

W462C_Finish_Work_of_Christ_33.mp3

[00:00:01] This is a recording made in the Chapel of the Open Book at the dinner hour service on Wednesday, and we are still considering the Acts of the Apostles as a section of the covering subject. The finished work. What are the features that I would like to stress, which I feel is important to us all, is the providence that is given at different steps through this acts of the Apostles to base their movement or what they are going to do upon, thus saith the Lord. For instance, we look back at chapter one and we find our Savior is recorded here in verse three, occupying a period of 40 days. I don't mean to say that the whole 40 days were spent, but during that 40 days between his resurrection and his ascension. The one outstanding thing that is recorded of him is that he opened the Scriptures. If anyone could have been independent of the written word of God, it was the risen Christ and he spent his time not telling them of things out of his own heart, of things which he knew, and things that were coming. He just opened up the scriptures. And then when we come to the. As a consequence of that, we come to verse six. When they therefore were come together, notice the word therefore. The word therefore means this is a consequence of something. What? If you'd had 40 days instruction by the risen Christ, you would have some questions, wouldn't you? You would have some things to answer.

[00:01:39] And their great point was, Lord, thou hast taken us through the book and all the way through we've seen either in prophecy or in parable in history, that this kingdom, which has long been deferred, will be restored to this people. Israel. And they said, Wilt thou? At this time I said, the question of time you must leave to the father. He didn't say yes or no. He said, You just leave that at this time. Well, then will we come to the upper room? In chapter one, when we met together, verse 16, Peter stood up and said, Men and brethren, this scripture must needs be fulfilled. Here is at it again. He's not going to make a move because he thinks it's a wise thing to do. He says this scripture must be fulfilled. And that led to the appointment of Matthias. So when we come to the second chapter and you and I start asking or arguing as to what does the word Pentecost mean and what is its significance? Don't go off on a tangent and say that the tradition says this and the church says that. Just ask the question. What? Saith the scripture. And when you come to realize this, that the men who are now going to appeal to the scriptures were given the gift of the Holy Spirit. They had the tongues of

fire on their head. If anyone could have been independent from a written book, it was those 12 men.

[00:03:06] And when Peter heard them arguing as to what this day of Pentecost could stand for, here we are coming to our subject. He said verse 16, This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel. I don't think there are any any words in our language that are more explicit than this. Is that. And what could you do with him? Could you twist him and distort them? He says, If you want to know the significance of what's happened today. Men and brethren on this day of Pentecost. He doesn't say the church has been inaugurated. He doesn't say here has been baptized into one body, Jew and gentile. He says this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel. Well, I'm not going to say that we don't know what the Prophet Joel spoke about, but I have a feeling I should be very remiss if I said, Well, we're going to the next subject. Don't you think so? Don't you think we ought to look at the Prophet Joel just to see what basis this man was putting underneath this great question of Pentecost. So the prophet Joel is immediately following Hosea, Joel, Obadiah, Amos, so on right to the end of the Old Testament. It's not very far from the end of the Old Testament. Page 844 But we in our Bibles, thank you. Our time is very limited. Now, you will notice. In verse four, there is a dreadful scourge come upon these people because of their disobedience.

[00:04:35] That which the palmerworm hath left, hath the locust eaten, and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm, and that which the cankerworm hath left as the caterpillar eaten. Well, if that's not a judgment. One after the other of these dreadful scourges, eating up the whole food of this people. That's how it starts. Well, then he calls them together to sanctify a fast. But then he comes along presently and gives a reference to the future. I'll be back. I'll go into the whole thing. But he is speaking about the day of the Lord that's coming. And then toward the close of Chapter two, he's back again on this Cankerworm scourge. He says. Verse 25. I will restore to you. I will restore to you chapter one of X's Wilt thou restore? Chapter two says, Look at the Prophet Joel. It may be that these men knew more about the ins and outs of Scripture than we give them credit for. Here we are, he says. I sent the judgment, but I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten the cankerworm, the caterpillar. The Palmer were my great army, which I sent among you. And then he goes on to say. Verse 28 and it shall come to pass afterward. I want you to notice this word afterward for a moment. Just keep that in mind. Joel says it shall come to pass afterward. And you don't need to be

very profound scholars to know that that means after the restoration, after he is restored.

[00:06:23] Then I'm going to do this. All right, for a moment. Leave then, and it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams. Your young men shall see visions and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids. In those days will I pour out my spirit And I will show wonders in the heavens and the earth. Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon into blood. Before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass. That whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant, whom the Lord shall call. Before we turn back again from Joel Glimpse to Chapter three. Verse 15. The sun and the moon shall be darkened and the star shall withdraw their shining and the Lord shall roar out of Zion and utter his voice from Jerusalem. And the heavens and the earth shall shake. And the Lord will be the hope of His people and the strength of the children of Israel and so on. Now, can you see in what we've just started these chapters of Joel, a reference to the church? This is all to do with a dreadful period that many scriptures speak of that is yet to come upon the earth called the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

[00:07:58] Now we'll turn back to Acts two and see what Peter has to say about this and the way in which he introduces it. The second chapter of the acts. You might perhaps wonder why those who were raising this question could say what they did. And they said in verse 13, some of them, These men are full of new wine. But Peter, standing up with the with the 11 lifted up his voice and said unto them, Ye men of Judea and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem. Be this known unto you and hearken to my words, for these are not drunken as ye suppose. Seeing that they are all teetotallers. It doesn't say that it is seen that it's a third hour of the day. Well, now that means to say that there's something that they knew. This is a part of the rabbinical law that you didn't touch alcoholic drinks so early in the morning. Part of their general accepted law, which he would appeal to, doesn't come in the law of Moses. It was their usual custom. But you said. Instead of poking fun at it and turning away from it, stop and think for them for a moment. This is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel. And I won't read the words again, but I draw your attention to the change that comes.

[00:09:20] It says. And then let me see how it comes. Oh, is it a first? 17. And it shall come to pass in the last days. Saith the Lord. Now, this man is not trifling with scripture, but when he quotes the Prophet Joel, he alters the words. In the prophet Jonah says it will come to pass afterwards. He says it shall come to pass in the last days. Now, what's the significance of that? Let's go on and look. You notice I put on the board the 40 days. Wilt thou restore the quotation from David and the 12 thrones that had to be occupied. This is that. Now we have. I will pour. And I will show now that took place and this didn't. There is no suggestion in any anywhere that on the day of Pentecost the sun was darkened and the moon turned to blood and the powers of the heavens were shaken. And the great and dreadful day of the Lord set in because it hadn't set in yet. So you see, he's just watering of it. He says, I'm not telling you that this is fulfilling the prophecy of John. I'm telling you, this is an anticipation of it. And if you will believe it will go on as God said, he will restore. But you see, the same thing's happened more than once in connection with this people. They came to the Lord and said, Is this Elijah that was to come? He said, if you will believe it, if you would accept the testimony that I'm giving you, it is.

[00:10:58] But on the other hand, it isn't. So you're saying you're going to rewatch what, haven't you? So he says, Here, look, God has done the first seven. You do the second second when the time comes. But this is an anticipation of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. But it didn't take place. So he says, You're a boy. In the last days, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy and your young men shall see visions. And your old men shall dream dreams. And on my servants and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days of my spirit. And they shall prophesy. Well, that took place. They found that these men did receive this gift of the spirit and there was the evidence. As we go through the actual find, this takes place again, when we come to the testimony of Stephen. He draws attention to the Old Testament history, which said in eloquent terms that it was the second time that the response took place, not the first. That comes over and over again in the working out of this. In fact, if you will tolerate the language of Shakespeare, the course of true love never did run smooth, he said. And this true love of God that was going on to that great goal has to be broken and stopped and picked up again in his infinite mercy.

[00:12:17] He picks it up again and doesn't cut us all off. So there we have once more a testimony I think, that we want to remember. There's so much that is said and so much is believed and taught with regard to the day of Pentecost. That you look at the person and you wonder why it is that with his Bible in front of him, he maintains that the church to which you and I belong began on the day of Pentecost. If you ask him what Pentecost means, he has a vague idea. Shall we make sure Pentecost simply is the Greek word for 50? It's got no spiritual meaning at all for 50, that's all. And you go back to Leviticus where you have the feast of the Passover and seven weeks afterwards, seven sevens are 49. Go easy here. I say my arithmetic is pretty groggy, but seven sevens are 49 and the very next day is the 50th. That's Pentecost. It was all embedded in Old Testament feasts which the Jews kept. Not a single word about the church in it. It was a part of their testimony that it was a picture of the working out of the purpose of the ages, which led right on to the seventh month when there was the day of atonement, when there was a feast of trumpets, when there was the Feast of Tabernacles, when everyone sat under his own vine in their own fig tree and they were restored.

[00:13:41] All the last feast is the restoration. This one was an anticipation and it didn't take place at the time. So we say. Don't let your imagination run riot because you do yourself harm and others. You tell me that on the day of Pentecost, a great company, and I think these people imagine a meeting like in Trafalgar Square packed as close as ever. They could be Jews and Gentiles, all waiting for the baptism of the Spirit to make the members of the church. Whereas at the beginning of a 12 men only in the upper room. And after that, those who were believers received the gift of the spirit. And though we are distinctly told there were Jews out of every nation under heaven, and if you go through the acts of the apostles and see the attitude that the early believers had to the Gentiles, take Peter himself, who supposed to have opened the door of the church here in the 10th chapter. He says it was unlawful for a man that was a Jew to be in company with a gentile, unlawful. And when they accused Paul of taking a Greek into the temple, they nearly pulled him limb from limb. And he spoke to them and accused them, Paul did, of the murder of Christ. And they listened to him quite calmly until he said he was going to be sent to the Gentiles. And when they got to that word, they threw their clothes in the air and they went for him.

[00:15:07] And yet we're supposed to tamely sit down and believe the church began at Pentecost. No such thing. Not the church. It was the commencement of the promise that God said I will fulfill. The first half has been fulfilled. It will be fulfilled. The gained its fullness, but the second half has never been fully fulfilled yet. And in the Old Testament, Prophet, he says, Rend your heart and not your garments. So shall we anticipate just another subject we have to take in? Next time we meet Chapter three. There's 19. Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing. Verse 21. Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution. Now if anybody's going to quibble and say, but he didn't say refreshing. It didn't say restitution. It said restoration. Well, I'll let you keep that. Don't you see this is the burden of this early part of the chapter will now restore. When will the times of refreshing come? When will the restoration take place? When will the restitution? And all based upon the testimony of Old Testament, the scriptures. So I think we're only robbing ourselves as we go through this acts of the apostles. We will find a change comes. We will find the apostle Paul declaring that he has never moved from the testimony of the law and the prophets up to a certain point.

[00:16:39] And then he begins to say, he said something revealed to him and at the long last. You'll find there's a contrast made between what he said to the Jews at Rome when he speaks about the Old Testament scriptures, when he refers to the ministry received where he's got no scriptures to appeal to. Because if we believe what God says, that the church today is a mystery or a secret and chosen before the foundation of the world and never embedded in Scripture, we begin to see with it onto a unique company. But if you don't, you ought to be very much exercised your mind frames. If you say no. I believe the church began at Pentecost. What evidence have you got? Can you speak with tongues? Can you lay your hands on the sick and they recover? Can you touch a leper and cleanse him? I remember once speaking in Scotland and I wondered why somebody at the end of the hall was going as red as a turkey cock. Because I said, this is a challenge. If you say you belong to the Pentecostal people. I've got a sister who is working among the lepers in India, but she doesn't say any of you Pentecostal people go out there and walk through the wards and leave all the lepers cleansed. And this man was going like a wolf. But he was the representative of the Pentecostal people in that town. And you think I apologized to him, not me. Why should I?