Date: November 15, 2026
Title: The Right Response to the Gospel
Passage: Acts 2: 37-41

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Summary:
I. Repent of your sin (v.37-38)
II. Publicly Identify with Christ (v.38)
III. Receive God's gracious promise (v.38-39)
IV. Save yourselves from this crooked generation. (v.40-41)
Key Truths:

- Repentance means to make a conscious turn from sin toward God and to pursue God's ways and His commandments.
- Repentance means turning from self-reliance to reliance to God; from sin to obedience to God. It's not about perfection but direction.
- Baptism is important but it is not salvific (not a requirement to be saved)
- Baptism is actually a public expression of a person[s faith in Christ and our identification with Jesus Christ as we are buried with Him in baptism and we are raised to a new life through and in Christ.

Application:

- How to interpret Scripture:
    - Read the passage based on context.
    - Look at other passages in the same book in the Bible.
    - Look at the rest of the New Testament.
- The only hope for change is through Christ. When you place your trust in Christ, you will see change in your life. The Holy Spirit can make you like Jesus Christ.
    - Do you lack peace? You need Christ.
    - Do you have guilt? You need Christ. Turn to Him.
- Share the Gospel - keep it simple and He will use it for His glory.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
- What's a takeaway from the sermon you can apply to your life?
- What keeps you from being baptized (if you haven't already)?
- What keeps you away from being forgiven of your sins?

- What next steps will you take in response to the truths you have heard or seen?

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Introduction
"Sin"

- In today's culture, this word has been disappearing or diminished.
    - Why? We have become increasingly morally subjective (what you consider is right may be for you but not for me; your truth is not my truth)
    - Sin has become more about violating someone's personal preference rather than violating God's law.
- Personal values has replaced the concept of objective truth.
    - We often ask "Do I feel good?" (Not "Am I right with God?")
- As God vanishes, so does sin (as God is removed from the picture, then sin is no longer thought of)
    - Implication? When we lose the meaning of sin, we lose the meaning of forgiveness. When we don't understand we need forgiveness, then we will not find freedom.
        - Truth: We desperately need forgiveness from God.
- If we don't realize we have a problem, then we don't realize we need forgivness.
    - Truth: we are sinners and we need forgiveness. This is why the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the only message that can bring life.
- In the Gospel of Jesus Christ alone, we find forgiveness and removal of the guilt of our sin.

Passage:
Acts 2:37-41
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?” 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. 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.” And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this

crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

EXPOSITION
Context of Passage:
This is the first sermon Peter preaches after the Holy Spirit comes over them.

- Many people from around the Empire came to Jerusalem for Pentecost.
- Now those who have received the Holy Spirit were speaking in different languages about Jesus.
- People inquired about what is happening.
- Peter stands up and preaches about Jesus.

Acts 2:23
this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.
Acts 2:36
Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Conclusion of Sermon:
Acts 2:37
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?"
they were cut to the heart

- Realization that they were sinners.
- Truth: We are all sinners as well.
    - Compare yourself to God's Law
        - Have you ever taken God's name in vain or inappropriately? You are a blasphemer.
        - How many times have you ever lied? You are a liar
        - Have you ever lusted after someone else who is not your spouse? You are an adulterer
        - Have you ever dishonored your parents? You are a sinner.
        - Have you ever stolen something? You are a thief.

"Brothers, what shall we do?"

- Having recognized that we are sinners, how are we to respond?
    - Key response after hearing the truth.

I. Repent of your sin (v.37-38)
Acts 2:38
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.
Matthew 5:48
You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

- The standard explained by Jesus as to what is necessary to have a right relationship with God.

Repent

- What is it?
    - Repentance means to make a conscious turn from sin toward God and to pursue God's ways and His commandments.

Mark 1:14-15 (Jesus Begins His Ministry)
Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

- Jesus began His ministry: repent and believe
    - What is not: merely regret or remorse
- Greek word: "Metanoia"
    - Meaning = change of mind.
    - In military use, it was a change in direction 180 degrees.
- Truth: A complete change from sin to towards God.

Acts 26:18 (picture of repentance)
to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

- Repent: "may turn from darkness to light"
    - From self-reliance to reliance to God.
    - From sin to obedience to God.
    - Admit in your mind and heart (What I have been doing is wrong) and turn to God.
- Clarification: This doesn't mean life of perfection.
    - You start hating the things that God hates which you used to love.
    - You start loving the things that God loves.
    - It's not about perfection but direction.

II. Publicly Identify with Christ (v.38)
Acts 2:38
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.

- Misinterpretation: it appears that baptism is essential to salvation
- How to analyze Scripture:
    - Read the passage based on context.
    - Look at other passages in the same book in the Bible.
    - Look at the rest of the New Testament.

for the forgiveness of your sins

- Translation: on the basis of the forgiveness

Other passages in Books of Acts

- Baptism is not essential to your salvation. It is a sign but not necessary for it.

Acts 2:21
Everyone who calls upon the name of teh Lord shall be saved.
Acts 10:43
To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins through His name."
Acts 15:8-9

And God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us, and he made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith.

- Their hearts were cleansed by faith (not by any baptism)

Acts 13:38-39
Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses.

- "Believes is freed" (no mention of baptism)

Also see: thief on the cross
Luke 23:42-43
And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

- he was never baptized yet promised that he would be in paradise that day.

Even though baptism is important, it is not essential to salvation.

Baptism is important but it is not salvific

- Baptism is a public expression of a person[s faith in Christ and our identification with Jesus Christ as we are buried with Him in baptism and we are raised to a new life through and in Christ.
- Question: What keeps you from being baptized (if you haven't already)?

III. Receive God's gracious promise (v.38-39)
Acts 2:38-39
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. 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.”

- God's gracious promise: forgiveness of sins.

    - The guilt of your sin can never be removed on your own effort.
    - In Christ, we receive full forgiveness of our sins. The penalty of our sins is fully paid.
    - Do we receive God's precious gift and promise?
- God's gracious promise: receive the Holy Spirit
    - You are given the power and ability to follow God.
    - When you place your trust in Christ, you will see change in your life. When applying the work of the Spirit, you will change.
    - The only hope for change is through Christ. The Holy Spirit can make you like Jesus Christ.
        - Do you lack peace? You need Christ.
        - Do you have guilt? You need Christ. Turn to Him.

For whom are these gracious promises for?
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."

- Jews
- Gentiles

everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.

- All those that God is drawing near to Him.
    - There is an invisible hand that orchestrates all things.
    - God calls His beloved to Him. God does the work from within. God gets all the credit.
    - We are each responsible to repent and turn to God. God is also the One who changes the heart to do so.

IV. Save yourselves from this crooked generation. (v.40-41)
<u>Acts 2:40</u>
And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation."
Crooked

- What is bent from what is straight and right.

Save yourselves from this crooked generation

- Call of application from Peter
- This is the call of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
    - If you don't save yourselves through repentance, you will face judgment for your sins.
    - Save yourselves by turning to Christ. Trusting in Christ.

<u>Acts 2:41</u>
So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

- Amazing response to Peter's sermon.
- Note: the 3,000 did not receive any special sign in being saved. They were saved by faith.

What keeps you away from being forgiven?

- Is there a more egregious sin than killing the God of the universe?
    - Yet God extended His hand of mercy through the cross of Christ to the Jews.
    - Likewise, there is no sin that God cannot forgive through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
        - Do not believe the lie that you need to work it out before you come to God.
        - Turn to Christ.
- If already in Christ, be refreshed with the precious truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and share with others.
    - Ask: have you dealt with the guilt of your sin? If there is a God, how would you deal with it?
        - Share the Gospel. Keep it simple. God will use it for His glory.