

Peter's First Sermon

Scripture Lesson:- Acts 2:14-

Text:- Acts 2:14.

Introduction:- This is an account of a religious service that was held many centuries ago. It was a memorable service, for it was the first really Christian service that was ever held. It also ushered in a new day. It was also unique, the power that made this service victorious ought to characterize our services today.

I. May we look first to the congregation. It was made up of two groups; believers and unbelievers. I am of the opinion that the same two groups ought to make up our congregation every Sunday.

1. Believers. On this occasion the entire membership of the church was present. That was impressive that day, it would be more impressive in this our day. We know that each Sunday only a fraction of our membership attends the services of the church. One secret of the drawing power of the early church was that it made such heavy demands upon its membership. We ought to make more demands upon our membership.

They were not only present, but their lips and their lives told about the mighty works of God. There was that something about them that drew attention and excited wonder. Those that looked on were compelled to ask, "What meaneth this"? What would happen if the whole membership of any church should be present next Sunday? (Enlarge)

2. Unbelievers were present. Why were they present? I believe that they were present in spite of their unfriendliness, in spite of their prejudice against the Christian movement. I do not think that they came to hear Peter preach. Those who are deeply committed to Christ, or to any cause always cast a spell of influence over others.

Unbelievers. Yes, before we can induce folks to act with us, we must have them think with us. Before they think with us, they must see and hear what we have to say. We too often preach to the church only, and not enough to sinners.

## II.

Now let us look at the sermon. The man who delivered it was Simon Peter. He was the leader of the apostles. He was not alone on this day. The eleven stood up with him. The whole apostolic ~~group~~ group was there giving him their backing and their testimony. He also had the backing of the Holy Spirit. A consecrated minister, plus a consecrated congregation, plus Almighty God, proved a power for the gospel.

2. "He lifted up his voice." He spoke so all could hear. He spoke with the power of a holy conviction. He spoke to them, those of the congregation. He spoke to those who were eagerly inquiring. He did not speak at them, he spoke to them. The sermon had three natural divisions. 1. He makes a correction. These he declares, "are not drunken, as ye suppose". But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. Quote the words. ~~2.~~ 2.

3. Jesus is now in their midst. He is pouring out his Holy Spirit, he is not dead, but alive.

Not only did they reject Jesus yesterday, but they may become guilty of rejecting him here and now. They are even now in open rebellion against their rightful Lord and King.

## III.

The effect of the sermon.

1. There was deep conviction. "They were cut to the heart." The language has a flavor of violence about it. Here Jesus makes good his promise of the holy Spirit, "And when he is come, he will convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and

of judgment.

2. When they were cut to the heart, they began to ask, "What shall we do?" It is just another way of saying, "What shall we do to be saved". They were in rebellion against the Lord Jesus Christ, and wanted to be in fellowship with him. How may we pass from the bondage of our guilt into the freedom which you have found.

3. The answer was, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is unto you." What is it to repent? It is to be convinced that you have done wrong. It is sorrow for wrong doing. It is "a change of mind that leads to a change of life's direction. The prodigal son said, "I will arise and go to my Father", but his change did not come until he felt the hug of his father's arms around him. Repentance looks not only to the past, but also to the future. It means a confession that we are wrong and an eagerness to do right.

4. If repentance is costly, its rewards are precious. It means reconciliation with God. It means sharing in Pentecost. As a result of Peter's sermon three thousand of those hearing repented and turned to Christ, and made open confession by receiving baptism. They too received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Never again, even in the book of Acts was there a sound of a rushing mighty wind. Never again did anyone see tongues of fire. But the Holy Spirit was poured upon all that would receive him. In the person of Christ, the Holy Spirit is with us still. He is the same, yesterday, today and forever. Pentecost will be with us unto the end of the age. This is our Lord's own promise, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever". Amen.