**GOD MADE JESUS LORD AND MESSIAH**

2016-05-22

Acts 2:22-47

Key Verse: 2:36, “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

In the last passage we studied the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is like a mighty wind that breathes God’s new spiritual life into people. The Holy Spirit is like tongues of fire that burn in people’s heart to sanctify them. The Holy Spirit enabled the ordinary people like apostles to speak in other tongues and declare the wonders of God to people of many nations. The Holy Spirit, as the prophet Joel had prophesied, enables young men to see God’s great vision of world salvation beyond their human circumstances or situation. I pray that the Holy Spirit may come upon many young men in our generation to see Jesus and God’s vision.

In today’s passage the Apostle Peter delivers the first message in the age of the church. Full of the Holy Spirit, he focused his message on Jesus Christ. He proclaims Jesus’ suffering and death. He proclaims even more Jesus’ resurrection and exaltation to the right hand of God. He explains how the coming of the Holy Spirit is related to Jesus’ exaltation. He challenges his listeners to acknowledge that Jesus is Lord and Christ. Peter’s message cut the listeners to the heart. It may be the most effective message that was ever preached in history. Three thousand people repented, were baptized and joined the Christian church. Through Peter’s message we can have a right view of Jesus and see the sovereign rule of God in history. When we repent and accept this Jesus as our Lord and Christ, we can receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. May God help us to do so!

**First, God raised Jesus from the dead (22-32).**

As we studied last time, a large crowd was drawn together by the work of the Holy Spirit through the apostles. They numbered at least three thousand. They wanted to understand what was happening. So they listened carefully. Peter quoted the prophet Joel to explain the coming of the Holy Spirit. Then he began to speak about Jesus. Look at verse 22. “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.” Jesus of Nazareth is the historical Jesus who entered time and space as a man, in human form. He came from God and did the work of God. The miracles, wonders and signs he performed showed that he was accredited by God. For example, Jesus once saw a man born blind. Out of his divine compassion, Jesus healed him with only mud and saliva. The blind man could see. It was a miracle that revealed Jesus’ identity as the Messiah. No one could open the eyes of a blind man. But Jesus did. The Jewish people, including their leaders, knew that Jesus was sent by God.

Since Jesus came from God, they should have welcomed him, honored him, and treated him with respect. What did they do? Look at verse 23. “This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.” They crucified God’s chosen servant on the cross. The Jewish religious leaders hated Jesus because they thought he threatened their political and economic interests. Though they knew Jesus was innocent, they pressured Pilate to pervert justice. They stirred up ordinary people to shout, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” It was the greatest crime in human history. They acted as enemies of God. However, in all fairness, it was not only they, but all people who are guilty of crucifying Jesus on the cross. A most thought-provoking song asks, “Were you there when they crucified my Lord?” Yes, we were there. Yes, I was there. It was also my sin that crucified Jesus.

When we look carefully at verse 23, we find that Jesus was handed over by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge. Jesus was crucified on the cross according to God’s will and God’s plan for world salvation. Isaiah 53:10 says, “Yet it was the Lord’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.” God used evil men to fulfill his own good purpose and offered Jesus as a sacrifice of atonement for the sin of the world. God loves the world. God sacrificed his own Son Jesus for sinners. Jesus willingly obeyed God’s purpose and offered himself as the Lamb of God.

Look at verse 24. “But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.” Until that time, death had reigned over men like a heavyweight champion, defeating all men one after another with no exception. Because of the inevitability of death, men had to live with a sense of defeat, many sorrows and great fear. Like all other men in history, Jesus died. But Jesus did not remain in the grave. It was impossible for the grave to hold Jesus, for Jesus is the Son of God. God raised Jesus from the dead. The almighty power of God raised Jesus to life. Jesus utterly defeated the power of death and became the everlasting champion of life.

This Jesus’ resurrection had been actually prophesied in the Scriptures. By the help of the Holy Spirit, Peter quoted here 2 Psalm passages. The first one is Psalm 16:8-11. Let’s look at verses 25-28. “David said about him: ‘I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.’”

As you know well, King David was one of the greatest men in Israel’s history but his life was not easy. From his teenage years he had to confront many unbearable hardships; one after another. Many times, he was in danger of death. But David was able to overcome all hardship because of his resurrection faith. The Psalm Peter quoted here testifies about David’s personal resurrection faith. He confessed, “I will not be shaken. My body also will rest in hope. You will not abandon me to the realm of the dead…” Until this point in his psalm, David had been sharing personal testimony of God’s victory in his life. But in verse 27b, David says, “...nor will you let your Holy One see decay.” In this verse, “Holy One” refers to the Messiah. This is the prophecy about the Messiah. When David had been sharing his personal testimony, whether he noticed the help of the Holy Spirit or not, he prophesied the resurrection of the Messiah. From verses 29-31, Peter explains this. Let’s look at these verses. “Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay.” As Peter said, it is obvious that even though David had resurrection faith and hope, he died and buried and his body decayed and his tomb was still there. So, here “Holy One” did not mean himself but the Messiah who would come after him. It is really amazing that what David prophesized and saw with spiritual foresight, Peter and the other apostles witnessed in history as fact and the fulfillment of prophecy. So, Peter said emphatically in verse 32, “God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it.”

**Second, the exaltation of Christ (33-36).**

The resurrection of Christ was a historical fact of which Peter and the others were witnesses. But what happened after the resurrection enabled the Risen Christ to send the Holy Spirit. Look at verse 33. Peter said, “Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.” The Risen Christ ascended into heaven and Peter saw it with his own eyes. The Risen Christ went to the throne of God and was seated at his right hand. It was the position of power and glory and majesty. The Risen Christ reigns over all creation as Lord. The Risen Christ asked the Father for the Holy Spirit based on the efficacy of his own sacrifice for sinners. God granted Jesus’ request and poured out the Holy Spirit upon all the believers.

Here, Peter quoted another Psalm as the Scriptural basis for his proclamation. It was Psalm 110:1, the same Psalm that Jesus himself quoted to reveal his true identity during the Passion week. Look at verses 34-35. “For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, ‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”’” In this quotation, in English, the same word “Lord” appears twice. But in Hebrew, the first “Lord” is “Jehovah” referring to the one great God of Israel; God the Father. The second “Lord” is “Adonai” referring to one greater than the speaker; David’s Lord Messiah; the Son of God, (this affirms the deity of the Christ). So in this quotation, God Almighty is welcoming the Christ to sit at his right hand to reign as Lord and promising victory over all his enemies.

After preaching until now, now Peter makes his conclusion of preaching. Let’s read all together verse 36. “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.” God made Jesus whom they and we crucified both Lord and Messiah. What does this news mean to you? In this short sentence, there are 3 important messages. 1) You and I crucified Jesus. This reveals our sin. 2) Jesus is the Messiah who will save us from our slavery to sin. 3) Jesus is the Lord whom we should trust and obey at any cost. As the Lord, Jesus reigns over men and the whole world to bring about God’s victory over all evil and unrighteousness and the power of death. In your life, have you ever accepted these 3 things seriously? Are you under the rule of Lord Jesus? If yes, you are encouraged to continue to live within this truth. But if not, now is the time to respond to God’s invitation.

**Third, repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ (37-47).**

When the people heard Peter’s message, they were cut to the heart. The very Jesus whom they had crucified had been raised from the dead and exalted to the right hand of God. The testimony of Scripture and the powerful witness of the apostles was overwhelming evidence that demanded their response. They realized they were guilty of sinning against the promised Messiah and the Creator God. They said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Look at verse 38. “Peter replied, ‘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 gift of the Holy Spirit.’” “Repent” means “turn from ourselves to God.” Our sin is to love ourselves or other things more than God. Our sin is that I rather than God becomes my lord. Our sin is to please ourselves or others more than God. “Repent” means “to turn from all such sins to God and God alone”. “Repent” means “to give up loving both the things of the world and God and to love God alone.” “Repent” means “give to God not my partial but my whole being.” “Repent” is not just one time emotional event but consistent change of our mind and will. When we repent and are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, we are promised to receive the forgiveness of our sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Here, what is the good news for us is that when we repent and receive the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit helps us to continue to remind us of Jesus and his grace of forgiveness of sins. This promise is for everyone who accepts Jesus (verse 39). Peter, with many other words, warned them and pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” By Peter’s message, on that day 3000 people accepted Jesus and were baptized in his name. In verses 42-47, the believers’ lives were transformed beyond human imagination. They were filled with the word of God, sacrificial love, gladness, and the favor of all the people due to their good deed in Christ.

Today we learn that Jesus was exalted to the right hand of God as Lord and Messiah. We all are responsible for Jesus’ death because of our sins. But by God’s grace when we repent and accept Jesus as Lord and Messiah, God gives us the forgiveness of our sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. This grace leads us to live transformed life; truly beautiful and holy life beyond our imagination. May God bless each one of us to accept Jesus and live such a life! In Jesus name, Amen.