter 1, verse 6, when they say **‘Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’** that’s our word “restitution.” He says **‘it’s not for you to know the times and the seasons the Father has set in his own power.’** They knew from him being with him for forty days and hearing him speak of the things of the Kingdom, there was a long-term plan for Israel, they asked of it. And here Peter in his preaching, he says **‘There is that time coming when this Jesus whom we preach, he’s going to be sent, God is sending him, whom heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things that God has spoken by the mouth of all of his prophets since the world began, that Christ is going to come, and he’s going to set up his Kingdom on the earth.’** [see https://unityinchrist.com/prophecies/2ndcoming_4.htm and <https://unityinchrist.com/kingdomofgod/mkg1.htm> for some studies about those prophecies.] This doesn’t say when it speaks of the restitution of all things, that what it means is there’s a time when finally everybody whose suffering in hell is going to be retrieved from hell, or that there’s a time when the bad angels are finally going to be restored again, it’s not talking about that at all, the New Testament knows nothing about that. This is talking about the time when his Kingdom will be set up, and his Kingdom will be established, Christ will come. Listen, I’m looking forward to that. This is what it says, when you study the Book of Revelation, when his Kingdom is set up, animal kingdom, complete peace (cf. Isaiah 11), lion, lamb, the wolf, the calf, child playing in the hole of the asp, the serpent, no danger (cf. Isaiah 11), Zechariah tells us that the aged people will walk in the evening, those are 800, 900-year-olds, real aged people, without fear, the children will play in the streets, not Head-Start programs, it doesn’t say children will pray in the streets, children will play in the streets. Imagine what it will be like. No armies, no military spending, beating swords and spears into pruning hooks and plowshares, no police by you guys, whatever that is, I don’t know. No lawyers, no orphanages, no dentists, no surgeons, no children’s hospitals, no divorce, no child abuse, just we can go on and on and on, no elections, no spending multi-millions of dollars on campaigns, one King in place, not up for election every four years, what a day that will be, the setting up of

the Kingdom, the time of restitution of all things that the prophets have spoken of since the world began.

Jesus Was The Prophet Moses Said Would Come

“For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.” (from the Book of Deuteronomy chapter 18) **“And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.” (verses 22-23)** Now look, they knew this, when John the Baptist came preaching, it says, this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him **‘Who art thou? He confessed and denied not, but confessed I am not the Christ, I’m not the Messiah.’** Notice, **‘And they asked him, What then, art thou Elias, Elijah? and he said ‘I am not,’ and then they said ‘Art thou that prophet?’ and he answered ‘No,’** they were speaking exactly what Peter’s preaching of here. Those religious Jews in Jerusalem knew God said he was going to raise up one like Moses from among their brethren, and that they were to hear him, and that those who would not hear him, he says here, would be destroyed from among the people. They understood while he’s preaching [and amazingly enough, God gave the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea 40 years time, from 30AD to 70AD “to hear him”, and then all who had not heard and responded to the Gospel were destroyed by the invading Romans, who destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple.] And here we are 2,000 years later, we’re listening to this on a Sunday night, not so relative to our culture the way we were brought up, this context still very Jewish, these Jews, thousands and thousands gathered there at this miracle, listening to him, completely familiar with the things he’s saying here, and he said **“it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that followed after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed”** singular **“shall all the kindreds”** not just Israel **“of the earth be blessed.”** and he says, **“Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him**

to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquity.” (verses 23-26) ‘Unto you first,’ which indicates that this message will go to the Gentiles afterwards, to others also. But **“Unto you first,”** he’s saying, beginning in Jerusalem, he knows then the Lord said it would go to Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8), **“Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” (verse 26) ‘every one from his twistedness,’** it speaks of the flaw in our nature, we are iniquitous, there is something warped, we’re twisted within us. Trespass is something we do with that iniquity, we step across the lines God has asked us not to step across, and that is sin when we do that. [What is the Bible definition of sin? 1st John 3:4, “Sin is the transgression of the law.”] But it is because of iniquity, it’s the fallen nature.

Acts 4:1-13

“And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees, came upon them, 2 being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3 And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide. 4 Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of men was about five thousand. 5 And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and the elders, and scribes, 6 and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. 7 And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost [Holy Spirit], said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, 9 if we this day be examined of the good deed done to this impotent man, by what means he is made whole; 10 be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole. 11 This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head stone of the corner. 12 Neither is there salvation in any other:

for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. 13 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.”

First Persecution Comes On The New Church

Now this is the first persecution the Church is going to experience, physically, where they are going to take the apostles now into custody, it says **“And as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees,”** they were the ruling party, they held power and sway, **“came upon them,”** notice this, **“being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.”** **(verses 1-2)** Now the Sadducees, again, didn't believe in the resurrection, they didn't believe in spirits, they didn't believe in angels, and as the saying goes, that's why they're Sad-you-see, that's a good way in your mind to separate Sadducees from Pharisees and remember the difference. The Pharisees believed in resurrection (i.e. they accepted the rest of OT Scriptures, such as Ezekiel 37:1-14), the Pharisees were more orthodox in their beginnings, they believed in the Prophets and the other writings, they believed in angels, they believed in spirits. The Sadducees were the ruling party, they only believed in the first five books of Moses, they didn't believe in resurrection or angels or spirits. Jesus of course dealt with them in the Temple precincts right out of the first five books and proved that ***‘I am the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not I was, but I am the God of the living, not a God of the dead,’*** he dealt with their misconceptions right there. So the Sadducees here are bothered by their preaching of the resurrection. Remember, when Lazarus was raised from the dead, that miracle was so notable that they sought to kill him. He was dead, it was a bad theological argument for the Sadducees, the guy raised from the dead, because they taught there wasn't a resurrection, so they wanted to kill Lazarus for being raised from the dead, *‘This guy's got some nerve, we'll fix him, we'll kill him again.’* So the Sadducees are grieved here, and the thousands of people here that are listening, and that he was preaching the resurrection from, *eknecron*, out from among the dead, **“And they laid hands on them, and put *them* in**

hold unto the next day: for it was now eventide.” (verse 3) now this is not like a full-Nelson or a chokehold, this is talking about the prison, ***‘They laid hands on them and put them in the prison unto the next day,’*** the reason, **“for it was now eventide”** the end of the day had come. [And now apparently they’re abiding by the ruling that court proceedings of the Sanhedrin couldn’t take place at night, unlike their holding illegal court proceedings against Jesus at night some 50+ days previously.]

5,000 Believed Because Of The Word Preached To Them

But listen, **verse 4, “Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.”** That’s quite a sermon. No PA system, no advertising, there’s no warm-up of months getting ready for the outreach, there’s a spontaneous ***‘Silver and gold have I not, but that which I have give I thee, in the name of Jesus rise up and walk,’*** and it creates, now look, it’s God using signs and wonders to bear witness to the Word, it’s not the Word being witness to signs and wonders. Here it says, ***‘They believed the Word that was preached to them, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.’*** It doesn’t say they believed because of the miracle, they marvelled, they were astounded, they didn’t know what to do with that. The reason that they believed is Peter explained it and called them to repentance, and they understood the things that he was saying, and they believed because of the Word. That never changes, that never changes. You know, sometimes we see so much in the Church [greater Body of Christ], you know, it’s almost a bit side-show-ish, in regards to signs and wonders and these things. And it’s very interesting, digging in, you find that there are really no validated miracles taking place [within these side-show supposed Christian groups]. But the Word being preached, they believed because of the Word, it’s so important for you and I. [Comment: And the Word that Peter and the Gospel writers such as Matthew and Luke were preaching at this early date was the Old Testament prophecies that showed and demonstrated distinctly that Yeshua, Jesus of Nazareth had fulfilled **all** of the Old Testament prophecies about his coming as Messiah to pay for the sins of the world. To read those prophecies about Jesus’ first coming and see that Jesus is the promised Messiah,

see

<https://unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>. To read prophecies about his 2nd coming, see https://unityinchrist.com/prophecies/2ndcoming_4.htm]

There's no speaking in tongues here, there's no flames of fire on anybody's head, there's not the repetition of the things that took place on Pentecost, there is now this Church Age that's been opened. Peter's standing up in power, no doubt, in the Spirit, he is preaching the Word, and it says **“many of them which heard the Word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand.” (verse 4)** and I wonder how many of them were there in the crowd?

The Religious Leaders Are About To Get ‘An Earful’ From Peter

“And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.” (verses 5-6) Now Annas was the appointed high priest by the Jewish people, they recognized him, the high priest was not elected every so many years, Aaron was high priest till he died, then his son Phineas was high priest till he died. Here Annas had been appointed, he was of the lineage of Aaron. But Annas was a crook, the carnivals of Annas or Bazaar or Tables of Annas were famous, that he set up to rake people over the coals for money, buying sacrifices, we have those historical estimates of money that was brought in by Annas. **“and Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas,”** who was the Roman appointee, and was in power till 36AD, **“and John, and Alexander,”** which are part of their family, **“and as many were of kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.”** Now, they would all be seated in a semicircle, there were a number of tiers where the Sanhedrin would gather, 70 plus one, the high priest, and gather there. So you have 71 of the most authoritative, influential, powerful men in Israel gathered against two fishermen, and the odds are not fair, the 71 are way outdone by the two fishermen. It's going to be because they're filled with the Holy Ghost and the other guys who have been with Jesus, they're way outmatched. But they do their best. So you can imagine here, Peter and John are going to be set in the midst of these 71 religious leaders, the most revered in all

of Israel gathered around them. **“And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?” (verse 7)** Now that was a legitimate question, in Deuteronomy it said if you see someone do a miracle, ***Deuteronomy 13*** I believe, then you asked ***‘in what name, what power?’*** If it’s in the name of another god or causing the children of Israel to turn away and worship other gods, you stone them. So, they’re within their boundaries to say to these men, ***‘By what name have you done this? what authority, what name, how have you done this?’*** not because they’re being genuine in their question, but they have them here on trial. And then it says this, **“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost [Holy Spirit], said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known”** he says to them, ***‘Are you guys really putting us on trial because of the good thing done to a crippled man? is that really why you have us here? you really want to know how dare we heal this man that’s been crippled for 40 years, laying here at your gate that you never did anything for? Well if you really want to know, I’m going to tell you,’*** and it says Peter here, filled with the Holy Ghost, again, Matthew, the Gospels, this man Peter, terrified in front of these religious leaders at the palace of the high priest and Caiaphas, had denied three times knowing Christ. Now here he is, standing in front of all of them, and of course the difference is, he’s born-again, he’s filled with the Holy Ghost, that makes all of the difference in the world. The Greek text indicates ***‘having been filled right then, it’s a fresh new filling, God puts his Spirit on him right then as he is about to give an account.’*** The Lord had said this to them, ***“When they deliver you up, take no thought how or what you shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour for what you shall speak, for it is not you that speaks, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.”*** They heard Jesus say those things. Now what reality there was, Peter stands up, and he’s animated by the Spirit, he’s filled with the Spirit. **“Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them,”** so this is the Spirit’s address through Peter’s mouth, **“Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole;”** if that’s what you want to know, **“be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye”** now that’s in the plural, he’s speaking to this religious crowd, **“whom ye**

crucified,” now they did it through Roman hands, using the Romans as their tool, but they were responsible, **“whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.”** (verses 9-10) and he says, **“This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.”** (verse 11) They are so familiar with these texts out of the Messianic songs of ascent [in Psalms], they know these are Messianic Psalms, 118, as they would work their way through these, **‘the stone which you builders set at nought is become the head of the corner,’** they knew exactly what he was talking about here, that they were Messianic prophecies, speaking of the One who would come [and nailing them squarely using this passage for how they set Jesus, the chief corner stone, at nought by killing him]. Again, the Scripture clear about Christ in that respect. To the Jew, it tells us, that he, Jesus is a stumbling stone and a rock of offense. Understand, we have an entire culture here, look, maybe if you have friends or relatives that are in a denominational system, who are not born-again, who don’t know Christ personally in a relationship that are very religious, you know how hard it is to talk to them about the need to be born-again, to know Christ. Whereas this culture was their nationality, was their bloodline, it was their people, it was their God, if you were a Jew, you’re a Jew, you’re a Jew. And now Peter’s trying to describe to them what has happened through Jesus Christ [Yeshua haMeschiach]. All of this, you know, they know the Scripture, they know the prophecies, but now they’re having to accept what he’s saying about the one that they personally had put to death. So, to them he’s a stumbling stone, because they have been circumcised, they kept the dietary law, they had done all of these things their whole lives, dedicated themselves, so many, to working out, as it were, some righteousness of their own, and now what they’re hearing is, **‘No, no, no, there is no righteousness of your own, if you’ve just coveted something you’ve broken the law, if you’ve had lust in your heart you’ve broken the law, the problem is, that you have no righteousness, you need redemption, you need atonement,’** which they should have known. It’s very interesting today to talk to religious Jews, because, you know, you ask *‘Where’s your sacrifice?’* When the worshipper came and the priest would examine again the lamb, the priest never examined the worshipper, it was a foregone conclusion the worshipper was there dragging a lamb because the worshipper had blemishes, the worshipper needed forgiveness, it was the sacrifice that had to be spotless, without

blemish. *'Where's your blood atonement today?'* it's a huge question [for the religious Jew, because the Temple and its sacrificial systems is gone]. So, to the Jew, Jesus Christ is a stumbling block, a stumbling stone, a rock of offense. To the Gentile nations of the world, to the Greeks he's foolishness, but Daniel says he's the smiting stone, he will come, you know, you look at all of this maneuvering in the world today, in regards to the Middle East, in regards to oil, you know, you look at a world where oil is more important than blood, sadly. You look at man trying to establish his own moral standards, thumbing his nose at God, look at the movies that are coming out now that are blatantly mocking a Holy God. And the greatest danger to our country, again, is not the terrorists but it is that we have no more fear of God as a nation. Because the might of a nation depends on its righteousness [and if that's true, during World War II the mightiest nations were the Soviet Union and the United States of America (and this righteousness would be measured by the righteousness of the average citizen, not necessarily their governments and rulers)]. So to the unbelieving nations, he is the smiting stone, but for the believer, you and I, he's the chief cornerstone of our lives. Everything is to be built, measured off of him, off of his Word, off of his person. Not an all-inclusive one-world religion, but Jesus Christ. He says here **"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."** (verse 11)

Only One Road, Way Leads To Salvation & God

Everything is to be measured from him, **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must" "be saved."** (verse 12) (that's in the emphatic)

there's no other way to be saved but through the name of Jesus [Yeshua]. Listen, I didn't say that. Peter said that, filled with the Holy Ghost. That indicates there's no salvation in the name of Buddha, he even had some good things to say. There's no salvation through his name. There's no salvation in the name of Mohammed, he may have said some things that were good, no salvation. No salvation through Confucius, Moraster or the other religious systems of the world, no salvation. That's narrow, that's what some

people think. I think it's remarkable. It isn't, you know, the fact there is, you know, people say there's only one way to be saved, that's just the wrong way of looking at it. The remarkable thing is, there is **a way** to be saved, there is a way. And you have friends, relatives, they challenge you, they talk to you, look, again, if they came up with a cure for cancer, no one would be saying 'You mean there's only one way to be cured of cancer? That's too narrow. I just bought a juicer, one of those television ads, and I want to be cured of cancer drinking juice, vegetable juice, or going on a macrobiotic diet, or I'm going to go to a clinic in Mexico, don't tell me...' No, if there was a sure-fire cure for cancer, people would be standing in line around the block and nobody would be saying 'This is too narrow,' people would be saying 'A break-through! a break-through! there's a way to be cured!' Isn't it interesting, nobody's looking at Jesus Christ and saying 'A break-through!' Peter's saying it, **there is a way, there's a way**. Isn't it amazing, for every one hundred people born, one hundred people die. 'Now there's an inoculation, there's a vaccine, there's a cure.' Death is way more deadly than cancer, everybody dies of death. And there's a cure. There's forgiveness in Christ. **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (verse 12)** And by the way, look, we hear this, there's a huge push in regards, and we're hearing about it, aren't you? global economics, it's necessary, they're saying, for the economy of America, and the other economies around the world to survive, we must become a global economic community. Then they're saying for us to survive, there must be a global politic, a cooperation between nations, a one-world government as it were [under Christ, yes, that's good, under man, no-way, not good]. And then Peter Drucker's third leg of the stool, there needs to be a one-world religious system, to go with the one-world economic system and the one-world political system or the stool falls over. And it's being taugted and pushed, and we're hearing more and more 'All ways lead to God,' and we're hearing people with tremendous opportunity through the media to say all kinds of things. Peter clearly says here, **'There is one way, one name given among men whereby we must be saved,'** we're being told [by the world] to be broadminded. I'm not broadminded, I'm narrowminded. ok? Ask my wife. I'm narrowminded, the Bible says **'Broad is the way that leads to destruction, many therebe that go thereof, narrow is the way that leads to eternal life, and few therebe that find it.'** My mind is right there. Jesus Christ. How interesting for these Jews, now the Jews were not

broadminded, all other religions were pagan to them. But what they're having to accept, as they listen here [to Peter] is that Jesus of Nazareth was their Messiah. It's not the Messiah they were looking for, they were looking for a Messiah that was going to overthrow the Roman government, they were looking for a Messiah that was going to let every man sit under his vine and his fig tree, the world's looking for that Messiah today, that will be the anti-christ of this world that will come with a solution to the economic problems, that will come with some kind of false peace, we see in Revelation chapter 6 the white horse coming with deception and a haunting policy supposedly to bring peace to the world, before world war breaks out across the globe. They were looking for a different Messiah.

In Closing

And Peter's saying, ***'This is the One whose come, he's the author of life, he's made this man whole, and you can turn to him in repentance, and your sins will be blotted out, and times of refreshing will come to you in the presence of the Lord. This is the One whose been spoken of, of all of the prophets, you know the verses'*** he says to them, ***'this is the One who would come and be raised up like unto Moses, this One, and if you don't hear the things he has to say you'll be destroyed from among the people, you know how your own prophets gave testimony'*** he says ***'to all of these things.'*** And it says as the people heard those things, five thousand of them believed. Now the religious leaders can't hack that. And now they drag these men in front of them, and the Lord, graciously, fills Peter freshly with the Holy Spirit, to stand up, not to condemn, I believe the Lord still loved this religious body, to give a testimony, here you have a sinner saved by grace standing in front of them, saying these things to them, challenging, that's for sure, ah, ***'you crucified him, and it's through his name that this man stands before you whole, this is the stone which was set at nought by you builders, which is become the head of the corner, neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.'*** "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter" that's filled with the Spirit, ***"and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men,"*** which

probably indicates they weren't studied, they wouldn't consider them scholars, because they probably didn't work in Hebrew but in Aramaic, certainly as you read John's Gospel and the three Epistles and the Book of Revelation, nothing unlearned or ignorant about John, yes, a very limited vocabulary if you're a Greek scholar, it's wonderful to read the things he wrote, but profound in tenses and the way he uses the language. Peter's staggering when you read his Epistles and the sermons he preached, they were unlearned and ignorant men in regards to the religious establishment, but not in regards to the Lord, these men were profound in their depth. It says they **"perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men,"** they hadn't studied with them **"they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."** (verse 13) Now they're wrong again, these men had not been with Jesus, these men were with Jesus still, as they stood in front of them. These are not men that had been with Jesus, these are men that were still with Jesus. Your testimony, my testimony to this lost world, certainly, ah, we can't go further than this. Ah, your testimony, my testimony to this lost world certainly, a regular part of our praying should be *'Lord, fill me with your Spirit, fill me afresh, Lord, fill me today for the things that I face.'* Again, not enough to say *'Well I'm a Spirit-filled Christian,'* it's not a title, it's a condition. And because, you know, somebody jabbered in tongues in 1976 does not mean they are a Spirit-filled Christian today, let's see it in your life, let's see the power of God there. And let's see the evidence of it in the fruit of the Spirit in your life. Let's see the empowering of the Spirit, **those who are led of the Spirit are the children of God,** let's see those things, for you, for me. And certainly, it's so much different when you're with somebody, you go to share, you're saying *'Lord, help me to know what to say, Lord, give me the verses,'* and all these verses come flooding into your mind, and you're like a machinegun, **bub-bub-bub-bub-bub!** you're taking them down, you know. And again you're walking away saying *'Man I was good,'* you were not, you were just a vessel that the Lord used, your dendrites never fire right unless he fills you with the Holy Spirit. So we want to be filled with the Spirit, and to me that is, what it mandates is, that we would be with Jesus. Look, the most profound theology that there is, is a personal relationship with the Living Christ, it's a personal relationship with Christ, that when you lay down tonight, before you close your eyes, his presence, you have his presence, you do, but that you enjoy it, you commune with him. That when you wake up in the morning. You know, to me it's amazing, when you open your

eyes, another day, here I am, I'm still breathing, *'What's up for today Lord? Help me to stand this creaky bunch of bones up, and I'll rub my eyes till they start working, and let's go Lord, what's on the docket for today?'* On the phones, someone calls and I'm thinking *'I don't know what to say to this person, help me Lord.'* It's so wonderful, sitting in my office, somebody comes for counseling, I think *'Lord, I'm scared, this person thinks I know something, help me, give me a verse, show me where to go with this Lord, help me, give me your heart here, Lord, from your Word, what does your Word say about this? How does it apply Lord, bring the verses to my memory.'* How wonderful, and you know what it's like, look, I've got a few folks in my life, older, a few younger, and I just know that they know Jesus. And I enjoy being around them, because when I'm around them I'm just saying *'This is a person that knows Jesus, this person spends time with Jesus, and it's just undeniable.'* What a wonderful testimony that makes us. Look, as we move through this, I encourage you to read ahead, if the Lord tarries, next Sunday night the rest of the 4th chapter into the 5th chapter, we'll look at these things. But the lessons for us today as we move through it, take note of them, read them slowly, go through them, let the Holy Spirit speak to your heart. Let's stand, we'll pray, we'll sing this last song, and look, I would encourage you to do this, you don't have to run out of here, you can say to the person next to you *'Do me a favor, you know, I haven't been filled with the Spirit, you know, I've been so busy I haven't been spending time alone with the Lord, just quickly pray for me.'* It doesn't have to be routine, as we finish the study, the Word is always going to be the center of what we do here, we're going to lift our hearts in song, our voices, but I encourage you, you don't just have to file out quickly and get to your car as fast as you can to get out of the parking lot. I encourage you to take some time, if you need prayers, to talk to somebody around you, just say *'Would you pray with me quickly, I'm facing something this week, I'm facing something, entered into a season of my life, I've been so busy I haven't spent any time with the Lord, I certainly need a fresh filling of his Spirit, I want to renew my personal relationship with Jesus, just to a depth greater than the depth I've enjoyed, I want everything that he's making available to me of himself.'* Just take, don't be afraid to take the time...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Acts 3:12-26 and Acts 4:1-13, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

related links:

Audio version: <http://resources.ccphilly.org/SPM598>

What was the “early Church” really like for its first 300 years? See <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/index3.htm> (and read through all four “html pages,” a four-part series based on recent historical and archaeological findings).

Acts 3:19-21, the Gospel in Miniature is seen through the prophecies at these links:

<https://unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>

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