

# ACTS 2:14-41

## Peter's Pentecost Sermon

### Memory Verse

“God raised Him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it.”

Acts 2:24

### Real-life Problems

**Sin**—All humans, post-Genesis 3, sin. This is the case whether we want it to be or not. The old saying is true: “We’re not sinners because we sin, we sin because we’re sinners.” At a fundamental level of our identity, we act against God and what He commands of us and desires for us. Even if we believe we’re not that bad, all of us would shudder to have even our thoughts broadcast on a screen before others—we are, deep down, much worse off than we sometimes think. To a certain extent, this even remains the case after we come to know the Lord—that’s how deep the disease of sin runs.

### The Good News

Even though we’re all sinners—even though we’re more lost in our natural state than we could ever imagine—we don’t have to try and save ourselves. God the Son, Jesus, has taken on our flesh and come to earth to live a perfect life and die our death for us. He’s paid the penalty for our sins so we can be in right relationship with the Lord, and He’s broken sin’s power over us.

## I. Introduction

### OPENING QUESTIONS

**Idea #1:** When was the last time you were punished for something you did? How about the last time you were rewarded for something you did?

**Idea #2:** What’s the nicest thing anyone’s ever done for you?

**Idea #3:** Can you think of a movie or a TV show in which someone made a sacrifice for someone else?

### PRAY

Open your time together in prayer.

### REHEARSING THE GOSPEL

#### What does gospel mean?

Good news

#### What’s the good news?

Jesus died for my sins

#### Why did He die for your sins?

So that I can have abundant life in relationship with Him now and forever

#### What is grace?

God’s undeserved love for sinners

## REVIEW

### 1) Who wrote the book of Acts?

Luke wrote Acts as a history of the earliest days of the church.

### 2) Who was the original audience of this book?

The original audience of Luke, narrowly speaking, is Theophilus. More broadly, though, Luke has written Acts with elements that appeal to both Jew and Greek, so the ultimate audience appears to be any Christian from any ethnicity.

### 3) Why was the book of Acts written?

The book of Acts was written to record the works of God in the early church.

## *What's going on?*

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### REMIND

Because Jesus sent His Spirit to us, He's always with us, no matter where we are or what we're going through.

### TODAY WE'LL LEARN

- 1) Why Jesus died and was raised.
- 2) What that means for us.
- 3) That this was God's plan from very early on.

## *Read*

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Read **Acts 2:14-41** aloud in your group.

## II. Questions for Discussion

### A. WHAT?

**1) According to Acts 2:14, who speaks up after the reactions of the crowd at Pentecost?**

Peter gets up to speak to the crowd.

**2) What does Peter say to the crowd first (vv. 15-16)?**

He addresses their objection, saying that the disciples aren't drunk; it's only 9 a.m. Rather, they're seeing a prophecy from Joel 2 fulfilled.

**3) In verse 17, when does Peter (quoting Joel) observe that these things will take place?**

These things will take place in "the last days."

**4) What are some of the things that will happen in the last days (vv. 17-18)?**

God's Spirit will be poured out on all flesh, sons and daughters will prophesy, young men will see visions, old men will dream dreams, etc.

**5) How was Jesus attested to by God to the people of Israel (v. 22)?**

With mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through Him in their midst.

**6) How was Jesus killed, according to verses 22-23?**

He was given over to be crucified according to "the definite plan and foreknowledge of God," and yet Peter blames the Jews he's addressing for killing Jesus.

**7) Peter quotes Psalm 16, and then says that David foresaw and spoke about what (v. 31)?**

Peter says that this Psalm foresaw Christ and His resurrection.

**8) What has God made Jesus, according to verse 36?**

God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ.

**9) The crowd is cut to the heart and asks what they should do. What is Peter's answer in verse 38?**

They should "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the Holy Spirit."

### B. SO WHAT?

**1) Why do you think Peter, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, quotes the Joel 2 passage?**

The quotation from Joel, and even the psalm that follows, show us that God's plan to send Jesus to live and die for us was not a plan that was merely thrown together when humans proved themselves completely and totally irredeemable. Quotations from the Old Testament show us that Jesus was God's plan for the redemption of humanity from before creation (as we see in vv. 22-23).

**2) Christians believe, because of the testimony of the Bible, that Jesus is both fully God and fully man. Does Peter calling Jesus "a man attested to you by God" pose a problem for Jesus' divinity?**

Some read this verse (in addition to verse 36) and conclude that Jesus is merely a man. In reality, this verse is not a problem for Jesus' divinity because what is in view here is His work as man (according to His human nature) on earth. Though Jesus is fully God, He is also fully man, so we should not shy away from passages that speak of His humanity. Even verse 36, where Peter mentions that God made Jesus both Lord and Christ, is not problematic when we consider that Jesus is given the name that is above every name after He completes His work on earth.

### **3) What does it mean that Peter's hearers were "cut to the heart" (v. 37)?**

This means that, when confronted with the fact that they indeed killed Jesus the Lord by delivering him up to be crucified, they felt their sinfulness. They came face-to-face with their sin and felt deep remorse about what they had done and the role they played in what happened to Jesus.

### **4) Why would the next question of members of the crowd be, "Brothers, what shall we do?"**

When confronted with their sin, the crowd's only option is to ask how they might overcome it or be forgiven. In the same way a person diagnosed with a disease immediately wants to know about a remedy, the crowd desires to be cured of their sin problem.

## **A Cure for a Sickness**

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Being sick is awful. Nobody enjoys it. When you're sick, you and everyone around you knows you're sick. We would rightly think it's ridiculous if someone had something like the flu—was coughing up a lung, sweating, pale, with a scratchy voice—and refused to believe they were sick. Refusing to face reality would mean that they had no hope of being cured in a timely way. In order to get the cure, you have to acknowledge that you're sick. In the same way, in order to receive Christ's forgiveness, we must recognize that we're sick. If we can't acknowledge that we're sick, we'll never receive the cure.

### **5) What is significant about Peter's response to their question?**

Peter doesn't tell the crowd to pull themselves up by their bootstraps and make themselves better. He doesn't tell them to go and follow the law perfectly. All he tells them to do is repent and be baptized. All they must do is admit their sin and sinfulness and turn to Christ in baptism. As a result, they'll receive forgiveness. They can't do anything to earn it. This is contrary to the way the world works! And yet, it's the truest news there is.

## **C. NOW WHAT?**

### **1) If even Jesus' killers were forgiven of their sin, what does that mean for you and your sin?**

*Answers may vary.* At minimum, it means that no matter what you've done or how much you've sinned, you're not beyond the reach of Christ's forgiveness. If Christ came to earth for the express purpose of forgiving sin, why would he forego a chance to forgive you of your sins?

### **2) What does this passage tell you about yourself? What does it tell you about God?**

*Answers may vary.* It tells us at least that we are sinful and that we're in need of rescue. We're no better than the crowd Peter is addressing. It also tells us that God loves to forgive His people—He's a merciful God who offers forgiveness to all who will receive it.

### **3) What does the fact that Jesus was God's plan from before the creation of the world tell you about God?**

Answers may vary. It should tell us that God is not surprised by our sinfulness, and that He loves us even before we can do anything for Him. Even in our sinfulness, God is still drawn to us in love.

### *Main takeaway*

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Even our darkest sin is not unforgivable by Christ—even His killers, when they turned to Him, were forgiven by Him.

## *III. Closing*

### REMEMBERING THE GOOD NEWS

Jesus Christ can and will forgive you, even of those sins of which you're most ashamed, if you'll only come to Him and receive His grace and forgiveness.

### CLOSE IN PRAYER

Lord, we thank You that You're a forgiving God. We thank You that You made provision for us, even when we were nothing but Your enemies. Help us daily to turn to You and receive Your grace and forgiveness. Amen.

### *Supporting Resources*

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#### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1) Think of the sin you're most ashamed of—can you believe that God has forgiven you of even that? Why or why not?
- 2) Do you struggle to forgive others? Why or why not?
- 3) What makes it hard for you to accept God's grace to you?

#### QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS

- 1) Was there a time when you thought you were "unforgivable?"
- 2) Was it hard for you to accept God's grace and forgiveness? What did it feel like when you finally did?
- 3) Do you find that you have to receive God's grace anew every day?