

JESUS OF NAZARETH – APPROVED, DELIVERED, RAISED
Acts 2:22-28

Intro: I trust that all of us have spent some time today preparing our hearts for the observance of the Lord's Supper tonight, and that our time in the Word just now will give us further preparation of our hearts.

As indicated in the Tableau, my text is in the book of Acts, chapter 2, verses 22 through 28. However, my main emphasis will be upon verses 22 through 24.

(Read the text.)

Most of you will recognize that this is a part of the message that the Apostle Peter brought in Jerusalem on the first day of Pentecost after the Lord had ascended back to heaven. It was a message that was greatly blessed of the Lord in the salvation of some three thousand people. That must have been quite overwhelming to those one hundred and twenty who had gathered in the upper room as the Lord had directed them to do.

But I want you to notice two things that we are told in the first chapter of this book of Acts. We believe it was written by Luke who was a medical doctor, and that it was really a continuation of his Gospel which also carries his name. Both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts were written by Luke for one man. His name appears at the beginning of these two NT books. His name was Theophilus. I don't want to spend time tonight talking about him, although that could be very profitable. But I do want you to notice what Luke said to him by way of introduction in Acts 1:1.

(Read Acts 1:1.)

Implied in Luke's statement here, that the Gospel of Luke tells us "of all that Jesus began both to do and teach," then the book of Acts is a continuation of what the Lord was doing and teaching. But, of course, there was a difference. No longer was the Lord Jesus Christ physically visible on the earth, but He was spiritually present with His people, working in and through them to finish His work throughout the world. And He was working *in them* and *through them* by the Holy Spirit.

The second point that I want to make from chapter 1 is the charge that the Lord gave to the disciples, and then on to the church, concerning what their ministry was to be. And you will find this in verse 8.

(Read Acts 1:8.)

They were to be witnesses “unto Me,” the Lord said., or lit. *my witnesses*. They were to tell people about the Lord Jesus Christ, Who He is, and what He had done, where He is now, what He is doing, and that He was coming back, but no one knew when that would be.. They were to begin where they were in Jerusalem, and the spread out through Judea, move on into Samaria, and then on “unto the uttermost part of the earth.” The work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the salvation of sinners was finished, as He said on the Cross. But the work of telling people about the Lord Jesus Christ is world-wide in its scope, and will never be finished until the end of time.

The Lord Jesus had told them that He was going to send the Holy Spirit to them, and He, the Holy Spirit, would empower them to carry the Gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

We see the beginning of that work in chapter 2, and we see also that the Apostle Peter was faithful to the charge that the Lord had given them. His message, as recorded in chapter 2, was all about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Before we get to one particular part of his message in which he was speaking about our Lord, let me refer briefly to the Lord’s Supper which we are going to observe tonight. We do this “in remembrance of” our Lord, and in particular, with the emphasis on His death. We are *showing forth* His death. That verb (καταγγέλλετε) taken from 1 Corinthians 11:26, means not only that we are publicly proclaim it, but that we are commending our Lord to sinners as the only Savior. It is a form of preaching *by what we are doing*. In the elements which we will take, the bread and the grape juice in the cup we are declaring that we believe in the humanity, the perfect humanity of our Lord, and that in His physical body He died, shedding His blood, on our behalf, having paid off the penalty that was upon us because of our sins.

The death of our Lord was a well-known fact to the people in Jerusalem on that Day of Pentecost. But not all of them knew Who He was, nor did

they know *why He died*. It was Peter's responsibility to tell them. And it is particularly to three words which the Apostle Peter used that I want to direct your attention tonight – the words “approved . . . delivered . . . raised,” or “raised up.”

Look with me now at verse 22. (Read.)

I. “APPROVED” (Acts 2:22).

The last statement of the verse indicates that when he referred to the miracles that the Lord had performed, he was not telling them, when speaking of the miracles, something which they did not know. Everybody knew about the Lord's miracles. They could not deny that He had done many wonderful works. Perhaps there were many in that crowd that day who had been personally healed by the Lord. *But what they did not know, was what the ability to perform those works, meant. No one had ever done such works, and no one had ever taught such truth.* Peter wanted them to know what it all meant!

The people knew that He was a Man (although very quickly in the early church there were false teachers who denied His humanity). But generally people knew that He was a Man. But what they needed to know was that He was “a Man approved of God”!

The word “approved” (ἀποδεδειγμένον) with the words “by God” means that the miracles were God's way of confirming that He was the Person that He claimed to be, the Person He was by virtue of the Name that was given to Him at His birth: “Jesus,” which interpreted means, “for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). It meant that God intended for people, all people everywhere, to believe His claims. And so His miracles were His credentials. No one before or since had ever performed the kinds of miracles and the number of miracles, that the Lord Jesus Christ performed.

You all know that I recently had surgery on my eyes – along with many others in our church family. I went to an ophthalmologist that I had never known before. But as I sat in his examining room waiting for him, I noticed on the wall all kinds of certificates indicating that he was fully qualified to do what I needed. I had no question about his qualifications and ability before because my regular ophthalmologist, whom I trusted, had sent me to him.

The miracles which our Lord performed were His God-given credentials indicating that He was fully qualified to do everything necessary for your salvation and mine.

And let me say very positively, “No one else has ever had those credentials!” If you want to be saved, you want to be sure that you go to the One Who has the credentials to save you. His credentials are also seen in His Name, “Jesus,” and His Name reflects that He is Deity, the Son of God.

But let us look at the second word.

II. “DELIVERED” (Acts 2:23).

The order of the words in the Greek text is different from our English translation. The word translated “Him,” is τοῦτον, lit., *this One*, the One with the accreditation of God, “by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, delivered . . .” (ἔκδοτον), or *gave Him over*.

Lenski made this comment about the death of our Lord:

. . . this bloody deed did not happen accidentally or only by the damnable will of the Jews. God could have prevented it in a second. This murder of Jesus happened only because Jesus was “delivered up (handed out to the Jews) by the deliberate counsel and foreknowledge of God.” God abandoned Jesus to the murderous Jews in order that they might wreak their hatred upon Him (John 19:11); this God did for His own purpose: by the death of His Son to redeem the world (pp. 82, 83).

And Lenski also point out that the word “determinate,” or *determined*, being a perfect participle, placed the counsel and foreknowledge of God “back into eternity” (p. 83).

The Jews could not deny what they had done, but it was a new revelation to them that in carrying out such a heinous crime, they unknowingly were carrying out God’s eternal purpose for His Son in making Him the Savior of sinners.

What new meaning this sheds of that amazing statement in Isaiah’s prophecy where he said in Isa. 53:10, “Yet it please the LORD (the Father) to bruise Him”(the Son). In the light of this verse, how can we ever measure the love of John 3:16? For God to love us so much that it required the

death of His Son, with all of the humiliation and suffering attached to that death, is more than any of us can possibly understand.

But we have one more word.

III. “RAISED,” or “RAISED UP” (Acts 2:24).

Have you noticed how prominent God is in these verses? He is the One Who has fully accredited His Son. He is the One Who delivered His Son over to His enemies that they might put Him to death. And now in this verse we read that “God hath raised Him up” from the dead

What did the resurrection of Christ mean? It meant 1) that His work was finished, and it meant 2) that God had accepted His work.

Why was it not possible that the Lord should be held by death? There are two reasons:

- 1) Because of Who He was – the eternal Son of the living God.
- 2) Because the Scriptures said that He would be raised, in this case Psa. 16:8-11.

Do you suppose that when Peter said that the Lord had raised the Lord Jesus up, he also had in mind His ascension to the right hand of the Father? Although the Lord died after He had been hanging on the Cross for six hours, yet He lives, lives at the right hand of the Father, and yet lives in you and me. And we are to observe this commemoration of His death until He comes! He is coming again. Then for the first time we will see Him, and we will be like Him, and we will be with Him forever. Oh, what a marvelous salvation we have in Christ!

Concl: Christ has for sin atonement made,
What a wonderful Savior!
We are redeemed, the price is paid!
What a wonderful Savior!

I praise Him for the cleansing blood,
What a wonderful Savior!
That reconciled my soul to God;
What a wonderful Savior!

He cleansed my heart from all its sin,

What a wonderful Savior!
And now He reigns and rules therein;
What a wonderful Savior!

What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Jesus!
What a wonderful Savior is Jesus, my Lord!

As we come to the Lord's Table tonight, I trust that there might be a renewed realization of the cost of our salvation – the cost to the Father Who gave His Son for our sins, and the cost to the Lord Jesus who purchased our salvation by His suffering and death. May we love Him more and more, and show our love for Him by living day by day in obedience to His Word. And may He make our time at the Table tonight, a time of worship and praise that our sins are forgiven and will be charged against us no more!