

# *Lamp in the Valley Ministries*

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Meeting address: 167 South Country Rd, Remsenburg

Bible study Wednesdays 7 - 8 PM

Acts 1 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

1 The first account I composed, Theophilus,

- Who is "Theophilus"?
  - The name means "one who loves God" - so this may be addressed to all such people

about all that Jesus began to do and teach,

- Why "began"?
  - He came to announce the kingdom of Heaven and tell us to pray to Him and spread the Gospel. The work continues until Judgment Day.
  - HIS work is finished. Ours is continual but He supports us.
  - John 4:35-38

2 until the day when He was taken up to heaven,

- We remember His ministry on earth but He lives on in Heaven
  - Romans 8:33-39
  - What does verse 2 here and verse 33/39 in Romans 8 tell us?
    - The love of God is in Him and He is in Heaven and interceding for us
    - So as long as we obey and love Him we have the love of God through Him!

after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.

- What do you notice about how He gave the orders?
- The Holy Spirit was necessary even for Christ to help us while He was on earth

3 To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.

- What does this tell us about faith?
  - John 14:11
  - 1 Corinthians 15:6
  - Jesus Himself made an effort to give proof, so that we don't just have to take His word - He knows we are weak
  - But - John 20:29

4 Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me;

- What seems odd here?
- Jesus says we HEARD OF the Holy Spirit from Him
- But not that He sent him
- John 14:17

5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

- Guzik - i. It may be more useful to describe the baptism of the Holy Spirit as a condition than as an experience. We should perhaps ask, “Are you baptized in the Holy Spirit?” instead of asking, “Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit?”
- Acts 4:5-12
  - What do you notice about the description of Peter?
  - If the Holy Spirit had descended on him permanently, why was it necessary to include “filled with the Holy Spirit”? Does the Bible give dramatic effect?
  - In light of Acts 2-5, perhaps the Holy Spirit is a bit more complicated than we make Him out to be. We shall study much more of this in the book of Acts.

6 So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”

- Why did they expect this?
  - Ezekiel 37:21-25
  - And many other passages
- What was different about their view of the Messiah?
  - They were not just interested in forgiveness; they longed for the kingdom
  - So should we - Romans 11:13-18
  - Hebrews 13:11-14

7 He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority;

- Matthew 24:15-34
- But Matthew 24:36-39
- Why can’t they know the times or seasons if so much other detail is given?
  - Matthew 6:25-34
  - Luke 12:35-38
  - We are soldiers clad in God’s armor fighting for His kingdom. We should concern ourselves with the battle, not with the logistics of supplying all the armies or the overall strategy of the war.

8 but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

- What is the nature of this power?
  - Same Greek word used to describe God’s power
  - Mark 5:30 - same word
- What should this tell us about witnessing and evangelizing?
  - It is the power of God in us that evangelizes, nothing that we do

9 And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

- Why would Jesus leave in so dramatic a fashion?
  - To make it clear that He did not just die again or disappear - He ascended bodily into Heaven

10 And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them.

11 They also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky?”

- Guzik - The two men (apparently angels) told the disciples to put their attention in the right place (obedience to Jesus’ command to return to Jerusalem), not in wondering where and how Jesus went. Jesus told them to go to the ends of the earth, and they stood gazing up into heaven.

- John 20:11-18
- Beautiful symmetry - first, look into tomb, news is resurrection, next look to Heaven, news is Gospel and second coming

This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”

Will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven: Jesus will return just as He left.

Guzik -

- He left physically and will so come in like manner.
- He left visibly and will so come in like manner.
- He left from the Mount of Olives and will so come in like manner.
- He left in the presence of His disciples and will so come in like manner.
- He left blessing His church and will so come in like manner.

The Upper Room

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away.

13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.

14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

- What do you notice about what was literally the first post-ascension church service?
- All together
  - All one mind
    - What's this mean?
    - Ever been in a crisis situation with other people?
    - All completely together concentrating on a problem
    - Apollo 13
    - This does not necessarily mean they all agreed on doctrine
  - Devoted to prayer

15 At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said,

16 “Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.

17 For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry.”

18 (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out.

19 And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)

20 “For it is written in the book of Psalms,

‘Let his homestead be made desolate,

And let no one dwell in it’;

and,

‘Let another man take his office.’

21 Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us—

22 beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.”

- Acts 5:1-5
- So Peter had authority
- But what do you notice about his statement here?
- Entirely defended with and argued from scripture

23 So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias.

24 And they prayed and said, “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen

25 to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”

26 And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

- How are church officers chosen today?
  - Degrees, boards
  - Perhaps we should take a page from the apostles
  - Proverbs 3:5-6

## Chapter 2

1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place.

- Do you notice a theme here?
  - Every word is important
  - They were ALL TOGETHER
  - Do you think this means physically?

2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

- John 3:8

3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.

- Where else did God appear as fire?
- Why do you think He hasn't appeared this way now?

4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.

- What was the purpose of this?
  - Matthew 28:19-20
  - Matthew 12:28
- Why did He have them wait?
  - Acts 1:14
  - Ecclesiastes 3:1
  - Isaiah 46:10

5 Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.

6 And when this sound occurred, the crowd came together,

- The crowd did what now?
- Again, coming together, they were living together, they came together at the sound of God

and were bewildered because each one of them was hearing them speak in his own language.

- Luke 21:15
- Philippians 2:13

7 They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

8 And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?

9 Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

11 Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our own tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God.”

- Does this baptism have to be only foreign languages?
  - David Wilkerson - spoke and the gangs listened. But it was all english.
- What is the source of the tongues?
  - The Holy Spirit
- So what is important here?
  - That the Spirit speak through you in a way that will get to people and get their attention personally

12 And they all continued in amazement and great perplexity, saying to one another, “What does this mean?”

- Joel 2

13 But others were mocking and saying, “They are full of sweet wine.”

- What’s bizarre about this?
  - How would being drunk have allowed them to speak other languages
- Then why would people think this?
  - Same as today, they look for any explanation, no matter how implausible, to avoid facing a holy God

Peter’s Sermon

14 But Peter, taking his stand with the eleven, raised his voice and declared to them: “Men of Judea and all you who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you and give heed to my words.

- Once again - addressed to the entire city!!

15 For these men are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only the third hour of the day;

16 but this is what was spoken of through the prophet Joel:

- Who knew Peter at this point?
  - Probably not many
- What was unusual about this statement
  - This is a pretty bold claim coming from what would have been to most people a random fisherman
  - A little bit of a change from the night of the Passion!

17 ‘And it shall be in the last days,’ God says,

‘That I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind;

And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

And your young men shall see visions,

And your old men shall dream dreams;

- Did this stop with the apostles?
  - 2 Timothy 3:1-5
  - 2 Peter 3:3-4
  - The last days continue until Christ comes, otherwise Paul and Peter would not have spoken of them after Pentacost

18 Even on My bondslaves, both men and women,

I will in those days pour forth of My Spirit

And they shall prophesy.

- What is the “even on” about?
  - In the Old Testament, His Spirit was poured out mostly on prophets and kings
- Is there still prophecy left to give?
  - Matthew 7:22
  - 1 Corinthians 13:9
  - It seems that this gift is ongoing. But not many speak of it, while tongues is mentioned constantly.
  - Yet 1 Corinthians 14

19 ‘And I will grant wonders in the sky above And signs on the earth below, Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke.

20 ‘The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood, Before the great and glorious day of the Lord shall come.

- What can we learn from this?
  - I would say it’s obvious not all of this has yet come to pass

21 ‘And it shall be that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

- Does this mean if they just acknowledge Jesus they will be saved?
  - Matthew 24:9-13, 27
  - Many people use this or John 3:16 or Romans 10:9 to prove the easiness of salvation. But the question is not once you come to the Lord will you be eternally saved, but rather what does it mean to “call on the name of the Lord”? Many of the examples we have in the Gospels and Acts portray it as a complete change of lifestyle and occupation, resulting in complete self denial and ending in martyrdom. We assume we surrender to Jesus instantly, then spend the rest of the time wondering what to do.

22 “Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—

- What is important about the wording here?
  - “Just as you yourselves know”
  - Remember, this crowd would not have easily accepted the idea that this poor fisherman and his friends were the fulfillment of prophecy - they actually believed they were drunk
  - So if there were many in the crowd who disagreed that Jesus performed miracles or signs, you would think this would have ended like the stoning of Stephen.

23 this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.

- This sentence gives us a lot of concrete information - such as?

- Predetermined plan and foreknowledge
  - Luke 9:22
  - Matthew 26:47-56
- By the hands of godless men
  - Puts the blame squarely on the Jews
  - Matthew 23:37
- What would have been the response of those who agreed with Herod and Pilate?
  - If they saw the apostles speaking in tongues and did not object to Peter's claim of prophetic fulfillment then this sentence should have terrified them

24 But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death,

- An end to who's agony of death?
  - "The" - end of death for all who call on Christ
  - The word "agony" can refer to pain of childbirth, harkening back to Genesis 3:16-19
- since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.
  - Why would it be impossible for Him to be held in the power of death?
    - Seems simple but this is profound - God did not create us to die, death came in through sin (disobedience) and is a creation of the devil, of his evil, and therefore subservient to God (see Job 1:6-12)

25 For David says of Him, 'I saw the Lord always in my presence; For He is at my right hand, so that I will not be shaken.

- Psalm 16
- This is a prophetic speech of Christ through David
- What does He mean "I saw the Lord always in my presence"?
  - He is aware of His Father's presence 24 x 7 no matter the circumstance
  - Perhaps this is what allowed Him the faith to do miracles in the flesh?
- What is in this for us?
  - If we always acknowledge the Lord's presence and seek His face continually (1 Chronicles 16:11-12) we would never be shaken either

26 'Therefore my heart was glad and my tongue exulted;

- We are supposed to praise God continually (Hebrews 13:15)
- It's hard to do this (therefore it says "sacrifice of praise")
- But Christ does it by seeing the Lord always with Him
- We can too

Moreover my flesh also will live in hope;

- Does your flesh live in hope? Why not?
- Hebrews 11:1

27 Because You will not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor allow Your Holy One to undergo decay.

- What is Hades?
- It's pretty clear it is not Heaven, if Christ would not be abandoned there
- It is equivalent to Sheol, the place of the dead to the Jews, not Heaven but not Hell
- How does this relate to "today you will be with me in paradise"?
- 1 Peter 3:18-19, 4:6
- It appears that Christ did not just go to one place and come back

- Outside of this it's a bit confusing but the main point here is Christ would not stay dead as a human nor would His soul be relegated to stay anywhere but Heaven

28 'You have made known to me the ways of life;

- What does this refer to?
  - The Gospel
  - John 17:1-8
  - So God made the Gospel known to Christ who preached it to the world

You will make me full of gladness with Your presence.'

- Even Christ is gladdened by God, even though He is God

29 "[Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.

- Remember this is Peter speaking
- What is he saying?
  - David spoke about not being left in Hades or decaying but he is dead and buried

30 And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne,

31 he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay.

- Here we are explicitly told David rightly prophesied of Christ
- How do you give the Gospel?
  - We should, as Peter does here, boldly declare not only the Gospel but the background to it, the reasons why we know it to be true
  - Christ is not convincing unless one accepts creation and original sin

32 This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

- Is it hard to declare the Gospel to people unfamiliar with God and the Bible?
- Think how much more difficult it would be for Peter - he was claiming to have physically seen, touched and spoken to the physically resurrected Christ, whom all saw scourged and hung on the cross
- But again he refers to all witnessing Christ's resurrection
- Remember Acts is in the form of a letter - to people who were alive at this time and could verify whether anyone witnessed these things

33 Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

- What is this explaining?
- John 14:16-28
- What does Peter's speech here tell us about the knowledge of the crowd?
- They must have had some foreknowledge of Christ's promise already, for Peter to be able to explain it this briefly

34 For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says:

'The Lord said to my Lord,

"Sit at My right hand,

35 Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet."

- Matthew 22:41-45
- Psalm 110
- cf “gotquestions.org”
- Jesus’ reasoning is this: “Son of David” is your title for the Messiah, yet David himself calls Him “Lord.” The Messiah, then, must be much more than just a son—a physical descendant—of David. According to Psalm 110:1, this “Son of David” was alive during David’s time and was greater than David. All of this information is contained in the statement that “the LORD says to my Lord.” Jesus is David’s Lord; He is the Christ, the Jewish Messiah, and Psalm 110 is a promise of Jesus’ victory at His second coming.
- So the point here is to drive home to the people to whom Peter is speaking that Christ is indeed the one they killed and whom was resurrected

36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”

- What does he mean, “both Lord and Christ”
  - Matthew 28:18
  - John 11:27
- “This Jesus whom you crucified”
  - Was there risk associated with this at this point?
    - You better believe it!
    - We all must declare to people who it is that they are denying, just as Peter did
    - This entire speech is really a guide on how to give the Gospel

37 Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?”

- Do you think Peter was expecting this reaction?
  - It’s tempting to say that after the sign of speaking in tongues they would have to agree, but they had seen wonders and miracles performed by Jesus
  - Matthew 27:45-54
- So what made the difference here?
  - We have to assume it was the Holy Spirit speaking through Peter directly to each one of those there
  - Ever feel a sermon was aimed directly at you?

38 Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- What do you notice about Peter’s assessment of these men versus his answer of what they should do?
  - They stand accused of killing God’s Messiah
  - They are to repent so that they can receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and eternal life
  - Makes it kind of obvious how insane and beautiful the Gospel really is

39 For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.”

- Who is excluded?
  - No one who calls upon the name of Jesus Christ!

40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation!”

- What is the lesson here?

- We must freely, adamantly and confidently preach to the unsaved, even when it seems repetitive or unfruitful. We must be bold like Peter and not give up.

41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

- Was this a one time church growth?
  - Since the Holy Spirit is calling them, He is always able
- How does this compare to our techniques and goals today in the church?
  - We do outreaches and flyers and FB posts and hope to reach a few
  - They came together, prayed the Holy Spirit in and Jesus called unto himself 3000 in one day!
  - If we want the “numbers” the way to do that is to go all in calling upon the Lord!
  - CF Guzik: God continues to do such great things. After the 1990 Summer Harvest Crusade, there was a mass baptism at Corona del Mar. They couldn’t count how many were baptized, but more than 5,000 people attended the event. It was reported as the largest baptism service in American history.

42 They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

- What is the significance of this verse
  - This is the blueprint for the church from the earliest possible example
  - Unity
    - Psalm 133:1-3
    - Colossians 3:14
    - John 13:35
  - Prayer
    - James 5:13-18
  - Bold preaching
    - Acts 4:13
    - Acts 18:5-11
      - Do you think he needed that long to make sure everyone heard?
        - Also to continually boldly preach to those to whom he had started witnessing to
  - The apostles’ teaching - how do we do this today?
    - The gospels
  - Fellowship
    - Why is this mentioned?
      - Fellowship is foundational - they could just as well have all gone off and studied alone
      - It is a reflection of Christ’s love and the unity of the trinity
      - James 5:19-20
  - Why breaking of bread?
    - Luke 22:19
    - What is the symbolism here?
      - John 6:35
      - Matthew 11:29
      - Bread is no good unless it is torn apart and eaten
      - The Word is no good unless it is treated the same

43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

- This seems like it would be a good test of whether a church is healthy
- How is this instructive to us?
  - The first part of this sounds like the description of a really good prayer meeting
  - This tells us that feeling we get is not just a bunch of us getting excited
  - It's what the first believers felt as well and it was important enough to record in scripture
- What was the purpose of the signs and wonders?
  - The messiah had already come and been resurrected
  - This is what the prophet Joel spoke of that Peter quoted in 17-20 above
  - God will make it unquestionably clear that He is there if you seek communion with Him in Word, prayer and obedience
  - He wants communion with us

44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;

- Had this been instructed?
- Luke 3:10-17
- John 17:20-21 - this is literally what Jesus prayed for. Do we expect Him to answer our prayers? How about answering His?

45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

- 1 John 3:16-18

46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple,

- Again, ONE MIND, UNITY
- Does this mean we always have to agree about everything?
  - Just means we are all seeking God and believing Christ
  - If we seek God and to please Him then He will do His will through us. If we all do this, there can be no disagreement - God will not disagree with God.

and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

- Is this what we do now?
  - House to house does not mean one house in the same arrangement. These people were a large family of believers, all going to see one another
  - We still consider it a healthy thing for families to share meals together
  - Our faith is represented through activities we do in our lives. Their faith was wound up in their lives and dictating its activities.

47 praising God and having favor with all the people.

- Note how these two are put together here. Again if we are praising, worshipping and OBEYING God and seeking His wisdom, we will all be in rough agreement

And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

- How was He adding?
  - Just by people preaching the Gospel
  - No postcards, gimmicks, tv spots, just the truth that draws all men - John 12:32

## Chapter 3

1 Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth hour, the hour of prayer.

- Why go up at the hour of temple prayer?
  - Some say to evangelize
  - Some say they were still following old habits
  - I think it's related to Luke 19:47-48 - they were following what their teacher did. The temple was a place to open up God's word and teach, and despite the fact so much bad teaching was going on there, they were going to teach the truth.
  - This seems plausible given what happens next

2 And a man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried along, whom they used to set down every day at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, in order to beg alms of those who were entering the temple.

- Who do you think "they" is?
  - Most likely this man's "friends"
- And what did they do for him?
  - Carry him to the temple so others could help him
  - Just like the man who was 38 years on the mat that Jesus healed
  - 1 John 3:17
- In much of the Old Testament, how would people seek healing?
  - By talking to Prophets 2 Kings 5 (initially talked to King)
  - By praying 1 Samuel 1:1-20
- But this man instead seeks just to survive by seeking sustenance *outside* the temple
  - This is what happens when we don't invite people into God's presence to seek healing from HIM
  - His friends could have carried him inside to pray. The lack of faith is astounding
  - Hebrews 11:6

3 When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he began asking to receive alms.

4 But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!"

- What do you think the normal reaction of most people was?
  - Most of them probably looked away or hurried along
- Why did Peter ask him to look at them?
  - I have often felt called to do this myself so that people will focus on what God is telling them through His word that I am giving - the man was probably looking around still to see where else he could get money, maybe averting his eyes in shame
  - Peter wanted him to focus on them, having been sent by God, to call his attention to what was about to unfold into his life via the Holy Spirit through Peter
  - It's like saying "wake up man, the kingdom of God is upon you!"
  - Matthew 13:15-16
  - Matthew 6:22-24
  - This man got this lesson *literally* that day!

5 And he began to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them.

- He thought they would give him money or maybe something to eat

6 But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk!"

- So what did Peter possess?
  - The Holy Spirit and the power of healing through it
  - Matthew 10:5-8

7 And seizing him by the right hand, he raised him up; and immediately his feet and his ankles were strengthened.

- This has to be the ultimate expression of faith - in the midst of the temple crowd

8 With a leap he stood upright and began to walk; and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God.

9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God;

- What miracles we could call down, what faith could be inspired through them, if we only had the faith of a mustard seed
- Does this relate to us today?
  - I would say this is a good description of how we act when we first receive Christ
- Where does that faith come from?
  - Reading the Word and the Holy Spirit

10 and they were taking note of him as being the one who used to sit at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to beg alms, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

- Do you have anything in common with this man?
  - Mark 5:1-16
- Weren't we all blind, crippled, out of our minds before we came to God? What a witness we can be to those who knew our state before!
- But this is also a reason to be diligent and dedicated to obeying the Lord
  - Matthew 5:13-14
  - 1 Peter 4:1-5
  - 1 Peter 3:15

11 While he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement.

12 But when Peter saw this, he replied to the people, "Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk?"

- What is Peter's first action after this miracle?
  - Point out that it was not them that caused it
- Why are you amazed?
  - If you believe the Bible why would you be amazed - God has done many miracles and created the man, the apostles and the temple.

13 The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him.

- What does he mean by "has glorified His servant Jesus"?
  - John 14:12-14
  - This man's healing is a perfect example of why God allows miracles through us all - to glorify Him and to spread belief

14 But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you,

15 but put to death the Prince of life, the one whom God raised from the dead, a fact to which we are witnesses.

- Is this a shy gospel? Does he soften it or gently ease people in?
- Straightforward, biting, honest, truth

16 And on the basis of faith in His name, it is the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which comes through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all.

- Boldly he heals in the name of Christ and boldly he declares it so!
- What is required as the basis?
  - “Simply” faith in His name
  - It’s actually stated that the *name* of Jesus has this strength
  - How does that work?
  - Philippians 2:10-11
  - This has to do with the power and sovereignty of God
  - Exodus 20:7
    - We think this has to do with cursing. It does not. It is stating that the sovereignty, kingship, holiness and power of God is such that even His name carries power and glory and should only be used in appropriate places.
    - Does this mean we can’t write it?
    - I would say this refers to when we are using it to call on the Lord, not just in documents such as this one

17 “And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also.

- John 9:39-41
- Does sin increase or decrease as our knowledge increases?
  - Increases
  - Proverbs 3:5-6
  - We must let the Spirit live in us and through us and refuse to move until He speaks
  - The more “we know” the harder that gets

18 But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.

19 Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;

20 and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you,

- What can we learn from this about preaching the Gospel?
  - Peter’s idea of an easy, light Gospel was not to weaken our responsibility or the punishment for not believing it, but instead to emphasize the great reward of peace and filling by the Holy Spirit
  - When we encourage people in other areas of their lives, we don’t minimize what’s necessary to accomplish their goals but rather just encourage them to think about the final outcome
  - Same here

21 whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

- What does this answer
  - “Where is this Jesus now?”
  - Especially for the Jews who believed He would reign on earth

22 Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren; to Him you shall give heed to everything He says to you.

23 And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.'

- This was to convince the Jews that Moses, whom they respected, spoke of Christ
- This is also a good verse for us to go to now

24 And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days.

25 It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

26 For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways."

- What does he mean "for you first"?
  - Salvation was first offered to the Jews before the gentiles
  - But how did Peter know to speak of this?
  - The Holy Spirit
- What do you notice about the content of Peter's gospel?
  - It relies heavily on the Old Testament
  - As does Paul's - Acts 17:24-31

## Chapter 4

1 As they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them,

2 being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.

3 And they laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening.

- Matthew 10:16-18

4 But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

- So what does all of this say about our Christian walk?
  - This is our job and function, just as it was Jesus' job and function - to preach boldly so that some may be saved
  - But along the way to be questioned, scourged and persecuted at every turn
- So how is this an encouragement?
  - Luke 6:22-23, 26
  - When we are called before church boards, criticized, thrown out, it is then we know we are speaking the truth

5 On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem;

6 and Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent.

- Why is this list important?
  - These are all learned, well respected religious leaders

7 When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, “By what power, or in what name, have you done this?”

- Luke 21:13
  - Was this easy testimony?
    - Remember they are prisoners right now

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers and elders of the people,

9 if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well,

- Does this remind you of anything Jesus said?
  - John 10:31-32
  - A servant is not above his Master

10 let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by this name this man stands here before you in good health.

- What does this part of the statement mean for our walk?
  - We not only need to do good acts but when the Lord moves we need to declare His glory, even when it puts us in peril to do so

11 He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the chief corner stone.

- Why do you think “the builders” is in there?
  - These men were supposed to be building a kingdom for God, praising His name, carrying out His will
    - Instead they were building the temple as they saw fit
    - We still do this today
    - Christ must be the corner stone - what does this mean?
      - Any teaching, any act, any sermon, any ministry, must be within that which He taught us and asked of us
      - This does not mean just His resurrection as the cornerstone, but the entirety of His teaching
      - how can you separate the teacher from the teaching, and why would you want to when God Himself in the flesh is speaking?

12 And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.”

- Anyone who claims to believe in God but believes He is in everything or all religions lead to Him, this is a great verse to share with them. Ask them how they believe in God if not from the Bible, and if they believe the Bible then what about this statement?

13 Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and began to recognize them as having been with Jesus.

- This is actually a huge statement that has a huge bearing on our modern church
- What made their testimony so effective?
  - They had no way to know it or give it and still gave it, under duress
- Would this have been as effective had they gone to seminary and been able to argue theology with the Pharisees?
  - 1 Corinthians 1:17
  - Isaiah 42:8

- Why are we studying so hard when our job is to testify and we are told that is done through us by the Holy Spirit?

14 And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply.

15 But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another,

16 saying, "What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it.

- What does this tell us about miracles?
  - John 14:13
  - John 10:38
- So God not allowing us to perform the things the apostles did would mean God is not interesting in being glorified any more??

17 But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name."

18 And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge;

20 for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard."

- Would you be this bold? Suppose this was the secret service, threatening you with lifelong prison?
- Matthew 10:32-33

21 When they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which to punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened;

22 for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

- John 8:32

23 When they had been released, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them.

- Why is this significant?
  - Luke 12:1-6
  - Ephesians 5:11-12
  - It is important to expose evil. Doing this is not gossiping if those in charge are truly rebelling against the Lord. You have a responsibility to not allow your brothers and sisters to be misled.

24 And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, "O Lord, it is You who made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them,

25 who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David Your servant, said, 'Why did the Gentiles rage,

And the peoples devise futile things?

26 'The kings of the earth took their stand, And the rulers were gathered together Against the Lord and against His Christ.'

- Psalm 2
- Was the Old Testament important to the early church?
  - They quote it extensively!

27 For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,

28 to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.

- What underscores that it was predestined?
  - Psalm 2

- What does this tell us?
  - It's important to God that we *know* He is predermining everything
    - Why?
      - Perhaps so we can relinquish control to Him easier

29 And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence,

- What do you notice about this prayer vs typical prayers?
  - They prayed for continued boldness to defy those who were threatening them!
    - Sometimes the path out of trouble is to continue following God even if it is counter intuitive within your physical world

30 while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus.”

- We often struggle to know what to pray. I think this is an excellent place to start.
- Let us speak Your Word boldly and heal and show wonders through us!

31 And when they had prayed, the place where they had gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness.

- Ever have a prayer answered almost before you finished speaking?
- When does this happen?
  - When we pray in God's will

32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.

- Is this essential for us to know?
  - Deuteronomy 15:7
  - Proverbs 14:31
  - Proverbs 21:16
  - Matthew 5:42
  - Matthew 25:35-36
  - Mark 10:21
  - Luke 14:33
  - 1 John 3:17
  - James 2:16

33 And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.

- What caused the Holy Spirit to pour forth this great power on them?
  - Obedience
    - Living as one body
    - Boldly preaching
    - Obeying God not men
    - No fear
    - Providing for one another
    - Studying and praying continuously
    - Giving glory to God

34 For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales

35 and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need.

- Is this anything like what anyone does today?
  - No, it sounds more like communism
  - But it isn't. Because this can only happen successfully when all are surrendered to and obeying the Lord

36 Now Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth, who was also called Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement),

37 and who owned a tract of land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.