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# Apostolic Proclamations of Christ

SPEECHES OF PETER AND PAUL. ELEMENTS OF THE APOSTOLIC WITNESS.

Speeches of Peter in Acts 2:14–36, 38–39; 3:12–26; 4:8–12; 5:29–32; 10:34–43. Speeches of Paul in Acts 17:16–34; 22:1–30; 26:1–32; 1 Corinthians 15:1–11.

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I Believe in Christ: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nnWoG6ledwc>

# “Come, Ye Thankful People” (fall; hymn no. 94)

1 Come, ye thankful people, come,  
raise the song of harvest home;  
all is safely gathered in,  
ere the winter storms begin.  
God our Maker doth provide  
for our wants to be supplied;  
come to God's own temple, come,  
raise the song of harvest home.

2 All the world is God's own field,  
fruit as praise to God we yield;  
wheat and tares together sown  
are to joy or sorrow grown;  
first the blade and then the ear,  
then the full corn shall appear;  
Lord of harvest, grant that we  
wholesome grain and pure may be.

3 For the Lord our God shall come,  
and shall take the harvest home;  
from the field shall in that day  
all offenses purge away,  
giving angels charge at last  
in the fire the tares to cast;  
but the fruitful ears to store  
in the garner evermore.

4 Even so, Lord, quickly come,  
bring thy final harvest home;  
gather thou thy people in,  
free from sorrow, free from sin,  
there, forever purified,  
in thy presence to abide;  
come, with all thine angels, come,  
raise the glorious harvest home.

# Testimony (winter; hymn no. 137)

1. The witness of the Holy Ghost,  
As borne by those who know,  
Has lifted me again to thee,  
O Father of my soul.

2. I know that thou art in the heav'n.  
I know the Savior reigns.  
I know a prophet speaks to us  
For our eternal gain.

3. My eyes are wet; my heart is full.  
The Spirit speaks today.  
O Lord, wilt thou my life renew  
And in my bosom stay.

4. As testimony fills my heart,  
It dulls the pain of days.  
For one brief moment, heaven's view  
Appears before my gaze.

# A Brief Introduction to the Book of Acts





# Authorship and Audience

- Formally anonymous, never directly names author
- Traditionally attributed to **Luke**, a Greek-speaking Christian who had been a missionary companion of Paul and also was credited with writing the Gospel according to Luke
  - The so-called “**we passages**” that seem to indicate that the author had been a part of some later events (Acts 16:10–17; 20:5–15; 21:1–18; 27:1–28:6)
- Officially dedicated to “**Theophilus**” (the name means “lover of God!”)
  - Perhaps a real person who was the work’s patron
  - Whether real or a type, “Theophilus” probably represents *the larger Christian community*
- Broadly directed to the early Christian community
  - Gives a sense of **continuity** with earlier Israelite history and the ministry of Christ
  - Provides a **defense** (*apologia*) in the face of both Jewish and Gentile opponents
  - Serves as a **guide**—basic principles applied to specific situations
  - Emphasizes *the superintending power of the Holy Spirit*

# Genre and Types of Content

- **Theological Narrative**—tells a story to make and teach theological points
  - Like the Book of Mormon, its author *selected historical events and include speeches and other material to make his points*
  - [some scholars call it “apologetic historiography” because it tries to “defend” that early Christian movement]
- Narrative (Luke telling or recounting events)
  - Historical narrative, summaries (esp. at the ends of sections), miracle stories (cf. healing and other miracle stories in the gospels), call stories (e.g, the call of Saul)
- Discourse (quoting the speech of others)
  - **Sermons**; other speeches, such as courtroom defenses; dialogues
    - Speeches—fully one half of the narrative
    - Luke uses them as Hellenistic historian would: what ought to be said in a particular occasion, but still based on what the character probably or reportedly had said
    - However, because he was writing scripture, we cannot discount the possibility that Luke could be inspired or that the Spirit “brought things to his remembrance” (see John 14:26)
- Combined, particularly in dramatic episodes (“dramatic narrative” for convenience of description)

# Structure of Acts

## *How is the book organized?*

- Acts chronicles **the geographic and ethnic expansion of the gospel**
  - **Thematic/structural statement:** “But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me both **in Jerusalem**, and **in all Judaea**, and **in Samaria**, and **unto the uttermost parts of the earth**” (Acts 1:8)
- **Jerusalem**
  - Preparing the Disciples (1:1–26)
  - Mission in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1–8:1a)
- **Missions in Samaria and Judea**
  - Preparing for the “Turn to the Gentiles” (Acts 8:1b–12:25)
- **“Unto the uttermost part of the earth”**
  - Missions of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:1–14:28)
  - The Jerusalem Council on Gentile Christians (Acts 15:1–35)
  - Missions of Paul to Asia Minor and Greece (Acts 15:36–21:14)
  - Paul’s Arrest in Jerusalem, Trial in Caesarea, and Journey to Rome (Acts 21:15–28:31)

# Speeches of Peter



Speeches of Peter in Acts 2:14-36, 38-39; 3:12-26; 4:8-12; 5:29-32;  
10:34-43



# Peter's Speech at Pentecost

(Acts 2:14–36, his first recorded sermon)

- Spoken to a crowd in Jerusalem that gathered and heard the apostles speak in tongues
- **Fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28–31 (Acts 2:16–21)**
  - **Prophecy, dreams, visions: “in those days will I pour out my spirit”**—multiple applications (2:17–18)
  - **After Pentecost in the Apostolic (Meridian) Church**
  - **Accompanying the Restoration**
  - **Continuing (and perhaps accelerating) until Jesus' return**
    - **Forerunner of apocalyptic destructions before the final coming—eschatological application** (2:19–20; this is the part that we usually ignore)
    - Moroni told Joseph Smith that this would not be completely fulfilled until the latter-days when “the fulness of the Gentiles was soon to come in” (JS—H 1:41)
- **Proclamation of Jesus Christ Crucified, Resurrected, and Glorified (2:22–36)**

# The Climax of Peter's Speech

Jesus Christ Crucified, Resurrected, and Glorified (Acts 2:22–36)



- “Ye men of Israel, hear these words; **Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God** among you **by miracles and wonders and signs**, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, **ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain . . .**” (2:22–23)
- “ . . . **This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.** Therefore **being by the right hand of God exalted**, and **having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost**, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.” (2:32–33)
- “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, **that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.**” (2:36)

*Tommaso Masolino da Panicale, “St. Peter Preaching in Jerusalem”*

# The Speeches of Peter in Acts

(e.g., 2:14–36, 3:11–26, 4:1–22)

- Peter's speeches as represented by Luke are some of the oldest NT “artifacts”
  - *Unclear to what extent these are more-or-less exact translations of Peter's own words or whether Luke composed Greek speeches that conveyed the basic sense of Peter's sermons*
- Basic elements of the Peter's speeches (and of most NT sermons)
  - Jesus was **the Son of God**
  - **Suffered and died** to save mankind
  - **Rose again from the dead**
  - **Ascended to heaven** where he sits at the right hand of God in glory
  - **He will return in glory**
  - People should **act in response** to this knowledge—usually “repent and be baptized”
- This constituted the fundamental apostolic testimony or “proclamation,” called the *kērygma*
  - *Together with collections of the sayings of Jesus and early Christian hymns, the kērygma provided one of the main sources for authors of the NT gospels*



# The First Converts (2:37–42, narrative)

## The Power of the Spirit and Peter's Preaching

- “Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said unto them, **‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.’**” (2:37–38)
  - **Repent, and be baptized:** Acts’ focus on basic principles and ordinances
- “. . . and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.” (2:41b)



# Peter's Speech in the Temple

(Acts 3:12–26, his second recorded sermon)

- Followed his healing of the lame man in the Gate Beautiful
- “And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, **the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus**; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. **But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead**; whereof we are witnesses. And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.”
- “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things . . .”



# Peter before the Sanhedrin

(Acts 4:8–12, Peter's third recorded speech)



- “Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that **by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole.** This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. **Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**”

# Peter and the Apostles again before the Sanhedrin (Acts 5:29–32, Peter's fourth recorded speech)

- After Peter heals many, some by merely being put in the path of his shadow, the apostles are imprisoned
- An angel freed them, after which they went to the temple and preached
- Brought to the Sanhedrin, Peter and the others said, “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, ‘We ought to obey God rather than men. The **God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.** And we are his witnesses of these things; and **so is also the Holy Ghost,** whom God hath given to them that obey him.’”
- Gamaliel, a moderate Pharisee, counseled the Sanhedrin to let them go

# Peter Preaches to Cornelius and His Household

(Acts 10:34–43, Peter’s fourth recorded speech)

- Cornelius, a Roman centurion in Caesarea, had a vision telling him to summon Peter from nearby Joppa (10:1–8)
- At the same time, Peter has a symbolic vision, teaching him “. . . What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” (10:9–18)
- Peter preached the gospel to the Gentiles, “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, **Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.** The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ . . .”
- “That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judæa, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; How **God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.** And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; **whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;** Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us . . .”

# The Speeches of Paul

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Acts 17:16–34; 22:1–23:10; 26:1–32; 1 Corinthians 15:1–11



# The Preaching of Paul

## Paul's Primary Message to Jews (essentially the apostolic *kērygma*)

- ✧ Jesus was the promised Messiah (Acts 13:23, 32–37)
- ✧ Jesus was crucified and died for sin (Acts 13:28–29, 38–39)
- ✧ Jesus was raised from the dead (Acts 13:30–31)
- ✧ Paul and Barnabas are witnesses (Acts 13:31–32)

## Paul's Primary Message to Gentiles

- ✧ Stop worshiping dead pagan gods and goddesses (Acts 14:15)
- ✧ Start worshiping the one true living God (Acts 14:15)



# Athens (17:16–34)

- During his second missionary journey, Paul came to Athens, the cultural and intellectual capital of Greece
- **Conditions in Athens** (17:16–19)
  - “While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that *the city was full of idols.*” (17:16 NIV)
- **Paul at the Areopagus Council** (17:20–33)
  - Originally a governmental council (like a Senate), under the Romans **the Areopagus** (named for where it met, the Hill of Ares or “Mars’ Hill”) was a civic organization of prominent citizens and only had authority over morality and religion
- **Paul’s Speech about the Unknown God** (17:22–31)
  - *Video clip: Paul on the Areopagus*



# Paul's Speech on "Mars' Hill" (Acts 17:22-31)

- “For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, **To the Unknown God**. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.
- “**God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands**; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And **hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth**, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: **For in him we live, and move, and have our being**; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as **we are the offspring of God**, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:
- “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness **by that man whom he hath ordained**; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, **in that he hath raised him from the dead.**”



# Paul Arrested and Brought before the Jewish Authorities (Acts 21:26–22:30)

- After returning to Jerusalem from his third missionary journey, Paul is arrested in the temple after a riot (Acts 21:27–23:24)
- Before being taken into Roman custody, he addressed the angry Jewish mob in the temple courts (Acts 21:40–22:21)
  - Paul’s account of his conversion on the road to Damascus: “And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly **there shone from heaven a great light** round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and **heard a voice** saying unto me, ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?’ And I answered, ‘Who art thou, Lord?’ And he said unto me, ‘***I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.***’” (Acts 22:1–13; cf. 9:1–9)
  - Paul’s second vision of Christ: while praying in the temple after his conversion (22:17–21)
  - The Lord’s injunction, “I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles” (22:21) sends the Jewish mob into a frenzy—They did not riot at his account of his visions
- Brought before the Sanhedrin, Paul recounted his conversion on the road to Damascus (Acts 23:1–10)

# Paul in Roman Custody (Acts 23:23–26:32)

- Transferred to Caesarea, he is tried before the governor Felix and then held in Roman prison for two years (23:23–24:27)
- The new governor, Festus, tries Paul and then consults Agrippa II (25:1–27)
- In his hearing before Agrippa, Paul relates his conversion for the third time (26:1–32)
  - “I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.’ And I said, ‘Who art thou, Lord?’ And he said, ‘**I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.**’” (26:14–15)
  - “Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That **Christ should suffer**, and that **he should be the first that should rise from the dead**, and **should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.**” (26:22–23)

# Paul's Testimony of the Resurrection

(1 Corinthians 15:1–11)

- One of Paul's strongest witnesses is found in one of his own letters
- “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures**; And that he was buried, and **that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures**:
- “And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles.
- “And **last of all he was seen of me also**, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed.”