

Peter Speaks to the Onlookers



Ice-Breaker

What refreshes you the most? A cool shower? A swim? A glass of lemonade? A massage? Air conditioning?



Scripture Passage

Acts 3:11-26

¹¹While the beggar held on to Peter and John, all the people were astonished and came running to them in the place called Solomon's Colonnade. ¹²When Peter saw this, he said to them: "Men of Israel, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. ¹⁴You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has given this complete healing to him, as you can all see.

¹⁷"Now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. ¹⁸But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christa would suffer. ¹⁹Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰and that he may send the Christ, who has been appointed for you--even Jesus. ²¹He must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. ²²For Moses said, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you. ²³Anyone who does not listen to him will be completely cut off from among his people.^b

²⁴"Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel on, as many as have spoken, have foretold these days. ²⁵And you are heirs of the prophets and of the covenant God made with your fathers. He said to Abraham, "Through your offspring all peoples on earth will be blessed."^c ²⁶When God raised up his servant, he sent him first to you to bless you by turning each of you from your wicked ways."

a [18] Or Messiah; also in verse 20

b [23] Deut. 18:15,18,19

c [25] Gen. 22:18; 26:4



Bible Study

1. How is this situation like the one in 2:1-12?
2. List all the facts about Jesus which Peter mentions here (vv. 13-16). How does this profile of Jesus compare with the one in 2:22-24?
3. Restate verse 16 in your own words.
4. What does Peter say about the people? How would you feel being accused: "You killed ..." (v. 15)?

5. From Peter's second recorded sermon, how would you sum up what it means to become a Christian?

6. Despite what Peter says about them (vv. 13-15), how does he give the people hope in verses 24-26? How are "blessing" and "turning" related?

Reference Notes

3:11 *Solomon's Colonnade.* This was a long porch extending along the eastern wall of the outer court of the temple. It was the typical gathering place for the early Jewish Christians (Acts 5:12).

3:12 *why do you stare at us?* As at Pentecost (Acts 2:15), Peter is eager to direct attention away from the immediate phenomenon to the significance behind what has happened.

3:13 *The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.* This was a common way of referring to God as the one who had entered into covenant faithfulness with Israel. his servant Jesus. "No other Old Testament passage has influenced the New Testament more than the so-called Servant songs of Isaiah (Isaiah 42:1ff; 49:1-3,5,8; 50:4-9 and especially 52:13-53:12)" (Williams). It is these passages that describe the mission of the Messiah most fully, as well as teach his suffering, death and exaltation.

3:14 *the Holy and Righteous One.* The Holy One of God was a designation of the Messiah (Mark 1:24; John 6:69; Revelation 3:7). It was used in Luke 1:35 as a description of how the child of Mary would belong in a special way to God, just like the Servant of Isaiah 52:13-53:12. The Righteous One also is rooted in the same song; see Isaiah 53:11. Together these terms accent the uniqueness and uprightness of Jesus.

3:15 *the author of life.* The word for "author" is translated in 5:31 as "Prince." It has the idea of a leader, a founder and ruler (see Hebrews 2:10; 12:2). In Aramaic, the word for "life" and "salvation" is the same.

3:16 In the Greek this is a difficult sentence, but its point is clear; it is because of faith (the man's or Peter's is unclear) in the presence, power and character of Jesus that this man has been healed.

3:17 *you acted in ignorance.* The Law of Moses allowed for forgiveness of sins committed unwittingly (Numbers 15:27-31). While Peter acknowledges that the people did not really know what they were doing when they had Jesus crucified (see also Acts 13:27; 1 Corinthians 2:8), he makes the point that if they resist him now they are guilty of a conscious, willful rejection of the Messiah.

3:19-20 *times of refreshing may come ... and that he may send the Christ.* Literally, "times of rest." "The reference here is probably to the return of the Messiah" (Bruce) when the messianic kingdom of peace and rest really could be established (Isaiah 32:16-20). However, it may have immediate, personal implications as well (Matt. 11:28-30).

3:21 *until the time comes for God to restore everything.* Upon Jesus' return, the fullness of the kingdom of God will be established (see Isaiah 51:6; 65:17).

3:22 *a prophet like me.* That God would send a new Moses who would restore God's people to himself was a common expectation in both Jewish and Samaritan tradition (John 1:21; 4:25; 6:14).

3:24 Samuel was thought to be the founder of the order of prophets in Israel (Hebrews 11:32).

3:26 *he sent him first to you.* They, as Jews, of all people should respond positively to Jesus as the Messiah.

Caring Time

1. When is it proper to come on strong against a person's sin, like Peter did in verses 13-15? In coming to Christ, did you need to be hit over the head with your sin first? How did it happen?
2. What does Peter's use of the Old Testament indicate about its benefits to your faith in Christ? How can you start to increase your knowledge of it?
3. How has repentance and turning to God brought "times of refreshing" (v. 19) to you? How can that be used as a means of encouraging others to come to Christ?
4. What does Jesus as "the author of life" (v. 15) mean to you?