

Peter's Afternoon Address

Compiled by Paul R. Blake

Introduction:

- A. Acts 3:12-26
- B. Second recorded Gospel sermon
 - 1. Possibly the next day; preached in the afternoon following the second specific miracle of the gospel dispensation
 - 2. The miracle caught the attention of the crowd
- C. Relate account of healing of the beggar - Acts 3:1-11
 - 1. The hour of prayer - apostles still following Jewish customs
 - 2. Alms - rabbinic tradition taught that Jews got religious credit for giving to the poor; beggar would station themselves to receive them
 - 3. Luke's great detail and descriptors
- D. Peter's example of a perfect gospel sermon
 - 1. Got the attention of hearers focused on Christ (vv. 11-12).
 - 2. Preached Christ to the multitude (vv. 13-16).
 - a. First, he told them who Christ is (v. 13).
 - b. Second, he exposed their sin (vv. 13-15).
 - c. Third, he declared what Christ has done (v. 15).
 - d. Fourth, he proclaimed the power of the risen Christ (v. 16).
 - e. Fifth, he gave a reason for hope (vv. 17-18).
 - f. Last, he presented the claims of the sovereign Christ (vv. 19-26).
- E. The setting:
 - 1. The outer court of the temple, called the Court of the Gentiles, was surrounded by porticoes. Solomon's Colonnade ran the length of the eastern portion of the outer court.
 - 2. The colonnades or porticos were busy places.
 - a. Religious teachers debated, and taught their pupils in its shade (Luke 2:46; 19:47; John 10:23).
 - b. Merchants and money changers conducted business there (Luke 19:45; John 2:14-16).
 - c. The early church met and taught here on a regular basis (Acts 2:46; 5:12; 42).
- F. The characters
 - 1. Peter and John going out by twos
 - 2. The beggar holding on to Peter and John
 - 3. The crowd rushing to see what this is all about

I. THE SERMON

- A. God of Abraham (3:12-13)
 - 1. To say that God was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was to refer to a time-honored way by which Jews spoke of God.
 - 2. God had introduced himself to Moses at the burning bush as the God of the fathers (Exodus 3:6, 15, 4:5).
- B. God's Servant (3:13)

1. Echoing the theme of Isaiah's Suffering Servant (Isa. 42-53, 52:13).
 2. The servant role of Jesus is frequently part of His preaching in the Gospel accounts
 3. It was implicit in the prophecies of the Messiah; it identified Him with Moses; it was part of the Jewish national identity
 4. He told them who Jesus is
- C. They wanted Barabbas (3:13-14)
1. The Servant they waited for was handed over by the Jews to be killed; Pilate, representing a pagan government, wanted to let Jesus go free.
 2. A criminal was given freedom, but the man who wanted to bring the nation spiritual freedom was executed.
 3. Grand and tragic ironies
 4. He told them of their sins
- D. God raised him up in the presence of witnesses (3:15)
1. Jesus is the "firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1Cor. 15:20).
 - a. Represents the total harvest; it is the beginning of the inevitable end of death
 2. The beggar was an example of God's power to "raise up."
- E. Brethren, you acted in ignorance (3:17)
1. Luke 23:34 - Jesus said the same thing
- F. Sufferings foretold (3:18, 21)
1. Jesus of Nazareth had been executed as a common criminal. In the eyes of the Jews, he was under the curse of the Law (Deut. 21:33; Gal. 3:13). They reasoned he could not have been their Messiah.
 2. Isaiah spoke of the Servant as the one who would suffer and die for the sins of others. It is not clear that the Jews understood the Servant and the Messiah to be one and the same. This perhaps was where ignorance entered.
 3. The prophets spoke of His suffering (Psalm 22, 69; Jer. 11:19; Zech. 13:7; Dan. 9:26).
- G. Repent and turn to God (3:19)
1. The meaning of "repent" here (as in Peter's first sermon) must be seen in context. Remember he was speaking to devout Jews who prayed at the temple and kept the Law. For them, repentance was not so much turning away from a sin-filled life, but sorrow for the sin of killing Jesus, and turning from Judaism to Christ.
 2. Repentance always involves sorrow for sin and turning to righteousness
- H. Times of refreshing (3:19-21) - the restoration of a true relationship with God, not just for Israel, but for all of humankind since Adam sinned in the Garden
1. Hopeful anticipation of that Garden relationship in heaven
- I. A prophet like Moses (3:22-23)
1. You must listen to him
- J. You are children of the prophets and of the father of the covenant - (3:24-25)
1. You have no excuse to dismiss this
- K. You get first opportunity to respond - (3:26)
1. But you will not be the last - Acts 22:21-22; Rom. 11:19-23