

June 15, 2025

Acts 2:14a, 22-36

“Echoes from the Preaching of Peter”

Pilgrim Lutheran Church
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Jesus of Nazareth. He is the one! The salvation from the Father comes out of a place that was so bad that Nathaniel had to ask: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" See Jesus! He is the fulfillment of all that was promised long ago in the garden after our first parents fell into sin and were disconnected from the Lord God and were banished from the garden that had been so tenderly made for them. Dust they were and to dust they did return, but not without the promise of life that would come from Eve who was the mother of all the living! This Jesus of Nazareth is the man to save humanity! He is the Son of God and the offspring of the woman who came to make us children of God that we might have an inheritance "that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading," as Peter writes, "kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time."

And the last time is upon us! And though we seem so far away from the events of the eye-witnesses who testify and proclaim to us eternal life, we can be certain of the eternal life that is ours in him, for this Jesus of Nazareth has been attested to us by God with "mighty works and wonders and signs" that God did through him who has the Spirit without measure. In that which was written by the Spirit, we ourselves now know and believe through those who heard and saw Jesus with their own eyes and touched him with their own hands. The life has appeared, and in him we have life, thus proving that we also have heard and seen, and have touched him through faith. We are made certain in the record that has been handed down to us by the provision of the one who created us and sent forth his Spirit to testify to us about his one and only Son. Certain hope is ours!

That's because Jesus has done "mighty works" - works of power - miracles that defied all comprehension. These miracles were "wonders" that caused amazement and were "signs" confirming that Jesus is the one who has come to save us from sin and every consequence. He was delivered up according to the fixed plan of God the Father which guaranteed that every single scene of his life would work out to serve the eternal purpose of loving and saving us. The Father saw all things beforehand and touched every detail so that in the fullness of time his Son was sent forth, "born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."

It was our lawlessness that crucified and killed him. You placed on him the crown of thorns by your self-centered thoughts, and it was for your wicked words that caused him to take your guilt as a sheep before its shearers is silent, and it was for your wicked works and walking into evil that nailed his hands and feet to the cursed tree so that you might be set free from the curse and eat from the fruit of his cross. He died the death that you deserve. He absorbed the fire reserved for you, and accepted as his own the eternal worm of your guilty conscience that you might have forever peace.

And if all these things were not enough, we are made certain that all has been accomplished because he rose from the dead! "God raised him up," Peter preaches, "loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it." Surely those who were in Jerusalem hearing the preaching of the beloved apostle on the day of Pentecost might have easily argued against the resurrection of Jesus by producing a solid argument or even a body. But with all that had happened during Holy Week, and now

with the public arrival of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, there was no one to argue against Peter who saw the linen cloths and the head cloth that had been folded together in a place by itself in the empty tomb. This is the same Peter who had seen the risen Lord multiple times along with the other apostles.

And the preaching of these things are for us too! But the unbelieving world forgets, and Christians take for granted all that has been said. But let us renew our zeal by considering that the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth gives us freedom from the pangs of death because it was impossible for death and the grave to hold him. And in the death and grave of Jesus our Savior is given our new birth from spiritual death and the hope of our own bodily resurrection from the dead and an entrance into the paradise of God. This is what Jesus has brought into this fallen and falling apart creation!

What this means for us is astonishing. The practical reality of what is being proclaimed is truly staggering and most comforting for us as the Spirit advocates these things to our souls, so that we may find relief from sin and all its consequences. We can earnestly say what David said long ago in an even greater way since we are now living on the side of the fulfillment of everything in Jesus. In view of the testimony we have received from the Spirit and the apostles, what was spoken and has come to pass has made us more certain. It is finished! The eternal future is accomplished and only left to be consummated.

David wrote in one of his Psalms: "I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken ..." As Jesus always saw the Father before him, with even an obedience to him unto death on a cross, the Father was at his right hand giving him strength that he might not be shaken. And wasn't that the case? Jesus accomplished everything and rose from the dead. David believed this about the coming Savior, and we believe this about the Savior who has come, and because we believe that Jesus has done these things for us, the Father is always before us and our strength even in death so that we may not be conquered but live forever - never to be shaken.

David goes on: "... therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; my flesh also will dwell in hope." As the heart of Jesus was glad and his tongue rejoiced and his human flesh journeyed through this life in hope, so did David because he trusted that his Savior would make this possible for him. Likewise, we are glad and our tongues rejoice because of everything that Jesus has done for us. Since we believe in him by the power of the Holy Spirit, our Father in heaven is with us in our journey through life.

David writes more: "For you will not abandon my soul to Hades [Hell], or let your Holy one see corruption." These words are about Jesus and were fulfilled in him when he rose from the dead. His soul was not abandoned. Hell had no hold on him for he bodily descended into Hell and bodily walked out to assure David and us that Hell cannot drag us down because of our Savior. David looked forward to this. The body of Jesus sees no corruption so that what is corrupted in us may be raised incorruptible. Hell is not our home.

And finally, these words of David: "You have made known to me the paths of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence." Jesus is the path. Jesus is the life. He cannot help but to be our path and life for he is one essence with the Father. And because of his path and life that he lived in the

flesh, David could be rest assured that his Father in heaven would lead him on the path to his destination to be with the Lord. As the gladness of the Son of God, who became flesh, was always in the presence and will of his Father in heaven, so was David's joy found by faith in his Savior. We too speak of the same gladness that is ours as David had it from faith in the coming Savior. All that Jesus speaks to us as our path and life is so that his joy may be in us, and our joy may be full (John 15:11).

Indeed. The words of David are first and foremost about Jesus of Nazareth, for David has yet to rise from the dead incorruptible. But David, being a prophet and trusting the promise of God that a Savior from his body would come and bring a reign of salvation, rise from the dead, and overcome hell and remove his corruption, possessed these things before they came to be. And that which is now finished is being poured out on us by the Holy Spirit in the preaching of the gospel, in baptism and the living of our baptism in absolution, and in the sacrament of the altar. All that is left is for Jesus to return and bring an end to the enemies of the gospel, raise his people from the dead unto life, and exalt us through his exaltation.

Therefore, know this all you who are in this sanctuary ... know for certain that the Father has made Jesus of Nazareth both Lord and Christ who was crucified for us for the forgiveness of all our sins!

Amen.

Pastor Brock