



Date: April 21, 2019

Scripture: Acts 1 – 2

Paul tells us that God's basic plan from eternity past to eternity future is to sum up all things in Christ...

Ephesians 1:3, 9–10 ^(ESV)

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ ... [How?]

⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In Acts 1-2 Peter explains to the wondering Jews, how this happens.

Peter isn't the first to explain things in terms of the Messiah/Christ....See Luke 24:13-32ⁱ

All of history, all things, find their culmination in Him (Col 1:15-20)ⁱⁱ.

1. Many people think that the death of Christ was a tragedy. How does Acts 2:23 portray it?
2. Who planned the Crucifixion? Who is responsible for it? How does this work?ⁱⁱⁱ
3. In Acts 2:24 the Bible describes God-the-Father as the one who raised Jesus up, noting that “the pangs of death” could not hold him. Here, the “Pangs of death” is an ironic world-play. The same word for “pangs” was used to describe child-birth. Thus the sealing of Christ in the Tomb is like that of a baby in a womb. Once in labor, nothing can prevent the child from coming out. New life bursts forth into the world. So too with the resurrection of Christ. Once in the tomb, nothing could prevent him from coming out and brining new life into the world – not even the labor ‘pangs’ or grip of death. What areas of life would you like to see Christ burst into?
4. Acts 2:25-28 were originally written as a Psalm of David – Psalm 16. It is a song of confidence that celebrates the benefits of a life lived under the rule of God.¹ Jesus doesn't take away all of our pain and suffering in this life, but he does make things different. What difference does Jesus' make [new life (our being born again)]? How are our lives markedly different than the lives of unbelievers? What do we have that they don't? How does it show up?
5. Acts 2:24 quotes a Davidic Psalm (#110) again “The Lord Said to my Lord” Who is speaking here? Who's talking to who? How then is this prophetic and how does it throw Jesus' accusers into confusion?^{iv}

¹ David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 148.



6. Ephesians 4:8-16 quotes another Psalm (68) and makes a reference to Christ's Kingly role. One of the roles of the King was to conquer the enemy and distribute the captured bounty. Christ did this by triumphing over his enemies at a Battlefield called "Golgatha". There he personally escorted the enemy to the grace and returned unharmed. After that Jesus distributed Gifts to his people. What was the first and primary gift he gave (acts 2:33)? What are the secondary and subsequent spiritual gifts? What did Christ give you and how does that work with how he made you? How are you using it to build up the church?

Please go to to <https://mefchurch.org/volunteer.html> to look for specific examples of ways in which you can plug in.

Thank you!

IN Christ,

Pastor Jeremy



ⁱ Luke 24:13–32 (ESV)

On the Road to Emmaus

¹³ That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, ¹⁴ and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. ¹⁵ While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ And he said to them, “**What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?**” And they stood still, looking sad. ¹⁸ Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?” ¹⁹ And he said to them, “**What things?**” And they said to him, “Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him. ²¹ But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. ²² Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, ²³ and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. ²⁴ Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see.” ²⁵ And he said to them, “**O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?**” ²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

²⁸ So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, ²⁹ but they urged him strongly, saying, “Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent.” So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. ³¹ And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. ³² They said to each other, “Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”

ii Colossians 1:15–20 (ESV)

The Preeminence of Christ

¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

iii **Not an Accident!**

The Crucifixion was not an Accident - God planned it on purpose. [JKL]

We see here, as often in Scripture, the paradox between divine providence and human responsibility (4:27–28). While God planned for Christ to die on the cross, those who carried out this act were responsible for it.¹

¹ Ajith Fernando, *Acts*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 102.

'handed over' (ekdotos) by God.

Without doubt, the emphasis is on God's sovereignty in everything that happened: he was handed over *'by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge'*

Here we find the first reference in Acts to God's 'purpose' or plan (*boulē*, cf. Lk. 7:30; Acts 4:28; 5:38–39; 13:36; 20:27), which was 'predetermined' or 'set' by him.

This plan, which had particular reference to the suffering of the Messiah, was revealed in advance in Scripture (cf. Lk. 22:22, 37; 24:26, 46; Acts 3:18; 4:25–28; 17:2–3; 26:22–23)....

God's *foreknowledge (prognōsis)* means **more** than his ability to anticipate the future. It is another way of talking about his determination of events in advance, according to his own plan (cf. Rom. 8:29; 11:2; 1 Pet. 1:2, 20)..... Despite this emphasis on God's sovereignty, there is no diminution of human responsibility here (cf. 1:17 note). Peter acknowledges that the betrayal and death of Jesus took place *'with the help of wicked men'* (*dia cheiros anomōn*, 'by the hand of lawless ones'), apparently identifying the Roman authorities as those who 'lacked the privilege of the law'. Judas Iscariot, together with the Jewish and Romans leaders, all had a part to play (cf. 4:27). But Peter lays a particular responsibility for the suffering of Jesus at the feet of the Jews in Jerusalem with the expression *prospēxantes aneilate*, literally means *'you fixed him (to the cross) and (thereby) slew him.'* (TNIV *'put him to death by nailing him to the cross'*).

David G. Peterson, *The Acts of the Apostles*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Nottingham, England: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), 145–146.

Free Will & Sovereignty

People do what they want,

But God gets what He wants. (Jeff Bucknam)



^{iv} Matthew 22:41–46 (ESV)

Whose Son Is the Christ?

⁴¹ Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question, ⁴² saying, “What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?” They said to him, “The son of David.”

⁴³ He said to them, “How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying,

⁴⁴ “ ‘The Lord said to my Lord,

“Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies under your feet” ’?

⁴⁵ If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?” ⁴⁶ And no one was able to answer him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

God-the-Father speaks to God-the-Son

The phrase “The Lord said to my Lord” is significant. While the same word is used in the Greek both times for “Lord,” the Hebrew of [Psalm 110:1](#) reads,

“*Yahweh* said to my *Adonai*.” Peter sees this as God speaking to Jesus, who is David’s Lord.¹

¹ Ajith Fernando, *Acts*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 104.