

Paul - Critical Questions of ChronologyII

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[0 : 00] I have some preliminary propositions that I want you to consider before we get to any of the texts. Really, really important material.

It's supposed to be, or I shouldn't be bringing it, right? Alright, here we go. In general, and all throughout Christendom, it has been assumed that Jesus Christ was sent forth from God his Father in order to bring God's kingdom rule in heaven to the earth.

It is believed that Christ actually offered this kingdom to Israel, the key nation to whom it was promised, and they, Israel, subsequently rejected the kingdom in their rejection and crucifixion of the king.

Further, it is assumed that in Israel's rejection of the king and kingdom, God subsequently rejected them by withdrawing from them his previous offer of the kingdom, and that this offer and withdrawal of it was realized at the crucifixion of their Messiah.

Let me stop here and offer a couple of explanatory comments, because this is really very, very important. As I just said, let me say again in a few different words.

[1 : 45] It is generally considered as over and done with for the nation of Israel when they crucified their Messiah.

Conventional wisdom says that Israel's final answer to Jesus Christ was realized at the crucifixion, and because instead of accepting Christ as their Messiah, they crucified him.

That was their final answer to God, and God has subsequently cut them off. That is a position probably held by 95% of Christendom today.

It is an inaccurate representation, and it has resulted in confusion compounded upon confusion. A timely article was received just a couple of weeks ago from Israel, one of my favorite publications. And it was an article written by William Sutter, who is the president of the Friends of Israel. I've made copies of his letter available. They are on the shelf on the table as you go out the door.

[3 : 04] It's just a letter from Bill Sutter. I would urge you to read it, because it deals with the issue of replacement theology and the conventional thinking among Christians that the church has replaced Israel, and that Israel is no longer a favored nation of God or no longer the chosen people, that the church is now the chosen people, and Israel is gone completely and permanently.

That's the conventional wisdom today held by most Christians, certainly in all of the larger major denominations. Replacement theology assumes that Israel no longer enjoys a covenant connection with God as his specially chosen people, and that the church has replaced it.

And this church, this church, the Christian church, is assumed that it came into being in Acts chapter 2 on the day of Pentecost.

And I cannot tell you how deeply ingrained this concept is in the lives of almost all Christians. And you'll hear something like this.

Everybody knows the church began at Pentecost. That's the birthday of the Christian church. No, it isn't.

[4 : 39] And I am not taking anything away from the Christian church. But that is not the origin of the church. This church assumed to have come into being in Acts chapter 2 on the day of Pentecost.

And since the second century, this position has been held by most Christians. Now, this is a very old position.

Am I saying that error regarding the beginning of the church has been in place for 18 centuries?

Yes. That is precisely what I'm saying. And some find it absolutely unbelievable. I can understand that, because I did too, for quite some time.

If there was anything that I thought I knew for sure, it was when the church began. And it was certainly on the day of Pentecost. No, it wasn't.

[5 : 46] And there is no place in the Bible where it says it was. But that is a gratuitous assumption that is made. Seeing the events in Acts 2, namely the speaking in languages not previously learned, or what we would call speaking in tongues, which simply means speaking in languages, and the numerous miracles that accompanied the day of Pentecost and thereafter in the book of Acts, particularly the physical healings, particularly those of the Pentecostal denomination, to have been divinely established as the precedent and norm for what a Christian church is to be and do.

Other Christians, not Pentecostal, but not speaking in tongues or practicing physical healing, have concluded that these miraculous manifestations were once the norm for the church, but they have since ceased with the passing of the original apostles.

So to them, the so-called sign gifts, such as miracles, healings, etc., are no longer operable as standard operating procedures for the church.

So, are you with me thus far? If you belong to a Pentecostal church, that denomination is of the persuasion, and they take their name, Pentecostal, from Acts 2, which took place on a predictable calendar set Jewish feast day called Pentecost, and the Feast of Pentecost.

And they believe that the events that happened on the day of Pentecost, including speaking in languages that you had never learned, but you were just miraculously enabled to speak another person's language so they could hear you in their own tongue without having learned the language.

[8 : 04] Clearly, it was a miracle. I frequently refer to what happened on the day of Pentecost as the Tower of Babel in reverse, because it was at the Tower of Babel in Genesis 10 or 11 that God confounded the languages.

All of the earth was a one language. And God confounded the languages and scattered the people throughout the Mediterranean world. So language, for the first time, became a barrier.

It is still a barrier. We all know the difficulty. We know the difficulty of trying to communicate sometimes when two people speak the same language. And it can be much more difficult when you're talking about a foreign language that you've never learned.

You're often usually just reduced to using sign language and motions to try to get a point across.

And in keeping with that, there were numerous miracles that took place in connection with Pentecost.

There were miraculous healings and some very dramatic things that took place and our Pentecostal brethren. And I do not fault these people at all for their sincerity, for their genuineness, for their love for the truth and all the rest.

[9 : 25] I just believe that they are mistaken here. They are believers. They are in Christ. And they are of the same body. And we are to love these people.

And they are to love us because our fellowship is in Christ. It's not in having all of your doctrinal T's and I's dotted and crossed. The thing that unites us is being in Christ.

But as much as we love these brethren, we are convinced that this is not the plan and program for the church. Most Protestants agree with that.

I come from a Baptist background. I was saved in a Baptist church in 1956, December 8.

A few hours later, I was married in a Baptist church. Later, I became the deacon in a Baptist church. I was baptized in a Baptist church and ordained in a Baptist church.

[10 : 27] So I've got a pretty legitimate Baptist background. And it was always somewhat of a problem to me as to why Baptists were not Pentecostal.

Because we wanted to follow the Bible. And right here in Acts chapter 2, where they did all of these things, it seems that we ought to be using that as our pattern.

But our Baptist friends had an answer for that. And that is, well, with the dying off of the original apostles, that all changed.

And now there is a new order. And, of course, the baptism didn't change. That's still in place. But everything else changed. So that's why these were the sign gifts.

And we believe that the sign gifts have been terminated. And that we are no longer to be speaking in tongues. And we are no longer to be performing miracles and healings and all of the rest of it.

[11 : 29] Because the sign gifts have ceased. But our Pentecostal friends would come right back and say, but this is what the text says. Therefore, this is what we ought to be doing.

This should be the norm for the church. We should be speaking in languages we have not learned. We should see miraculous healings as just standard operating procedure.

We should have a healing service going on all the time where people are just miraculously healed of whatever because of their faith. Well, I would be the first to say, I refuse to limit God in his ability to do whatever he wants to do whenever he wants to do it, whether or not we think it's the right dispensation.

If God wants to heal someone of whatever disease that leaves the medical community just dumbfounded and they can't offer an explanation, God can do that.

But I am also quick to add that it is extremely rare when he does. Some people give you the impression that it is God's will that you never die.

[12 : 42] And if you just had enough faith, you never would, which is patent nonsense because everybody who lives long enough is going to die from something. And sometimes it obviously is God's will for people to die.

And I'm looking forward to it. Never done that before. And it's going to be exciting, whatever. I just hope I'm in my right mind and not doped out of my skull so that I can enjoy it.

So, we believe that all of the aforementioned assumptions are simply not valid.

They are not and they cannot be sustained by a straightforward reading of the biblical record set forth in the book of Acts. Now, I have a question for you.

Who cares? Why does this matter? Who gives a rip in the final analysis? And if someone has said, is knowing this stuff going to help you pay the mortgage or combat the high price of gasoline?

[13 : 44] No, it's not going to do that. But it'll do a whole lot more. Because if what I am saying is true, and you'll have to decide whether or not it is, I believe it is, of course, or I wouldn't be teaching it.

But there is nothing in the world that will serve you more wonderfully than the truth, knowing it, and embracing it.

And in a day when it is increasingly difficult to identify truth, because so many insist that truth is what you make it, you have your truth and I have my truth.

You know, that kind of thing. You create your own reality. Sometimes truth is hard to come by. But trust me, it is very, very important.

Now, if you are not a believer, if you do not have a personal relationship with Christ, you will see this to be much ado about nothing. In fact, if you don't have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, you probably consider just about everything spiritual to be much ado about nothing.

[14 : 59] And you consider yourself as zeroing in on the more important things, like putting food on the table and making that mortgage payment, etc.

These may be the only kind of things that concern you. And I can understand that. Because if you are not a believer, that is all you have to work with. And I have been there and done that, so I know exactly what you're talking about.

And you are certainly in the vast majority of people. So no question about that. But so far as who cares and why this matters, everyone who holds dear the sacred biblical record should care and care a lot.

And it matters because the very nature and mission of what the church is and is supposed to do is at stake.

A failure of the church to be and do what it is supposed to be and do seriously impairs its ability, its influence, and effectiveness in the world.

[16 : 07] The church, accordingly, is failing in much of its mission and impact in many of the same ways that Israel failed in much of its mission and impact.

The church has bumped its head on the same old rock as have many who were of the seed of Abraham. Abraham.

First of all, we want to address the issue of the kingdom, its offer, and its rejection thereof, and the consequences for Israel.

And to give you something for thinking along this line, I want you to turn to a very important but seemingly obscure little parable that Jesus gave back in Luke chapter 13.

It is really, I think, very significant. It's the kind of a thing that is just really easy to overlook. Very easy to overlook.

[17 : 11] But it's so important. And Luke, I believe, is the only text that mentions it. I don't think the synoptics refer to it, the others. Luke chapter 13.

And I want to introduce a word that is very critical to the whole context because it is what the context is all about. And the subject at hand is repentance.

Repentance means reversing yourself. You reverse yourself from the position that you previously held because you have received additional information that will no longer allow you to embrace your former position.

You come to the conviction where you say, you know what? I've been wrong about that. I've been wrong. And I have gotten information that has shown me that I've been wrong and what the right information is.

So, as an act of my will, I am going to scrap the position that I formerly held and embrace this new position.

[18 : 24] That is repentance. And it doesn't necessarily have anything to do with sin. Although it may. All it means is change your mind.

Change your mind. That's all it means. Metanoia in the Greek. It means through the mind. Thinking is a mental thing.

You receive data, information, and you process it. And it either comports with what you already believed, in which case it simply reinforces it and strengthens it.

Or it goes totally against what you believed. And it creates a conflict within you, a struggle, a mental battle is going on.

What am I going to do? Am I going to embrace this new thing, or am I going to cling to the old? And let me tell you something. This is the most difficult thing that we have to do.

[19 : 28] I don't care if it is an issue involving personal salvation, or anything else. It is really, really hard to repent, because when you do, you are saying, I was wrong.

I was wrong. I have been wrong, and I am wrong, and I need to change it. That is tough. I don't care who you are. That is tough.

It is bruising to the ego. And if you have a male ego, like I do, it is even tougher. Be like the fellow who said, I only made one mistake in my life.

I said, really, what was that? He said, well, it was one time when I thought I was wrong. What you couldn't do with somebody like that? The gal who found Mr.

Right, then she discovered that his first name was always, and she became determined that she was going to change it to never.

[20 : 34] God said, well, we're talking about repentance here. The toughest thing in the world is to say, I am wrong.

I have been wrong. And now that I have received this new information, I have reason to change my mind. And folks, let me tell you something. This is all the preaching of the gospel.

This is all it is. when you preach the gospel, you give people information, and they process it, and initially they usually reject it.

With something like, well, I've never believed that. This is what I've always believed, and I'm going to die believing it. You've heard the saying, when you get along in years, you get set in your ways. Boy, do you ever. Do you ever. Even if what you believe is not true, as the years go on, you become more and more convinced of it.

[21 : 41] And when you hear something that goes counter to that, oh, I've never believed that. That can't be true. And the reason I know it can't be true is because I'm so smart, I would have learned that a long time ago if that were true, but I didn't learn it, so it's not true.

This is the human ego talking. repentance is a tough thing to do. And the Bible speaks so much about it. Well, let's look at this.

This is what the theme is, repentance here. Chapter 13. On the same occasion, there were some present who reported to him, that is to Jesus, about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

I don't want to go into this, but it was a terribly unjust thing. Pilate simply murdered a bunch of Jews whom he thought were either insurrection or a potential for insurrection, and they were in the temple, they were there to offer animal sacrifice, and the sacrificial blood of the animals was flowing as the priest conducted the sacrifice, and Roman soldiers beset these Jews who were there offering the sacrifices with the result that the Jewish blood of these human beings was commingled with the

blood of the animal sacrifices that were being offered.

It was a horrendous thing, and it was all prompted by Pontius Pilate. And he answered and said to them, Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate?

[23 : 35] I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. In other words, he's saying, you people have some issues that you need to change your mind about.

And you know what the principle one was? About himself. Who he was and who sent him. Because that was the burning issue all during the earthly ministry of Christ.

Who is this one? Is he just? No one but a peasant carpenter from Galilee whose mother and father we know, and that's it?

Or is he in fact Yeshua Hamashiach, the Messiah himself sent from God in heaven?

That was the burning question. That was the only question. Because your answer to that question determined everything. And then he says in verse four, Do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them?

[24 : 42] This was a construction project. This was a huge unfortunate accident that happened in conjunction with a construction project. And something broke, something caved in, something gave way, and as a result, there were a lot of men killed.

Eighteen of them in fact, on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them. Do you suppose they were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you no.

But unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Now you get the setting, you get the scene, the context makes it very clear, what's the subject matter?

What are they talking about? Repentance. The need for repentance. The need for understanding that you've been wrong about something, turning your back on that, and embracing what you now know to be true.

That's what repentance does. And salvation is just one illustration of it. You can repent of anything that you change your mind about.

[25 : 49] A position you no longer hold, you reverse yourself on it. And it doesn't necessarily have anything to do with something spiritual, although it may. If you go downtown, you look at an automobile, you're thinking about buying it.

You get all the stats on it, and then you look at the sticker. You say, whoa, I can't afford this car.

You went down there with the intent that you were probably going to buy that vehicle. But when you recovered from sticker shock, you said to yourself, no, I am not going to do this.

I can't afford this. I'm not going to pay that much for an automobile. Do you know what you've done? You repented. Now, part of the confusion is in the fact that we don't think of that as repentance. We always think of repentance in a religious context.

But it isn't. It isn't limited to that. It means change your mind about anything. It could be, it could be, okay, let's pick on a member of Congress.

[26 : 56] There is a bill that comes up, and he's thinking about voting for it. And he's looking over all the details of this bill and the ramifications of it and what's going to happen if he votes for it.

And then he thinks he's going to vote for it. But along comes several what they call riders added to the bill where the whole bill is going to contain a whole bunch of other things that he doesn't want anything to do with.

And he backs off. And he says, I'm not going to vote for this. I'm not going to vote for this. We don't say he repented. We say he changed his mind. Same thing.

Exactly the same thing. I was going to vote for it, but I repented of that. And if you did that, Jim, to your colleagues and said, I was going to vote for HR 3240, but I repented.

They say, you what? But that's exactly what you did. So you say, I changed my mind. I'm not going to vote for it. That's the meaning of the word repentance. And that's the subject matter that is here.

[28 : 04] And he began telling, verse 6, this parable. Why this parable? Because this parable is going to illustrate the need for repentance.

That's what he's talking about. A certain man had a fig tree, which had been planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any.

And he said to the vineyard keeper, Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any.

Cut it down. Why does it even use up the ground? And he answered and said to him, Let it alone, sir, for this year too.

until I dig around it and put in fertilizer, and if it bears fruit next year, fine. But if not, cut it down.

[29 : 13] Well, what in the world is the point of this? What does this have to do with anything? It has everything to do with the subject of repentance. And when we compare Scripture with Scripture, we discover, even going all the way back to Isaiah, that Isaiah and that other passages often talk about Israel as being a fig tree.

He's talking about the nation of Israel. He's using this tree to illustrate his point. And when he says to the vineyard keeper, three years I've come looking for fruit on this fig tree, Israel is the fig tree. Who came looking for fruit? Who's the one that came looking for fruit? Christ. How long did he come and look for fruit? Three years. How long was Jesus here on the earth ministering to people? Three years. He came to the nation Israel, and Israel received him not. He came looking for fruit. What was the message?

What was the message that John preached? Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. What did Jesus preach? Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[30 : 35] Get your act together. You need to reverse yourself on a number of issues. The apostles preached, repent, for the kingdom of heaven. The reason you should repent, this is a get ready message, the reason you should repent is to get yourself spiritually and morally prepared to receive the Messiah because he's coming.

That was John's message. And it was all about a nation in rebellion. And they needed to repent, get their act together, spiritually, as a nation.

At this time, Israel, nationally, had sunk to incredible, abominable depths of corruption and profligacy that you can't imagine.

The priesthood was corrupt. Everything was corrupt. And when Jesus went in and cleansed the temple of the money changers and all the rest of it, all he was doing was addressing corruption in that area.

And he just threw everything out. And this is a nation that needs to repent. And he came for three years ministering to Israel.

[31 : 46] Providing them with an opportunity to repent. To change their direction. And now, according to the parable here, after three years, he's ready to cut it down.

Cut down the tree. But, let's give it one more chance.

Let's give it a reprieve. Let's give it another growing season to produce. And if it does, and we'll give it more advantage, all right?

We'll dig around it and aerate it, and we'll put in fertilizer so as to give it a better chance of making it produce. And then, if it doesn't produce, after a year's reprieve, then we'll cut it down.

[32 : 52] beautiful illustration, beautiful parable. Jesus never gave meaningless parables.

They always had a point. And the point that he is making here is, well, I think it's pretty obvious. the crucifixion of Christ was not the end of Israel's opportunity.

And here is another erroneous assumption. The vast majority of people, Catholic and Protestant, believe that it was.

They believe that the crucifixion of Christ and the rejection of the Messiah was Israel's final word to God. And they said, no.

So, with the crucifixion and rejection of their Messiah, Israel is finished. No, no. That's not what this parable is teaching.

[34 : 03] This parable is teaching after the crucifixion, there is a reprieve to be given. Now, how do we work a crucifixion into this, into this parable?

May I just suggest this? Digging around it and putting in fertilizer provides more basis for the success of the tree.

Creates a greater likelihood for this tree making it, because it has been dug around and aerated and fertilizer has been poured in. What do those symbolize?

I think this is a Wiseman opinion. The text doesn't say this, but I think he is talking about his very own crucifixion. The crucifixion of Jesus Christ is the fertilizer for Israel.

It is to be Israel's wake-up call, because that crucifixion is going to be followed with a resurrection, and Israel is now going to have more occasion to believe and more culpability for not believing than they had before.

[35 : 34] Now, to the miracles and teaching of the Messiah, his death, burial, and resurrection have been added, and it makes his claims all the more outstanding.

And as Luke wrote in Acts, Jesus presented himself alive by many infallible proofs. And it means that now, after the resurrection, Israel is even more without excuse for rejecting their Messiah. And the year that they are given is a year's extension or probation following the crucifixion. So, the crucifixion of Christ was not the end of Israel's opportunity.

It was a continuation, celebration, and an intensifying of Israel's opportunity. In other words, the chance to do the right thing is still there.

When are they going to be given an opportunity to do the right thing? On the day of Pentecost. Christ, when Peter is humming the same old tune, as he delivers his message to Israel, he says, repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

[37 : 10] This is Acts 2.38. The message hasn't changed. It's just that there's another dimension added to it that wasn't there before, and that is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

So what we have in Acts 2 is not a cutting off or a conclusion of Israel's opportunity. It is an extension of Israel's opportunity.

Because, contrary to the common position that is taken about this, the thinking is that when Israel crucified their Messiah, God said to Israel, that's it.

Deal's off. You are no longer my people. I'm casting you off. That's your final answer. Well, this is my final answer to you. You are done, Israel. That's no more. And can you not see how people could reach that conclusion?

I certainly can. Because I'm one who reached it myself for many years. It seems only logical that was their final answer. No, it wasn't their final answer and it wasn't their final opportunity.

[38 : 25] And here is where we part company with the vast majority of Christendom. And some would say, at least on the surface, it's not that big a deal.

It doesn't make that much difference. Oh, yes, it does. When you get into this and understand the implications, it becomes a very big deal. There's a lot riding on this. Nobody's splitting theological hairs.

Ah, who cares? This way, that way. It doesn't make any difference. Yes, it does. It makes a world of difference. It only makes no difference to those who have never really thought it through.

And so many people are so superficial in their approach to everything that they never really think anything through. Two things had to occur before the kingdom of heaven could come to earth.

Number one, Christ had to die and provide the legal basis for God removing the curse that he had imposed upon the earth.

[39 : 31] He did that. The death of the Messiah was a necessity. In order to pay the redemptive price for human sin.

And that's precisely what Christ did when he died on that cross. And the second thing that has to occur before the kingdom could be established is that Israel must nationally own Jesus as their Messiah.

Prior to his death, Christ never offered the kingdom but repeatedly announced its nearness or at hand.

Here is another really important distinction. John the Baptist never said this is it. Here it is folks, the kingdom, you can have it. All you have to do is wrap your arms around it and it's yours.

He never said that. Jesus never said that. All they would commit to was the kingdom of heaven is near.

[40 : 41] It is at hand. That's the expression that's used repeatedly. It is at hand. That means close by, near. And it was in the person of the king.

Because the king is the one who brings the kingdom. And the king is on site. Here he is, Jesus of Nazareth. He's the king. And everywhere he went, he brought with him to authenticate his claim.

He brought his credentials with him and he established kingdom realities wherever he went. He exercised supernatural power over the elements, over the wind, over the rain, over the sea.

He exercised authority over demonic spirits. He exercised authority over disease, even over death. He demonstrated that he was really in control.

So wherever the king went, he brought with him kingdom conditions because these are the way things are going to be done when that kingdom is established. Afterwards, in Acts 2 and again in

Acts 3, the kingdom is actually offered to Israel by Peter using the keys to the kingdom of heaven that Christ gave him in Matthew chapter 16.

[42 : 10] Peter was the chief spokesman for the twelve. His having the keys to the kingdom of heaven represents authority. The power and ability to open and unlock and admit that's what a key is for.

And Peter is the only one who was given those keys. He in Acts chapter 2 let's go there please if we may a few minutes that we have left.

Acts chapter 2 Peter is using these keys and he is offering he is offering to Israel if you will on a golden platter that which Christ came to purchase and the only thing that they need to do is nationally embrace Jesus as their Messiah.

And here let me explain to you. Here is where a lot of thinking goes erroneous because on the day of Pentecost as a result of Peter's preaching there were 3,000 Jews who believed and by the way they were all Jews no non-Jews here.

This was a Jewish feast day. Pentecost was on the Jewish calendar it was for Jews to observe and Jews came from all over the world to be there for it. And we sometimes think that there were 3,000 people there which is a pretty good sized congregation and Peter stood up and he preached this message to 3,000 people and lo and behold all 3,000 of them believed and they were all baptized.

[43 : 57] And that is an assumption that many make when they read the text. And by the way it's an assumption that yours truly made for several years. But it is a gratuitous assumption.

There's no valid basis for it. In fact if you will look at Acts chapter 2 and verse 40 Acts 2 40 at the conclusion of Peter's message it says and with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them saying be saved deliver yourselves from this perverse generation a perverse generation is a corrupt generation it is a decadent generation and that's what was in existence then by the way nothing has changed that's what's in existence today it's a perverse generation and look at verse 41 so then everybody who heard Peter's message were baptized no they weren't were they just those who received his word how many were there 3,000 how many were there we don't know we aren't told if I were to offer a wise man opinion

I would say multiplied thousand I wouldn't be surprised if 3,000 were not the minority not the majority because this is a huge huge area the temple mount upon which well now it's a Muslim mosque is built but originally the temple mount as it was expanded under Herod even during the days of Christ occupied the space of about 12 football fields this is a big area huge huge open area the temple itself was relatively small it was only 30 feet 45 feet long 15 feet wide relatively small but the huge courtyard and all the expanse around it was very large and it could accommodate easily 100 250 people no problem at all we aren't told how many were there but there were 3,000 who believed this message now

I want you to come over quickly to chapter 3 and let's look at verse 11 we've got an incident that took place here that was very dramatic this man had been healed who was there by the temple gate and he's jumping up and down and he'd been lame from his mother's womb and never walked a day in his life and now he's jumping around for joy and we read in verse 11 while he this man was just healed was clinging to Peter and John all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon which is by the way a huge area could accommodate thousands and thousands of people full of amazement but Peter saw this he replied to the people men of Israel now note the limitation of Peter's audience these are Jews they're all Jews there's no reason for Gentiles to be there men of

Israel why do you marvel at this or why do you gaze at us as if by our own power piety we had made him walk the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob and so on and he comes down and he says verse 16 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 he has given perfect health in the presence of you all and look at verse 17 but now brethren these are Jewish brethren these are not fellow believers in Christ they are just fellow Jews they are all seed of Abraham and now brethren I know that you acted in ignorance that is when you crucified Jesus just as your rulers did also but the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets that his Christ should suffer he has thus fulfilled the prophets told about

[48 : 37] Christ suffering when he came God sent him to suffer and God has done his part God has made good on his promise what remains what remains is for you to make good on what you're supposed to do and he goes on and says repent look at that word there it is again repent therefore

change your mind about who you thought Jesus was that led to your shouting crucify him crucify him you've got to reverse yourself instead of wanting him crucified you have to be willing to worship him now folks that is a 180 that is repentance you repent therefore that is part two of the formula and return that your sins may be wiped away in order that times of refreshing what is that that's the kingdom the restitution and restoration of all things that's the kingdom that

Christ came to provide and it will come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send Jesus the Christ appointed for you 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 folks this is not the beginning of the church this is the fulfillment of a promise that God made to his covenant people years and years ago and that's what Peter says when they were speaking in these unknown languages some of those standing by says you know what these guys are smashed why they're drunk as a skunk and Peter stood up and said oh wait a minute wait a minute these men are not drunken as you suppose it's only the third hour of the day they are not drunk but this this that you are seeing and hearing the speaking in tongue this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel this is a fulfillment of God's promise folks this is nothing new that is beginning this is something old that is continuing and the offer is extended to Israel even though they earlier rejected it what's God doing he's giving them another chance opportunity when Jesus was on that cross one of the things he said was father forgive them who was he talking about he was talking about the religious Jewish establishment that was responsible for his crucifixion forgive them they know not what they do and here Peter says we know that you did it ignorantly and in unbelief you were all wrong you were all wrong now are you big enough to admit it and reverse yourself that's Peter's message that was his message in Pentecost on Acts 2 repent therefore and be baptized in the name what baptism that was John's baptism it's the only baptism they knew wasn't Christian baptism there's nothing Christian about this in Acts 2 they aren't even called Christians the word isn't even used until years later at Antioch when they were first called Christians these are all Jews Jews Jews Jews all of them and was Jewish and it was the Jewish people that was to be the vanguard nation for all the other nations of the world but they weren't cooperative we will not have this man to reign over us now they are given another opportunity this is that of which Jesus spoke in the parable let's dig around it and fertilize it and give it another year that's a year after the crucifixion and

I don't know about the precise chronology of this but I am suspecting I am thinking and if it's not on this it's pretty close that this a year later a year later after the crucifixion is about the time that Stephen is stoned in Acts chapter 7 and guess who stoned him guess who took up literal stones to stone this man it was the religious establishment in charge the San Hedron these old gray heads with their flowing beards and robes drag Stephen outside the city and they personally stoned him to death that was Israel's final answer and that was the culmination of the year's reprieve they were given and then what then a whole new thing begins because then

[54 : 48] Israel is set aside in unbelief and God turns to a whole new entity that was never before even thought of dreamed of it isn't predicted in the Old Testament at all it is a new thing that will blend Jew and Gentile together in one body that's called the church it does not replace Israel it is an altogether new dynamic that was never a subject of prophecy that's why it's called a mystery it was before hidden in God who never revealed it until he raised up this unlikely man by the name of Saul of Tarsus and he clued him in as to what he was doing and it was a whole new thing this is really important stuff to understand this because it determines what a church is to be how a church is to operate what our modus operandi is and someone would say do you mean to tell me that the church has been operating under a lot of erroneous assumptions for centuries yes that's exactly what

I mean to tell you and you know something Israel did the same thing before us for several centuries so and so often we are willing to settle for something that is less than the truth thank you for these dear folk here this morning and for their gracious hearing that they've given to this we pray that the spirit of

God who inspired it will work in their hearts and minds and confirm these things to be true or allow them to pass away and come to not if you deem them untrue we bless you for each one here in Christ's name amen