

Week 7

THE JERUSALEM CHURCH IN ACTION – PT 2

A Warning to Israel

In the second half of chapter two, Peter preaches his second recorded sermon in the Church era. His sermon reveals some very important things about the preaching of the early church. Peter's sermon is profoundly biblical, as was his first sermon in chapter two.

In his second sermon, Peter is preaching in an expository style, which came natural to him, having not had any formal education. Expository preaching is what the church was known for until the modern era. Expository preaching is using the scriptures for a text and explaining them in their context and then applying their meaning to the lives of those who are listening.

This style preaching lets the power of the message be in God's words, not the preachers. Both Peter, and later Paul offer their messages from a place of humility. Paul even says, in the First Corinthian letter that he did not come to them with powerful and persuasive words (1 Cor. 2:1-5) The church in our world is desperate for humble preachers who know the Word of God well enough to let it speak for itself, and who know Christ in such power that they know when and how to let Him speak through them.

Peter shows how in Genesis and in Deuteronomy, there is prophecy of Jesus the Messiah who would come one day. By appealing to the words of Moses, Peter had instant credibility with his audience. Moses was the most revered man/prophet in Judaism.

On a side note, we need to think about the preacher, who he is, and what does he do? Moses was a reluctant preacher. He even ran from God, and confessed he was not qualified because he was slow of speech. We've already mentioned how Peter and Paul were humble preachers without any great training. We should note that Paul was a Pharisee, which meant he had training in the Mosaic Law, but that was the law as it was after centuries of rabbinic translation, not the pure law of Moses found in the Torah.

So, what did Moses, Peter, and Paul have in common? They were all humble, reluctant leaders, who were led and filled by the Spirit of God.

The world today, and the church, are hungry for humble, spirit-led preachers who trust the Lord to give them words to say at the appropriate time. These preachers will preach in Jesus' name, as we will soon learn in the chapter four, is exactly what the apostles do. This is the preaching that grew the church exponentially, and it will again, when men and women of God, answer the call to be led by His Spirit, and not the spirit of the wisdom of this world.

C. THE CHURCH MINISTERING IN JERUSALEM (3-8:3)

1. A Sign to Israel: A Lame Man Healed – The 1st Miracle of the Church Age (3:1-11)

a. The habit of the Apostles

- The Liturgy of the Hours

b. Lame from birth

- Common in the East for beggars to position near shrines
- No one could deny the miracle was of God

c. The Oneness of Apostolic ministry

- The one thing the church has is what the world needs
- The age of miracles – have they stopped?

2. A Warning to Israel: Peter's Sermon (3:12-26)

a. Early Christian preaching

1. The Cross
2. The Resurrection
3. The Power of the Risen Lord

b. Knowing their limits opened unlimited possibilities

- “Yet not I, but through Christ in me”

c. the Old Testament prophecies Jesus

- Moses is specifically quoted
- All prophets pointed the way to Jesus

d. The preaching and healing led to arrest

- Thousands more believe – The church grows exponentially

