



## Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

# Short Study 024: Peter's Pentecost Sermon

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Read initially Acts 2:14

Speaking in other tongues was not the only manifestation of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.<sup>1</sup> This phenomenon was followed by the Spirit's illumination and enabling in the preaching of the Gospel by the Apostle Peter, that led to the conversion of no less than 3,000 hearers.

Peter's sermon on that day followed a pattern that scholars have identified as the main message taught by the Early Church, seen in other sermons record in the Acts of the Apostles and known by scholars as the *Kerygma*. This is a Greek word which simply means "preaching". The details of the message were famously summarised by the 20<sup>th</sup> Century scholar, C.H. Dodd, in a lecture entitled "The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments"<sup>2</sup>.

Dodd listed six aspects of the *Kerygma*, which are briefly as follows:

1. The prophecies are fulfilled; inaugurating the age of the last days.
2. This was by the birth, life, ministry, death and resurrection of Christ.
3. By His resurrection, Christ has been exalted to the right hand of God.
4. God sent the Holy Spirit as a sign of Christ's power and glory.
5. This age of the Messiah will reach its conclusion in the return of Christ.
6. An appeal to repent and the offer of forgiveness, salvation and the Holy Spirit.

**The Study:** Read through Peter's sermon, in Acts 2:14-40 and identify each of these six aspects. (No. 5 is not easy to spot – though it is suggested in verse 34 and 35. A clearer reference is in Peter's second sermon, at the Gate of the Temple, in Acts 3:20-21.)

**To think about:** Are all the aspects of this message relevant today?

**To dig deeper:** Look for occurrences of these themes in other sermons and speeches in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the letters of Paul when you are reading them.

<sup>1</sup> See Short Study 010 for a study on the events of that day.

<sup>2</sup> The lecture has since been printed by several publishers and is also available on the internet at <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=539&C=606>