

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
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Sermon title: The Apostle Peter After He Denied Christ, Acts 2

Date preached: February 12, 2017

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INTRODUCTION: In a lost and dying world, is there any hope whatsoever? I ask this because the world is indeed lost and dying. Today, there are 7,400,000,000 people on our planet. I remember when I was a boy and the world population was about 4,000,000,000. I heard someone say the world population would double in our lifetime. I was amazed. It's almost happened.

With wars, which never seem to end, and poverty and famine around the world, is there any hope at all for the world? In America, we are removed from a lot of that, but TV and internet allow us to see it. In America, there are plenty who are lost and dying.

As believers in Jesus Christ, we believe the hope for the nations is Jesus. I've heard this, my entire life, and I believe it. However, one has to wonder if we are fighting a losing battle. Are people coming to Christ at a faster rate than people are being born? Are we sending enough missionaries around the world to reach the lost? Are we helping in places around the world where the need is great?

Recently, I was thinking about all these things and was reminded of the Book of Acts where the Church was born. Before the Church was born, worship in the temple was rather complicated. Men and women were segregated, and only Jewish people worshipped. In the Bible, we read of some people on the outside that became part of the family of faith — but not many.

When Jesus came, it all changed. There was no longer a need for a temple or a priest. There was no longer a need for animal sacrifices for forgiveness of sin. One simple way to sum it all up is this: in the Old Testament, God chose a group of people to be a blessing to the world. Sometimes they were a blessing, but many

times, they were not. God opened it up to all. Romans 11 tells us we have been grafted in.

This early Church must have been fascinating. People groups who grew up hating each other were now worshipping together because they shared the same religion. Jews and Gentiles, former pagans, men and women — it had never been done before. The early Church had many things to overcome: prejudice, cultural barriers and lingering beliefs from the past, which were no longer relevant.

OVERVIEW: My three points in this message are:

1. After Peter denied Christ, God used him to boldly present the Gospel.
2. Peter's Gospel sermon resulted in 3,000 salvations.
3. The mass conversion led to a rich fellowship.

First, AFTER PETER DENIED CHRIST, GOD USED HIM TO BOLDLY PRESENT THE GOSPEL.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:14-24 ¹⁴ *Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:*

¹⁷ *"In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.*

¹⁸ *Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.*

¹⁹ *I will show wonders in the heavens above
and signs on the earth below,
blood and fire and billows of smoke.*

²⁰ *The sun will be turned to darkness*

*and the moon to blood
before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.*
²¹ *And everyone who calls
on the name of the Lord will be saved.'*

²² *“Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. ²³ This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. ²⁴ But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.*

EXPLANATION: Peter goes on to quote more Old Testament prophecies and reminded them how they were witnesses to the recently resurrected Christ. In the first part of the chapter, God-fearing Jews from many nations were together. Within minutes, this large crowd of people heard the Gospel in their own language in the most incredible way...spoken through the mouths of commoners through the gift of tongues. Then, Peter launched into a powerful sermon.

Remember what Peter did earlier? Jesus told Peter at their last supper he would deny him three times. Peter said he would never do it. And, later on, while warming himself around a campfire— he did. He felt terrible about it. Also, as you recall, Judas betrayed Jesus, and in his remorse, killed himself. He eliminated the possibility of Jesus restoring him. Peter, however, was restored and went on to preach the Gospel.

Now with the sweeping presence of the Holy Spirit and the Gospel being preached, many Jews realized who Jesus was.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:36-40 ³⁶ *“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”*

³⁷ *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”*

³⁸ *Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy*

Spirit. ³⁹ *The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.*”

⁴⁰ *With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”*

Peter realized he’d been given another opportunity. He realized his life could have been over. He knew what happened to Judas.

Second, PETER’S GOSPEL SERMON RESULTED IN 3,000 SALVATIONS.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:41 ⁴¹ *Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

EXPLANATION: That’s pretty incredible for a man who denied Christ. That’s pretty incredible for a man who was known for being impulsive.

You see, God can take anyone — even someone who has denied him — and use that person to do a mighty work for him.

APPLICATION: You might not be like Peter in the Bible. Perhaps you’ve never denied Christ like Peter did. Perhaps you are not a public speaker, or perhaps you are a timid person. Regardless, God can use you in a mighty way.

Maybe you are one who is like Peter. Maybe you’ve denied Christ, either verbally or with your actions, or with your unbelief. If you’ll only repent and believe, God will use you in a mighty way.

ILLUSTRATION: I was at a funeral recently where a man wanted to speak with me afterwards. He said he’d never heard the scriptures explained the way I explained them. He said he couldn’t even believe he was talking with me. He said he’d grown up hearing about an angry God and for years had avoided him, but in the previous hour he had felt completely different. Something happened to him on the inside he could not explain. As we talked, I realized during the funeral, he had opened his heart to God. And, I told him the Bible talked about being born again. He said, “I think that’s what’s happened to me.” He told me again he could not believe he was even talking about this. I told him to pray and ask what God wanted him to do with the rest of his life.

You see, God can take a calloused person and soften that person's heart.

Third, THE MASS CONVERSION LED TO A RICH FELLOWSHIP.

SCRIPTURE: Acts 2:42-47 ⁴² *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.* ⁴³ *Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.* ⁴⁴ *All the believers were together and had everything in common.* ⁴⁵ *They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.* ⁴⁶ *Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,* ⁴⁷ *praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

EXPLANATION: What we see here is unity and joy — two themes that run throughout the Book of Acts. A church unified and full of joy can do just about anything.

CALL TO ACTION: Right here in this scripture is the answer for a lost and dying world: Jesus is our only hope. We must make Christ known to the nations.

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I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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