

Acts Chapter 2 Con't

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[0 : 00] Well, this is our April 19 class, and we continue in Acts chapter 2. And I am laboring somewhat with this chapter simply because it is of such critical importance to the whole body of Christ.

I have already stated and will repeat the fact that it is this chapter that is one of the most divisive in all of Christendom as to its interpretation.

And the reason being very simple, and that is because the natural tendency is to take what you have already heard and what you already believe and just assume that that is what this text is teaching because that's where it came from.

And I must confess to my embarrassment that this is precisely what I did for many, many years, and I never had any reason to do otherwise. It was very obvious to me what the party line was.

And the party line was and still is. The church began on the day of Pentecost. That's the birthday of the church. Everybody knows that. Well, it just ain't so.

[1 : 20] I think it was Josh Billings who said, I'd rather know a few things for certain than a whole lot of things that ain't so. And this is one of them. But it escapes us because we just grow up with this mentality, this idea that is passed on from generation to generation, that this is the beginning of the church.

Acts chapter 2, the day of Pentecost. Everybody knows that. But, fellas, it just isn't so. The principle dynamic that makes the church the church is its commonality to all who are in it.

That is, whether you are Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female, you are all on the same plane if you are in Christ.

And it is the amalgamation of Jew and Gentile, which up to this time was absolutely unheard of.

Because the Jew, from the time he was called, was to be a peculiar people unto the Lord, separate from everyone else.

Come out from among them. You are not to be like the Gentiles. Now, we've got a switch in mind that just doesn't set well at all with the Jews who had cut their teeth on this whole principle of separation.

[2 : 56] And now, it is as if through the death of Christ, the floodgates are open, and it isn't just the seed of Abraham.

It is whosoever will may come. Put your faith in Jesus Christ, God's Son, and you become baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ.

You become in union with Christ, and you are brethren with everyone else in the body on the same plane. No distinction between Jew and Gentile.

That didn't go over well. In fact, it didn't go over at all. And when the one who was one of the chief opponents of that, who had dedicated his energies to stamping out the Jewish people who would dare suggest that by believing in Jesus as the Messiah, when that one became converted on the road to Damascus, it changed everything.

I mean, you talk about a quantum shift, a paradigm shift. This was incredible. And it all began with this man, Saul of Tarsus, coming to faith in Christ as his Messiah, and being raised up of God to be nothing less than the apostle to the Gentiles.

[4 : 37] Well, can you believe it? To the Gentiles? What does God want to do with Gentiles? God is the God of the Jews, and of the God of the Jews only.

No, no. And you know, listen, fellas, this is often lost sight of. But it was always God's intent, and this is brought out several times in Isaiah, and in Jeremiah, and in Micah, and in other places, that God's original purpose for utilizing and raising up the Jews was to be a light to the Gentiles.

They were to be the catalyst through whom God would reach the Gentiles. But they weren't interested in doing that. They just wanted to keep everything to themselves.

And as a result, God raised up this man, Saul of Tarsus, and dubbed him. And this is right there in chapter 9, where Saul's conversion takes place.

Where God is speaking to Ananias and says, For I will send him, Paul, Saul, to the Gentiles, to bear my name to the Gentiles.

[5 : 51] And when he began doing that, he was viewed by other Jews, of course, as a traitor, as a turncoat. And they vowed that they were going to kill him. I talked about that earlier.

I didn't give the references. This is in chapter 21, I think, where 40 Jews swore an oath that they would not eat or drink until they had killed Paul the Apostle.

And, of course, they didn't end up doing that. We don't know if they ever did make good on their vow and starve to death, but it isn't likely. But that's how they hated him for what he was doing.

And you remember, I've related this to you before, and I don't want to get too far afield, because I want to get to the text. But back in Acts chapter 10, right after he was converted, right after Paul was converted, in Acts chapter 9, that's when God uses Peter.

As Peter had been the chief spokesman, he had been the one to whom the keys of the kingdom were given by Christ in Matthew 16. And he used Peter to break the ice.

[7 : 02] And this is really important, guys, because Saul of Tarsus, who became converted to Jesus Christ, had zero credibility with the Jews because he was making overtures to the Gentiles.

So the Jews automatically rejected him and gave him difficulty everywhere he went. But Peter already had credibility. Peter was one of the original twelve chosen by Christ.

In fact, he was the chief spokesman. Out of the twelve, there were three principal apostles. Peter, James, and John. And of the three, Peter stood tallest.

Peter was, you could describe Peter as Christ's right-hand man. Peter was the one to whom Christ committed the keys of the kingdom. Now, I want to make an important distinction here.

He didn't say, I'm giving you the keys to the church. He said, I'm giving you the keys to the kingdom. That's different. And the key is a symbol of authority.

[8 : 07] A key is used to lock things and unlock things. And the one who has the key has the authority and the ability to lock and unlock.

And this is exactly what Christ was referring to when he said, Whatsoever you bind shall have been bound on earth. Whatsoever you loose shall have been loosed on earth. But it was all in connection with the kingdom, not with the church.

And this is where I feel that our Roman Catholic friends and Protestants go astray in interpreting that passage in Matthew 16, because they will not allow it to mean what it says.

You can't let it mean what it says, because that would favor Catholicism. You can't do that. That's the Protestant response. And the Catholic response is, read the text.

That's what it says. And you know what? They're right. But it isn't talking about the church. It's talking about the kingdom. And Peter used the keys to open, if you will, the door wide to the kingdom.

[9 : 19] And the first time he used the keys was on the day of Pentecost. And he is preaching this message to the Jews who are gathered there on the day of Pentecost.

And he is telling them, you crucified the Messiah. And you need to reverse yourself and repent of that and embrace him as your Savior Messiah.

And that was Peter's message. And he preached that in Acts chapter 2 and Acts chapter 3. And he was literally using his key verbally as he proclaimed the death, burial, and resurrection to the Jew.

And then Peter is going to use the key again. And this is so important, guys. He's going to use the key again in Acts chapter 10 when he sees this sheet let down from heaven.

And in this sheet is all manner of four-footed beasts, clean and unclean. What does that mean?

[10 : 29] And in this vision, he is told, rise, Peter, kill and eat. And Peter says, well, I'm not going to eat any of them. That's unclean flesh. I'm not going to. And the text goes on to say, what God hath cleansed, that call thou not unclean.

And what that means, guys, this is really important. What that means is God is telling Peter, you see these clean and unclean animals? Animals that are clean are acceptable for sacrifice in the Jewish sacrificial system.

Animals that are unclean are not acceptable. You can't offer them a sacrifice. And all of these animals are there together, mixed together. And Peter says, what does this mean? What does this mean? And what it means is God is using those animals to represent humanity. And the animals, clean and unclean, represent the Jew and the Gentile together. Wow, how can that be? And Peter was told to go to the house of Cornelius. Cornelius was a Roman army officer.

[11 : 39] And he had been praying for light. This is in Acts chapter 10. He had been praying for light. And God sent an angel to Cornelius and said, You send two men and go to the household of Ananias, I think it was, in Joppa, and inquire after a man by the name of Peter, and ask him to come here, and he will tell you what you need to know.

So, this sheet let down from heaven three times before Peter would respond. And then the next thing you know, there's a knock at the door. Peter goes to the door. And here are a couple of guys. And they're obviously Gentiles. And they say, Are you Peter? And he says, Yes, I am. He says, Well, our master Cornelius sent us to get you and escort you back to where he is because you have words to tell him that he needs to know.

And Peter said, I'm not very comfortable with this. This is a Gentile. And he wasn't about to do that. And you know what he did?

Peter took, I think, six fellow Jews with him. Not only moral support, but probably protection too. I don't know what I'm getting into. He took, I think it was a half a dozen Jewish brethren with him.

[12 : 58] And they went to the household of Cornelius. Very uncomfortable in doing so. And when they got there, they were all waiting for them. Peter preached that message to a house full of Gentiles.

What was he doing? He was using that key again through the spoken word. And he was telling them all about Jesus, the Jewish Messiah, who was not only the Savior of Israel, but he is the Savior of the whole world.

And you know what? Cornelius and everyone in the house said, that's it. That's the message we've been waiting for. And through Jesus Christ, you receive the forgiveness of sins.

And to authenticate what took place there, the Spirit of God fell on them there in Acts 10, just as he had in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost.

And that really confirmed to Peter that God was in this, and this was God's doing. And Peter says, it was just like the day of Pentecost all over again.

[14 : 13] And the people there who had a language barrier in Acts 10 in Cornelius' household, they were able to communicate through a language that they had never learned before.

And that authenticated the whole thing. And Peter related this to his Jewish brethren who criticized him for going there. And then, fellas, there in Acts 11, after they had called Peter on the carpet for going into the house of a Gentile and eating with him, and Peter explained to them everything that happened from the sheet let down and the whole nine yards.

And the text goes on and says, Well then, has God also granted repentance unto the Gentiles? That was never heard of before. God didn't want anything to do with the Gentiles, did He? And now, He is including Gentiles?

Wow, fellas, this is part of what the Scriptures call the mystery of Christ. That in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, God was in Christ reconciling the world.

[15 : 28] Not just Israel, but the world unto God. And has given us the ministry of reconciliation. Incredible. Well, I hadn't planned to go there, but let's get to our text now.

We're back in Acts chapter 2. Back in Acts chapter 2, and we're starting a new page. And it's at the top of page 442, which is Acts 2.28.

And this is a quote from the Old Testament. This is from one of the Psalms. Which Psalm it is escapes me. Maybe you've got the number of it. Anybody knows can shout it out.

It's a messianic psalm. And David is writing this psalm. And it is being quoted by Peter as part of his sermon on the day of Pentecost.

And in verse 28, he is quoting from the psalm that David the king wrote. And it includes, thou hast made known to me the ways of life.

[16 : 32] Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. And I'm reading the bold print here because that's the King James and you can fill in with the other translations there. And then Peter, after quoting that, then Peter says, Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch

David.

Now, where was David when Peter was preaching the day of Pentecost? David was dead. Had been dead for a thousand years.

Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried.

And his sepulcher, his grave, is with us unto this day. It's right around the corner and down the street. You can go visit the tomb of David if you want to.

You all know where David's buried. And you all know that his body is there in that tomb. And it's still there. Or skeleton is still there. His sepulcher is with us unto this day.

[17 : 44] Therefore, being a prophet, he's talking about David, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that is, God had sworn with an oath to David, that of the fruit of David's loins, according to the flesh, that is, humanly speaking, that is, humanly speaking, he, God, would raise up Christ, the Messiah, to sit on his throne.

And at the time David was penning this, Christ would not be born in Bethlehem for another thousand years. He, verse 31, He, seeing this before, spoke of the resurrection of Christ.

Now here, he's got David talking about the resurrection of Christ, and Christ hadn't even been born yet. That his soul was not left in hell.

Whose soul was not left in hell? Christ's. And this word hell, by the way, should be translated Hades. You see, the 20th century New Testament says, place of death.

The ASV has it, Hades. Weymouth translates it, not left forsaken in the grave, or deserted in death, or in the realm of the death.

[19 : 12] He was not deserted when he was dead, was Beckwith's translation. Neither his flesh did see corruption. Now, it's obvious that he's not talking about David's flesh, because David's flesh did see.

What is this corruption thing? Corruption is what happens to the physical body when it dies. It decays. It disintegrates.

It literally falls apart. That's the nature of flesh that is dead. All biological life decays when physical death is removed from it.

That's why we embalm people. We principally embalm people so as to preserve the body so that the relatives from California will have time to get here. And if you know anything about Judaism, they do not embalm.

And if you are a Jew, especially if you are an Orthodox Jew, if you die in the morning, you're buried in the afternoon, same day.

[20 : 19] If you die in the evening, you're buried the next morning. There's no three, four days or anything like that, because they don't embalm. And if you don't embalm, you've got to dispose of the body in a rather ready fashion, because the decaying process sets in very quickly.

And especially if you are in a temperature condition like exists there in the Middle East. You don't want that body. Remember when Jesus went to raise Lazarus from the dead, his sister says, much as I love my brother, he really smells bad now.

He's been dead four days. You don't want to roll away that stone. The stench would be overwhelming. If you've ever smelled anything dead, it's offensive to the nostrils.

You can't. When you see people working, you see them wearing masks. When they're looking for dead bodies after an earthquake or something, everybody's wearing masks, because the air is so putrid. That's the nature of decay.

And when he talks here about thou wilt not leave his soul in Hades, neither his flesh did see corruption. And the reason it didn't is because of the resurrection.

[21 : 32] Because Christ came forth from that tomb. And in verse 32, this Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.

And I think Peter here is saying, we all, with a sweep of the hand, and he's talking about himself, and the eleven other apostles who are right there with him.

And they're all nodding their heads. Yeah, right, right. We were there. We saw him. We handled him. We touched him. We talked to him. We heard him talk to us. We saw the print of the nails in his hands.

And he said to us, handle me and see, for a spirit has not flesh and bone as you see me have. And all of these are saying, we saw him.

We spent 40 days with him after his resurrection. And that was just 10 days ago. And then we saw him stand there on the Mount of Olives and descend physically, visibly, right before our very eyes. [22 : 41] He was received up into heaven. We know whereof we speak. Whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, that's where Christ went when he ascended.

He went to the right hand of the Father. And having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath shed forth this, which you now see and hear.

And this, he's talking about, this miraculous manifestation of speaking in languages that they had never heard. This was the coming, the arrival of the Spirit of God in fulfillment of the promise that God gave through the prophet Joel.

That's what all of this is about. Fellas, listen, there is not even a hint here that this is the beginning of the church. Not even a hint.

We read that into it. And we have done that for hundreds and hundreds of years. because with the national rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, which is the majority viewpoint among Christendom today, that Christ, having been rejected by the nation of Israel, God has rejected Israel and replaced Israel with the church, and this is the beginning of it here.

[24 : 24] That's the standard party line. But there is not a thing in the text to suggest that. This is just something that has been imposed upon Christianity, both Catholic and Protestant, for hundreds and hundreds of years.

But fellas, let me tell you something. There is nothing Christian about this Pentecostal thing. Nothing Christian about it at all. It is Jewish, just like it says.

And you have to maintain the continuity from the Gospels to the Acts. Because the book of Acts is really nothing more than a continuation of the Gospel of Luke.

So, Christians and Christianity doesn't even come into play until Gentiles come into the picture and start constituting the body of Christ.

And then we read, I think it's in Acts 13, where it says, and they were called Christians first at Antioch.

[25 : 36] That's the first time you find anything Christian. Now, what we've got here on the day of Pentecost is, of course, just like the Old Testament. It is the seedbed of Christianity.

Christianity. Christianity is going to flow from this. So, Pentecost and all of the Old Testament represent the roots of Christianity.

But there's nothing Christian about it. It isn't Christian until after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and the introduction of Gentiles into this one body which becomes the whole new man.

And it's just something that we have lived with. And don't worry, I have no illusions of being able to straighten out Christendom because, Barb says, this isn't the beginning of the church, therefore we'll forget all about it.

I have no illusions about that. Nothing dies harder than religious tradition if it dies at all. So, people will perpetuate it with, well, that's what I've always believed.

[26 : 40] And that's where they're stuck. But we don't have to be stuck there with them. We can just go with the text. Therefore, by the right hand of God exalted, having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which you now see and hear.

For David, David is not ascended into the heavens, but he, David, says himself, the Lord said unto my Lord, Lord.

Well, what kind of double talk is that? If you look carefully at that bold type, you will see two different spellings for the word Lord. The first is in all capital letters.

The second begins with a capital letter, but it's lower case. And, it is rendered more appropriately by the 20th century New Testament, the Lord said to my Master, the Lord God said unto my Lord.

This is the translation from, I thought it was the range of the way, but it's a different translation. But anyway, what we've got here is deity speaking with deity.

[27 : 56] This is the Father. This is God the Father speaking to God the Son. And, it looks like double talk. It looks like he's talking to himself.

The Lord said to my Lord. But, he isn't talking to himself. This is the Father talking to the Son. And, he says to the Son, sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool.

That is, God the Father speaking to God the Son. And, this too is a quote from the Old Testament. Therefore, in light of all of that, let all the house of Israel, again, do you not see the limitation of his

audience?

The qualification to whom he is speaking? It is the house of Israel. Who constitutes the house of Israel? It's the twelve tribes of Jacob.

Remember, God changed Jacob's name in the Old Testament at the brook Jabbok. He changed his name from Jacob to Israel.

[29 : 09] Jacob became Israel. And, all of Jacob's twelve sons, the twelve tribes, comprised the whole house of Israel.

Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made that same Jesus, yes, the one you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

I can just see the response on the faces of a lot of these men. They're just standing there shell-shock. and the Spirit of God takes this truth and drives it home to the hearts of those that were open to receive it.

And their only response was, read on. Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart.

20th century says, they were conscious, smitten. Moffat says, it went straight to their hearts.

Goodspeed says, they were stung to the heart.

[30 : 26] Williams, they were stabbed to the heart. Berkeley, they were moved to the depths of their hearts. Knox says, their consciences were stung.

They were pierced to the heart. They felt crushed. These are all good expressions of what many in this crowd were feeling as Peter explained to them who Jesus of Nazareth really was and what Israel had done to him.

And this pall of gloom settled in over these people and they are saying, my God, this man's right.

This is right. This is exactly what we did. Oh, no! How could we have missed it? How could we have been so I can't believe it!

He was the Messiah. We turned him over to the Romans. We crucified him. And they were shell-shocked.

[31 : 32] They were just stunned. And they look at each other and say, man, this guy's right. This is what we did.

what can we do about it now? We really, really blew it. What can we do now? And Peter as much as said, well, you can't go back and do it over.

what is done is done, but I'll tell you what you can do. You can change your mind and admit that you were wrong.

And you know, when John was here preaching the kingdom of heaven and baptizing those who repented and Jesus and his disciples preached the same thing and many people believed the message and they repented of their sin and they were baptized by John and by the disciples of Christ and many of you here refuse that message and you refuse that baptism and Luke tells us that the Pharisees and the scribes rejected the counsel of God against themselves not being baptized of John you turned your nose up at John's baptism you rejected John's message you rejected the message of the twelve what are you going to do now are you willing to reverse yourself now because that's what repentance means and three thousand people in that crowd said yes I'm willing to completely reverse myself and the really difficult thing guys about repentance is you have to be big enough to admit you were wrong and that's a hard sell that bruises the ego we will avoid that at all costs but that's what it takes because you can never get right if you refuse to admit you were wrong and that's exactly what three thousand of these people did and as a result they demonstrated their change of heart by submitting to the baptism that they had earlier rejected now the food is here and I don't want it to get cold go right ahead and eat but are there questions that you'd like to pose before we bring this to all Scott

[34 : 38] Well, that's an entirely different subject. And we will get into it, but I can't elaborate on that now because it would just take too long.

But it's a good question. It's a worthy question, and I don't want to just slough it off. But it's upcoming. It's upcoming. We'll be dealing with it. Anything else? Yes. Just some add-ons.

Is there a difference between hell and Hades? Well, yes, there is a considerable difference between hell and Hades. And I'll be just as brief with this as I can. To the best of my knowledge, what we think of as hell does not now exist.

Hades does. Hades is a temporal place where the departed unbelievers go. But hell is a final state.

And I would equate that with what is referred to as the lake of fire in Revelation 19. But no one is in hell today. And the reason they aren't is because they have not had their day in court.

[35 : 45] And their day in court will be in Revelation 19 when the books are open and everyone is judged out of the books. And they will have their time in court. So everyone who died as an unbeliever is in what we would say a holding place.

And that is Hades. And I don't know exactly what it's like there. But I can assure you they're not having fun. Richard? The Trinity is hard to understand.

Yes. Yeah. But I never heard until this morning where the Lord talked to my Lord. I don't know. That's a brand new thought to me.

Maybe not to the other men. But, you know, I've always thought about in terms of the death of Christ. When he was buried, you know, I think the Scripture says he was able to take up himself. But it's easier for me to understand if Jesus killed him down there. And his father was up there and not dead. And he embraced him.

[36 : 50] Yeah. Well, there is nothing more profoundly mysterious than the subject of the nature and being of God. And that includes the Trinitarian aspect.

We do not embrace and believe the Trinity because we understand it. But we believe it because it is a clear matter of revelation in Scripture. And it does relate to the nature and character of God.

He is a triune being. But there are not three gods. There are three persons subsisting in one God. Yet each is not one-third God.

Each is fully God. And they are co-equal and co-eternal. And all that suggests is that God exists on a plane beyond our comprehension.

But, but, shouldn't he? Shouldn't there be things about the deity that we cannot comprehend? I dare say there certainly should be.

[37 : 48] And that is one of them. And the phrase that we used this morning, the Lord said unto my Lord, is just one of several. There are others. Yes, Dana? I assume, I don't know if you know or not, but in the Hebrew, are there two different words for Lord, Lord, Father, and Son?

Yes, yes. There is Jehovah and there is Adonai. And one means Master and one means Lord. They're similar, but they're not the same.

Yeah. Okay, enjoy your breakfast. Another question? Oh, yeah. I just had a question with, in 231, when you're talking about referencing the song, He was not left in Hades and His flesh did not experience in Hades.

Is he saying that Jesus, when He died, that His soul was in Hades? Yes. Yes. This is a problematic passage, too.

But Peter refers to it. Christ, after His resurrection, appeared to the spirits in prison. And that's, I think it's 2 Peter.

[38 : 53] And that's a problematic passage. I just don't understand it nearly as much as I'd like. But it seems to indicate that after His death, burial, and resurrection, Christ descended into Hades.

And there He preached, we are told, Peter says, to the spirits in prison. And what did He preach? And exactly who were these spirits? I don't really have a handle on that.

It would seem to me, the logic would seem to say, that He announced to them His victory over death. But the text doesn't say that, yet you wonder, what else would He have said?

What else would He have announced? What else would He have announced?