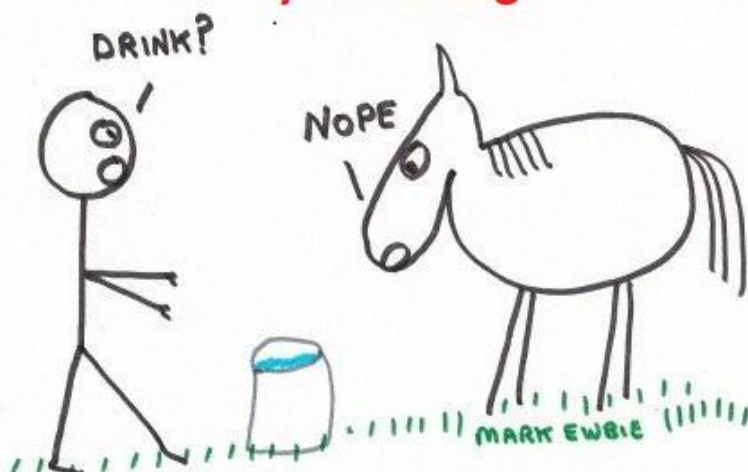


Are You Actually Receiving God's Word?



Saturday, 4/25 at 4:00 | Sunday, 4/26 at 9:00

Third Sunday of Easter – 2020

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: We hear and read the Bible, *but are we actually receiving it in a beneficial way?* Think about eating... when some people eat, *the food goes right through them*; therefore, even though they ate, *they did not receive the benefits*. The same can happen to us regarding the Word of God. Therefore, later on in this sermon, *we will focus on HOW we can actually benefit!* Today's text, from **Acts chapter 2**, took place on the Day of Pentecost, *fifty days after Jesus rose from the dead*.

1. **The Setting of Today's Sermon Text** (Acts 2:1-36): On that particular *Day of Pentecost* a sound from heaven caused a large crowd of people to gather; then the Bible tells us what happened: **¹⁴ Peter, standing with the eleven** [*the other eleven apostles*], **lifted up his voice and addressed [the large crowd]...** // So Peter, *moved by the Holy Spirit*, preached an amazing Law and Gospel sermon about Jesus:

- a. Peter told the crowd that the unusual events – *that were happening right before their very eyes* – were the fulfillment of a prophecy written in [the book of Joel](#).
- b. Peter, *in trying to show a definite connection between Jesus and God*, told the crowd that *God had worked through Jesus* to perform many miracles.
- c. Peter told the crowd that Jesus being **✦**delivered up, **✦**crucified, and **✦**raised was all part of God’s amazing plan to remove the sins of the world.
- d. Peter told the crowd about words written by David – how those words pointed ahead to **✦**Jesus and **✦**His resurrection from the dead.
- e. Peter, then, concluded his sermon with these words: ³⁶ **“Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.”** // Think about Peter’s statement... It was **GOD** who made Jesus both Lord and Christ, *thus Messiah!* When? **GOD** did so right after Jesus **✦**was baptized and **✦**had stepped out of the river; that is when **GOD** anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and said these words from heaven, **“This is my beloved Son”** ([Matthew 3:17 ESV](#)). Peter not only told what GOD had done, but also what THEY had done – *by crucifying the very Messiah / the very Christ / the very Savior!!!*

2. **The Reaction to Peter’s Sermon:**

- a. Sorrow: ³⁷ **Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”** // The Holy Spirit, *working through Peter’s preaching*, showed many in the crowd **✦**who Jesus really is – *the Christ*, and **✦**what they had done – *calling for Jesus to be crucified*.

Imagine ♣doing something horrible; then ♣realizing the horror of what you did; then, ♣crying out to God for mercy! *That happened to some of Peter's hearers!*

b. Solution:

- i. ³⁸ **And Peter said to them, “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.** // When we read the word repent, we must consider the context to rightly understand it. In this case, “**Repent**” means: ♣*be sorry for your sins* **and** ♣*believe in Jesus as your Savior*. Think about the situation... Peter's hearers had committed a grave sin – *putting to death the very Son of God*; yet, *through faith in Jesus and holy baptism*, God offered them His great gifts of ♣*forgiveness* and ♣*the Holy Spirit!*
- ii. What about us? *We desperately need the same!* So Peter said: ³⁹ **For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”** // *That refers to us!* We are sinners and were far off, yet *God has called us and saved us through Jesus!*
- iii. ⁴⁰ **And with many other words [Peter] bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.”** // What did Peter mean by a “crooked generation”? **Lenksi** gave this answer: “[**Crooked**] refers to a warped piece of timber which the carpenters must throw out as being useless” (111). Therefore, Peter was saying: *Without Jesus, you are worthless in God's sight and will be thrown away; therefore, save*

yourselves by ♣being sorry, ♣believing in Jesus, and ♣being baptized into His name!

- c. Forgiveness: ⁴¹ **So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.** // We don't know the total number of Peter's hearers, but *the text implies that some – about three thousand – received what he preached and were baptized*, while, sadly, others did not receive his word.

3. **Our Receiving of God's Word**: We certainly have much access to God's Word today: ♣We have Bibles, smartphones, and devotional booklets, and ♣we can hear preaching in person, on the radio, and online. But are we actually receiving God's Word for our eternal benefit? These things will help us to actually receive God's Word...
- a. Think about it: Read slowly and thoughtfully, "**meditate on it day and night**" (Joshua 1:8 ESV).
- b. Rightly understand it: Ask the Holy Spirit for help, and realize that what you are reading is only one piece of a much larger puzzle – *AND it all fits together!*
- c. Apply it to your life: The Word of God is ancient and yet alive! *So it still has application is our lives today!*
- d. Share it with others: As we are blessed to understand and apply, so let us share those blessings with others!

This Week's Challenge: Regarding God's Word: Think about it, rightly understand it, apply it to your life, and share it with others!

Let Us Pray: Dear Holy Spirit, *as You worked through Peter's preaching to eternally bless many others*, so help us to gladly receive, rightly understand, faithfully apply, and kindly share!

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