

The First Sermon Preached Under The New Covenant

Introduction

- I. This morning I want to talk about the first sermon ever preached in the name of our risen Lord.
- II. Remember that God sees the end from the beginning (Isa. 46:10).
 - A. He made the first promise of a Savior in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:15).
 - B. He chose Abraham even before there was a nation of Israel (Gen. 12:1–3).
 - C. Abraham’s descendants were formed into a nation in Egypt (Exodus 1).
 - D. God used Moses and the prophets to shape the nation, and had not even revealed the full plan to His angels (1 Pet. 1:12).
 - E. God saw His plan unfolding through the ages, until the time was perfect for the Messiah to come into the world (Gal. 4:4).
 - F. For 33 years Christ walked among men, and left us an example to follow.
 - G. After the tragic scene at the cross, He came forth from the borrowed grave triumphant over the powers of sin and death and thus brought light and immortality to light.
 - H. Then, for the first time in history, the glad announcement was made that the gospel was to be preached to all the world, and that “and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (Luke 24:47).
- III. After the resurrection, the apostles were told to wait in Jerusalem (Acts 1:4–8).
 - A. The message was too important to rely on their own memories, they must wait for the outpouring of the Spirit.
 - B. To understand the sermon delivered on that day, you must find out the time of it, the character of the audience, the preachers, the contents of the sermon and the effect on the hearers.

Discussion

I. A Joyous Day

- A. “Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1).
 1. Pentecost was one for the three great feast days in Jewish economy, the others being the Passover and the annual day of atonement.
 2. Always on the first day of the week (never on any other day).
 3. The first day of the week was when our Lord was resurrected.
- B. On this Pentecost Christ was crowned at His Father’s right hand and His Kingdom was established upon this earth—it was also the time when the terms of Divine pardon were first made known unto men.
- C. So, here we are in Jerusalem, at God’s announcement, on the first day of the week, at around 9:00 A.M. in the morning.
- D. The Holy Spirit came to the apostles (Acts 2:2–4).

II. The Audience

- A. You have never seen an audience like this, even though you might have visited the Superbowl or Indy 500 (Acts 2:5–13).
 - 1. These were devout men who had gathered to worship God.
 - 2. Devout men from every nation under heaven—15 are mentioned.
- B. Here is a select crowd of honest, upright men devoted to religious matters, who had gathered from every corner of the Greco-Roman world to attend this feast.
- C. Men from up around the Caspian Sea all the way down to the Persian Gulf, up the rivers of the Tigris and Euphrates.
 - 1. Passing the Wilderness of Wandering into the continent of Africa, representatives from Libya about Cyrene, as far west as Rome.
 - 2. There were also strangers and proselytes.

III. The Preachers

- A. Peter stood up *with* the other eleven apostles (Acts 2:14).
- B. They had the “keys to the kingdom” (Matt. 16:19; 18:18).
- C. They were guided by the Holy Spirit (John 14:2).

IV. The Sermon

- A. Prior to the sermon an objection had to be cleared away.
 - 1. Were these men drunk? No!
 - 2. An appeal was made to the Scriptures (Acts 2:14–21).
 - 3. The apostles now have the attention of the audience.
- B. Four propositions in the sermon (Acts 2:22–36).
 - 1. Jesus of Nazareth was a Man approved of God by “miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst.”
 - 2. Jesus was “delivered by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God.”
 - 3. “You have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death.”
 - 4. God raised Jesus from the grave.
- C. This is truly a model sermon for all time!
 - 1. They cleared up misunderstandings and prepared the audience for receiving the message.
 - 2. Not much time was spent on the first three points—the audience already agreed with the first three points.
- D. The main point of the sermon—the resurrection of Christ from the grave.
 - 1. Quoted from their own prophet, David (Acts 2:25; Psa. 16:8–11).
 - 2. If they accept David, they must accept his testimony.
 - 3. The purpose of the resurrection—Christ was raised to sit on the throne with His father (Acts 2:30).
- E. Evidence of the resurrection:
 - 1. The recorded testimony of David.
 - 2. The eyewitness testimony of the Apostles.
 - 3. The present demonstration which they could see and hear.

V. The Effect On The Audience

- A. Look at what happened (Acts 2:37–41).
 1. Peter preached a simple lesson.
 2. The audience heard the message.
 3. They were cut to the heart and forced to inquire about salvation.
- B. The question is, “What shall these believers do?”
 1. Peter, guided by the Spirit, responded by saying, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).
 2. It is strange to me that preachers with high sounding titles and letters after their names will not tell audiences here in town the same thing that Peter told his audience on Pentecost.
 3. Peter said, “repent and be baptized”—these two items are joined together by the conjunction “and.”
 4. The answer was not a popular answer—more people might have attended if he promised some gimmick to draw men in.
 5. God’s only drawing power is the gospel (Rom. 1:16).
- C. Our response to the command is not a matter of understanding, it is a matter of faith.
- D. Peter told these people to “save themselves.”
- E. The Lord added those who obey to the church (Acts 2:47).

Conclusion

- I. This is the same plan of salvation for us today.
- II. Are there those here who are willing to render obedience to the Son of God today like those on Pentecost did?
- III. Do you believe the story of the cross? If so, why should you linger?
- IV. The very fact that God demands obedience is the highest possible reason.
- V. Out of respect for His authority, out of regard for His word, do it and trust Him for the fulfillment of His sure word.

Based upon a sermon by N.B. Hardeman