

**History in the Making**  
**Understanding the Book of Acts**  
**Lesson Six**

**Introduction:** For 40 days after the resurrection, Jesus “presented Himself alive...by many infallible proofs” and spoke to His disciples, the “things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.”

**NOTE:** Paul says He was seen by Peter, 12, 500 at once, James, all the Apostles (1 Corinthians 15:5-7)

- ✓ Then His commission (Acts 1:6-8) and ascension
- ✓ 10 more days the disciples, with many others (120 in all) lingered in the upper room
- ✓ On the Day of Pentecost (50<sup>th</sup>), with a city full of Jewish pilgrims, the Pentecostal phenomenon occurred
- ✓ Crowds speculation—followed by Peter’s sermon
- ✓ The results of the first Christian sermon were extraordinary

***Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. Acts 2:41 NKJV***

Reflection

- ✓ Many things can be said today and are preached every week
- ✓ Something very powerful about the simplicity of Peter’s message

This series—History in the Making

- ✓ The church that makes history today will still maintain the simple message

**I. Jesus willingly gave His life for us.**

***"Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know — 23 Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; Acts 2:22-23 NKJV***

Two thoughts

A. The death of Jesus on the cross was necessary

1. The Old Testament law required that mankind die for his wrongdoing of sins (soul that sins shall die/wages of sin is death)
2. Since it was human sin that needed to be covered-it must be human blood that paid the price

***For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins. Hebrews 10:4 NKJV***

3. But also had to be sinless humanity to pay the price (lamb without blemish)
4. God had stored up sin before Christ, forgiven, but no penalty was paid-Jesus paid the penalty

***For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. This sacrifice shows that God was being fair when he held back and did not punish those who sinned in times past, 26 for he was looking ahead and including them in what he would do in this present time. God did this to demonstrate his righteousness, for he himself is fair and just, and he declares sinners to be right in his sight when they believe in Jesus. Romans 3:25-26 New Living Translation***

NOTE: Even in the garden, Jesus wrestled-if it is possible-no other way-was necessary

5. Jesus later said

***Then Jesus said to them, "You foolish people! You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. 26 Wasn't it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?" 11 Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. John 19:10-11a NKJV***

B. The death of Jesus on the cross was voluntary

1. No one takes it -I lay it down
2. No power over Him

***Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" 11 Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. John 19:10-11a NKJV***

HIS DEATH WAS NECESSARY AND VOLUNTARY-He gave His live for us!

## II. Jesus totally fulfilled God's Word.

*For David says concerning Him: 'I foresaw the Lord always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. 27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 28 You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.' 29 "Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31 he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption. Acts 2:25-31 NKJV*

(Quoting from David in Psalms)

- A. David was speaking a prophecy about his offspring
- B. Peter made it clear-not about David-His grave is here today!
- C. Speaking prophetically of the One who would come

*Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, Luke 2:4 NKJV*

*For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11 NKJV*

- D. Birth of Christ (Micah 5:2), death of Jesus (Isaiah 53) and His resurrection all declared by God
- E. Peter says-Jesus totally fulfilled God's Word-NOTE: He still will!

## III. Jesus completely defeated death.

*Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it. Acts 2:24 NKJV*

*This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. Acts 2:32 NKJV*

Theme of New Testament preaching

- A. The resurrection of Jesus is essential

*But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen. 14 And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty. 15 Yes, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He did not raise up — if in fact the dead do not rise. 16 For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. 17 And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! 18 Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. 19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. 1 Corinthians 15:13-19 NKJV*

**B. The resurrection of Jesus is verifiable**

1. Foolish anti-resurrection theories

- a. Swoon-theory (didn't really die-but Romans knew how to kill people)
- b. Didn't really die, wasn't crucified-bones now in a sealed tomb in southwestern France

NOTE: 1996 "The Tomb of God" Richard Andrews

- c. Rudolf Bultmann-resurrection was about the "arising of the faith of the early church" not the resurrection of Jesus
- d. Edward Schillenbeeckx-"The disciples were so filled with the light that it did not matter whether there was a body or not. He came as the light of the world and this was the illumination by which the disciples were justified."

2. Historical evidence of the resurrection

a. **Early Christianity was a kingdom movement**

New Testament proof

***For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 14:17 NKJV***

***For the kingdom of God is not in word but in power. 1 Corinthians 4:20 NKJV***

***That you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. 1 Thessalonians 2:12 NKJV***

Kingdom Expectation

- ✓ End of Israel exile/destruction of pagan empire
- ✓ Return of Yahweh to judge
- ✓ Not private experience-big stuff
- ✓ Coming of God's justice and liberation for the whole cosmos
- ✓ Anything less (personal experience, illumination, would not have convinced anyone)

b. **Early Christianity was a Messianic movement**

- ✓ Early Christianity declared Jesus as Messiah (Acts 3:36-His is both Lord and Christ)
- ✓ No one envisioned the Messiah dying at the hands of pagans
- ✓ Expected to defeat pagans and cleanse the temple (David to Bar Kochba-Herod and Maccabeus)
- ✓ If the Messiah had been killed-sure evidence that he was NOT the Messiah
- ✓ Would go back to job, looking for another

***But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Luke 24:21 NKJV***

- ✓ Yet Jesus, beaten, brutalized, tortured, and killed by pagans, is heralded as Messiah!
- ✓ Why? The resurrection!

**c. Early Christianity was a resurrection movement**

- ✓ Central belief from Pentecost on
- ✓ Belief was consistent-dead-out the other side to a new mode of existence
- ✓ This was the organizing belief of the New Testament church
- ✓ Built their lives around it and gave their lives for it
- ✓ Not for a swooning experience or some mystical experience of illumination
- ✓ New Testament believers and every unbelieving historian said the New Testament church believed in the bodily resurrection of Jesus

Peter declared-Jesus completely defeated death

**IV. Jesus eternally reigns.**

***This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. 34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts 2:32-36 NKJV***

- A. Lived, died, resurrected, now exalted
- B. At the right hand of the Father's throne
  - 1. Seated-work is complete
  - 2. Right hand-all power
  - 3. The One you crucified-God makes Him Lord and Christ-He is victor!

**Conclusion:** Greek game-laurel wreath was called the "Victor's Crown"-“Stephanos”-crown of victory

***But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. Hebrews 2:9 NKJV***

(Crowned-Stephanos)

- ✓ He gave His life willingly
- ✓ He fulfilled God's Word totally
- ✓ He defeated death completely
- ✓ He reigns eternally