

Acts (Quality: Good)

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 25 June 2006

Preacher: Pont, Philip

[0 : 0 0] As the Lord may help us, I will ask your attention to the reading Acts, the second chapter and verse 39.

The book of the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2 and verse 39. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

What a blessed day in the Church of Christ was the day of Pentecost. We read in the Gospel as recorded by Luke, all that day, the last chapter of the Gospel of Luke, where we read the words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, that tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

[1 : 5 4] the promise of my Father. And that was the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. And so it came to pass, according to the words of Jesus, and according to the prophecy of Joel, it was a day to be remembered.

And oh, see to, dear friends, the effect of that pouring out of the Spirit. Wonderful effect.

They that were there heard the Gospel. They heard it in their own language, not in some gibberish words that were, which are suggested as being what it was, my friends.

They heard it in their own language. They could understand the Word, though they were from different places, and indeed, different ways.

But it was further than that, there was an impression made. That blessed Spirit that was poured out from on high, as it was described as tongues of fire, had a blessed effect upon Peter.

[3 : 1 1] And he preached the Gospel. But it had a blessed effect upon the Word of his grace, because they came to a place where we read, and they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do?

Have you had such a day? Do you know such a time in the sanctuaries of God, when the Word has been with authority and power, nothing to do with the preacher?

Oh, the Lord forbid that we ever think that it is the preacher's ability to be able to lay the Word of God upon your spirit, to have an effect.

That's the Holy Spirit's work, not man's spirit. And so they came and said, men and brethren, what shall we do? And living souls know those times and seasons when they are brought into abject poverty and need, and they have to look to the Lord to wonder what they shall do, how shall it be?

And, oh, there was a blessing in that day. And there was 3,000 added to the church. And again, as we close the reading, the Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved.

- [4 : 32] And that was the day when the spirit was poured out without measure. Now, we want to look at these words not as historical, but as according to the covenant of divine grace.
- All day long, all day yesterday, I was looking at another word and trying to find if the Lord would move my spirit to glean something out of it.
- And so it went on, and during the night, this word dropped in, for the promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are far off, even as many as the Lord our God should call.
- Now, what promise is this? Covenant promises. We read in the closing verses of the next chapter, Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.
- And you know what day that was when the Lord spoke that to Abraham? When he was to offer, as he thought, his only begotten son, his only son, Isaac, on the altar.
- [6 : 00] That was when the promise was given to him, And thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first, God, having raised up his son, Jesus, sent him to bless you, and turning away every one of you from his iniquities.
- Now, this was a day of blessing then to the Jews, to the believing Jews. We've read in our reading that there were dwelling Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of a renecution under heaven.
- But it had an effect, this preaching. And it was a Holy Ghost preaching. And that's what we seek. And I trust you do too, to see in the churches today, a Holy Ghost preaching.
- Now, let us therefore look at this word as we may be helped, because this is not the covenant that we would first address our mind to as the covenant which was spoken of Joel, that was spoken to the national people of God.
- This was the covenant of eternal grace and mercy. And that, my friends, is what the church is under and will be indeed till the last vessel of mercy is brought into a hope in the mercy of God.
- [7 : 22] God. This is the promise that shall abide. There's a reference in here to that word in Isaiah, and all thy children shall be told to the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children.
- My friends, there's been one or two godly parents have been blessed with that promise, and there's one or two godly parents that live to see the promise coming to pass. Well, my friends, the promise is unto you.
- If you and I are in the covenant of eternal grace, the promise is unto us. The promise is unto you. What promise? My friends, the promise of the Spirit.
- You know, it's a wonderful mercy if you can trace, as all believers should be able to, trace back to the time when they were called out of darkness.
- Called out of darkness, the promise is unto you. And it was the Spirit's work, it wasn't some preacher in a pulpit. He may have spoken words which the Holy Ghost has applied, but blessed be God, you know, he does his work.
- [8 : 39] Though he raises up sinners to preach the gospel, my friends, it doesn't come from the sinner that preaches the gospel, the blessing of the word of his grace comes from the Holy Ghost.
- You'll love the Lord's servants when he's used, when they're used of God. My friends, when you'll hold them in high esteem when they are used of God, but go back further, it's in the eternal counsels of Jehovah.

And according to that eternal counsel of a triune God, there are people that are to be born into this world, born under the law, born as Adam's descendants, born sinners, but they'll be the subject of this promise.

You see, there's a wonderful word, we don't need to go to December 25th, you know, to remember such words. In Matthew's gospel, chapter 1, thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

God, and the day will come when you'll see that it is so, child of grace. My friends, to be left out of the promise that is spoken of here is to be left out of heaven.

[9 : 56] But to be the subjects of the fulfilment of the promise, because as you go, as we said, as you go back to Joel's prophecy, and see the way in which he remarkably was able to prophesy of the day when the spirit shall indeed be given.

They're not the spirit of salvation. These apostles were already saved by grace. This was the commission that they had, that they should go forth into all the world and preach the gospel.

This is the commission. That was the sealing of the spirit upon that commission. And the preaching of the gospel should be, I was going to put it in a way like this, so beneficial because it was spirit taught to these dear apostles, and should be so to all preachers.

But oh, this is, this is not abstract, my friends, this is not generalising, this is not speaking in a general sense of the word of the church of Christ, it's you.

That's what's so important. You and I, my friends, we are here in the Lord's house, is the promise unto us, the promise of the Holy Ghost.

[11 : 09] The apostle wrote in the Ephesians, of that remarkable day and hour and moment, and you who were dead in trespasses and sins.

That's the work of the Spirit, and that's, my friends, which is to be preached. As I approach this Lord's Day, and with many words upon my spirit, concerning the services of the house of prayer this day, both here and throughout the day, as far as I was concerned, I felt such a need of the pouring of the Spirit upon my spirit.

Because, you know, those whom God has sent to preach, they're not academics in the word of God. They don't go to colleges of theology to learn how to preach the word.

They're put into the school of Christ, and they're revealed constantly, 52 weeks a year, of their utter hopelessness and helplessness in themselves, and as far as the word of God is concerned, the total ignorance of the word of God.

And it came upon me so great during the week, and as I approached this day, what a need of the Holy Spirit there was. What a need, lest we should put a wrong interpretation on the word of truth, and you know there's such a lot of wrong interpretation.

[12 : 40] But my friends, as the preaching may be, according to the Holy Spirit's help, my friends, so it will be, whether it's speaking or in hearing, we've always helped, my friends, we need the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel.

But if that gospel of Jesus Christ must be of any benefit or blessing to his people, so the Spirit of God must be in the pew as well. You know, if he doesn't give you a hunger or a thirst, then the gospel is no profit.

And the servant of God said to me, if you get on one of these, when you're preaching, if you feel to have liberty and light, you said, look who's listening. Look who's listening.

Now, my friends, when that's the case, it's where the spirits work. Now, the Lord, we go back to the word of this text, for the promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off, the promise of the Spirit.

My friends, his quickening effect, his life-giving virtue. My friends, we all have a soul, and if we're a living soul, it's because the Holy Spirit has begun to work in that soul.

[14 : 01] It has spoken it into divine life. You know, when the creation of the world began, it was, he spake, and it was done.

He commanded, and it stood fast. My friends, if that's what the Lord did as far as the creation of this world was concerned, how much more, my friends, is it, when such a soul is quickened into divine life out of the deadness and darkness of the fall.

Like John, you know, people say, when you preach the gospel, it's received in the heart. Well, that's the Spirit's work, my friends. If the Spirit hasn't quickened that soul into divine life, it will not receive the gospel.

It will not accept the gospel, nor the teaching of the gospel. If there's to be a blessing and a favor, my friends, it's where the ground has been prepared.

If you come to the Lord's house, you go back to those days of unregeneracy, and it was painful, wasn't it, to sit in the Lord's house, to hear a foreign language.

[15 : 14] It's no attraction to you, and you thought of, oh, what we're going to do tomorrow, or what we did yesterday, and the day was wasted away in the house of God.

My friends, this is so now, I'd love to meet among them now, and at thy gracious feet to bow, though virious of them all. Well, the promise is unto you, and to your children.

This blessed number, that no man can number, this sacred church of Christ, made out of sinners, called by grace, established before all worlds, established before Adam ever was created, or ever fell.

There was a number that no man could number. Jesus Christ said of that, and you know, that's the evidence of the Holy Ghost's work. What did he say? All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

The promise is unto you. Do you remember the day when you had to come just as you was? Just as I am without one plea, that thy blood was shed for me, and that thou bidst me come to thee.

[16 : 27] O Lamb of God, I come. You know, there's a lot of this attempting to try to encourage sinners to come to Jesus Christ as though they could.

Jesus draws the chosen race by his sweet resistless grace. That's how they'll come. And how will they come? They'll come poor and needy.

I've said lots of times lately to the Lord, it's not a sin to be poor, you know. It's not a sin. It's necessary, my friends, and the Lord will bring you into that poverty, and into that need, into that absolute destitute state.

It's not a sin to be that. My friends, that's how sinners find salvation when they're poor and when they're needy. As we said in prayer, the prodigal, you know, was in want.

My friends, it was in want that drove him to his father's house. The promise is unto you, the work of the spirit, life-giving work, soul-saving work.

[17 : 35] And you say, but yeah, but what, yes, what was it? My friends, it's to bring you to be aware of your standing, and your standing was that of a sinner before a just and a holy God.

The promise is unto you and to your children. And my friends, that's where life is known, you know. Listen to the petitions of the people of God.

My friends, if they're told for the spirit, they'll pray concerning their poverty, they'll plead before the Lord, that he will have mercy on their destitute condition.

They'll come to the Lord's house, you know, not always like this, but so often like this. They'll come to hear what God the Lord will say, for he will speak peace unto his people.

My friends, and that's what they'll come to listen. The promise is unto you, the spirits welcome. And where the spirit's works be gone, you know, it will be maintained.

[18 : 49] The apostle didn't, he wrote to the church at Philippi, didn't he? And say, being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

The promise is unto you. My friends, and so he will you, keep alive your precious soul, though it may seem to be a day of famine. We say that these days, you know, many hide behind those words, it's a day of small things.

But a living soul will not be content with such things, describe such things as that. A living soul will not be, you know, well, you might as well hold your arms and see what happens.

God's love. But a living soul will be pleaded before the Lord that he will turn the captivity of his own soul. But he will indeed deliver you from his chastening hand and bring life and grace and mercy and eternal kindness to bear upon your spirit.

My friends, a Holy Ghost teaching, my friends, is absolutely essential. Never listen to preaching where it doesn't include the Holy Spirit's work because you're leaving out of the word of God that which is essential to salvation and to life itself, spiritual life.

[20 : 20] But this is the promise. My friends, the promise was that the Spirit shall come and the Spirit did come. Do you need the Spirit's work?

I tell you something, my friends, if you value the Holy Ghost, you'll be taught to value it because you'll be brought into need of it. That's where the blessing is, you know.

That's when you will find, if we look at something naturally, you will say, how do you value the food on your table? It's when you're hungry that's when you value it.

My friends, if you value the Holy Spirit's work by the need of the Holy Spirit, it. I've pleaded this before the Lord time and time again.

There's a word that we read the other day in our reading, how does it go? It's the words of the Holy Spirit, if ye being, it speaks about the good gift, it'll come back to me in a moment, my friends, but it says this at the close of that verse, that he shall give the Holy Spirit to them that ask.

[21 : 37] Now, that's what you'll do if you value the Holy Spirit, and you'll value it because there's life in that blessed spirit of truth, my friends, as he's made known to you.

If you're under this blessed promise, you'll value divine teaching of the Spirit, sometimes you will have to look back and see that it is profitable to your soul to be brought through what you might call darks and paths.

Darks and paths, times of realization of your spiritual poverty, times when you feel that all you've got against you seems to be but his frown but not his smile.

It's though, my friends, it's condemnation, and not salvation. And you will value it as you look back, it's divine teaching. If the Holy Spirit doesn't convince his people of sin, how will they ever cry out for salvation?

The Lord Jesus Christ speaks of the Holy Spirit in the Gospel of John as the comforter. I believe that's the only gospel where that word is used or titled is used concerning the Holy Spirit.

[22 : 53] The comforter. But that is what he does. That's his way. He doesn't bring comfort, my friends, unless he first causes distress. He doesn't teach his people comfort without first preparing the soul for comfort.

comfort. In the 14th of John, you know, the Lord Jesus said, and the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things.

All things. Everything that's needed for salvation will be divinely taught you by the Spirit. And some of those times and seasons are not comfortable, but they're teaching times and they're profitable times.

My friends, and it is a preparation ground whereby you and I must ever be found seeking for the person and work of Christ Jesus.

Now, the same blessed speaker, the Lord Jesus Christ, said this of the Holy Ghost in two chapters further on in John's Gospel, he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you.

[24 : 10] Now, my friend, there is, I believe, I don't wish to put personal views upon the work of the Spirit, but there's certainly a lot of difference, there's a lot of difference, you know, having Jesus Christ shown to you as against Jesus Christ being applied to you.

where the publican came in his under divine teaching of the Holy Ghost, you know, he was shown his own wicked state, and such was the effect of his wicked heart, and the revelation of that wickedness of his own nature.

no doubt he was, as the Pharisee said, that he was an extortioner, no doubt that he was, that was a part of being a publican, a tax gatherer, an exploiter of his own people, he was an extortioner, but you see, God in his mercy stopped him in his work, and taught him he was a sinner, and so he comes up to the temple of God, and prays God be merciful to me a sinner.

Now, my friends, he had a view of, he had a view of what he needed, and that was mercy. Do you know the day, can you go back on the time, my friends, when you first cried as the publican did?

The promises unto you, and to your children, to all that are afar, or even as many as the Lord our God shall call, the day of mercy.

[25 : 54] I've told you this story before, and it's not a story, it's absolute truth. The Lord's dear servant, the late George Rose, said to me in Hanover one prayer meeting night, he said, the Lord bless you, and then he said, if you want him to, he already has.

You think about that, if you want him to, he already has. That's true, isn't it? That's the work of the Spirit. My friends, if he gives you such a desire for Christ, such a desire for mercy, such a desire that will lift you from your fears of sinking to hell, to a hope in his mercy, my friends, the Lord's already had mercy.

In every call of grace, you know, there's the hand of mercy. amazed I see, do you know that hymn, amazed I see the hand that stopped me in my wild career, a miracle of grace I stand, the Lord has caused my heart to fear.

Now, my friends, if you're a convinced sinner, and you were brought as a publican was to be found at the footstool of mercy, praying for mercy, my friends, Philpott used to speak about the promises of God, and he said they were halfway to the blessing, the promises of God.

And so it is, my friends, with divine teaching, the Holy Spirit teaches you the need of mercy, you're on the way to the blessing. Jesus said of this man that he went down to his house justified.

[27 : 44] There's a lot of meaning in that word justification, you know. he said he wasn't justified in his prayers. He wasn't justified because he was a sinner and felt it to be so.

My friends, he was made to be justified because by that sacrifice for sin, he was justified. Because of that redeeming love and mercy, he was delivered of promises unto you, the work of the Spirit is to convince the sin, the work of the Spirit is to teach his own dear people that depravity and their need of mercy, and they'll cry out under it.

You say, well, it's the most painful work. Bless God, my friends, if you know it. Bless God if you know it, and pray for others that they may be brought to be taught in the person and work of Christ Jesus.

Pray for others that may come to your mind that seem to be destitute of an interest in the salvation of Jesus Christ on the cross. My friends, may they be under and included within the promise of the blessed Spirit's work, the promises unto you.

You see, it's not that we belong to the Strict Baptist Church, it's not that we go to church or chapel every Sunday and sometimes in the week. My friends, it's whether you and I are under the promise, the promise he shall save his people from their sins.

[29 : 23] That's the promise. God's son of the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but should have himself alive.

And you're under that promise. Are you under that other promise that we mentioned from John chapter 6, all that the Father giveth me shall come to me.

And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out the promises unto you and to your children. Enter my mind in the book of Numbers we read of the day when which the Lord afflicted his Israel with fiery serpents, fiery serpents, for their sin, for their iniquity, they were bitten by serpents and some died and some were dying.

Now my friends it reveals a simple illustration, a sacred illustration of the person of Jesus Christ. He was instructed, Moses was instructed to make a serpent of brass and put it on a pole and hold it up.

And there was a promise and they that looked they lived. You'll say well that's not generalizing, it is not generalizing.

[30 : 51] Just remember this, there's two things you want to remember this. My friends it was the dying that looked, the dead can't. So it wasn't the dead that was raised up, it was the dying that was healed.

those dead and trespasses and sins cannot look, they've got no desire to look. And a dead person on the wilderness journey out of Goshen to Canyon could not look because it was already dead.

There's another thing, you must remember on that illustration of the brazen serpent, what was it? just, and I'm going to use the word, I can't, I shouldn't use it in a pulpit, I will not use it because it's wrong to use the word, but just consider in your mind those numbers of the Israelites are sat there in their afflictive condition.

Just the same as in any congregation, few or many, some were at the front, some that must be at the back. This word says, and to all that are far off, however distant they were from that brazen serpent, my friends, it might have been such a distance, but they could hardly see it.

They that looked, they lived, my friends, and if you feel to be, and grace has taught you this, only grace will teach you this, you might feel to be so far off from God this morning.

[32 : 39] You might say, well I look back on this weakness past, and oh it's driven me as it was, put a distance between me and anything spiritually good, I feel so far off, I feel at such a distance.

well Jesus draws the chosen race by his sweet resistors grace, the promises unto you, they that look, they lived, my friends, and it doesn't take an account how far they were away from that brazen serpent, it doesn't take any account.

I'll tell you something else my friends, that the Lord doesn't take an account of, and that is the depths of the fool, you know some, some poor sinners know a little of the fool, some know a lot of the fool, some are being led in the depths of the knowledge of their own sinful state and condition, others not so far.

If you look at the Acts of the Apostles, that chapter concerning Lydia, and in the same chapter as the account of Lydia, there was the jailer.

Now, you might view those two characters as being somewhat different, and you might also view some of those, the account of those two characters, how the Lord seemed to deal with them in a different way.

[34 : 07] It's a set of Lydia whose heart the Lord opened. My friends, could you compare that woman, Lydia, to the jailer?

what a hard heart he must have got. Who wants the occupation of a jailer when he's got to keep under his control, and safely so, securely so, those who have, by some means or other, deserved prison?

What a hard heart he must have had. Well, my friends, let me say this, if you're a Lydia, you, and the Lord's opened your heart, showed you what was in your heart, would you have called that a very simple work?

Would you say that was a gentle work? But you see, the Lord is no respecter of persons, his people, whatever degree of sin and iniquity they've been found in, my friends, he may, some people say, well, he gently needs those.

My friends, if he convinces you of sin, there's nothing gentle in that, there's mercy in it, but it's isn't gentle. It reveals to the sinner what he is, and it brings shame and distress and sorrow.

[35 : 24] Now, my friends, he didn't have to, he used a different way upon the jailer, a great earthquake, that he brought from his lips, didn't it, we read, that he called for a light and sprang and the fowl trembling before Paul and Cyrus and said, sirs, what must I do to be saved?

My friends, it was a most solemn work on that man's heart. Those two people came to the same blessing, came under the same blessing, possessed the same blessing.

They were both baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. The promise is unto you. Oh, you may think that there's outstanding cases.

And these are, you might say, well, Saul of Tarsus, I've never done what he's done. He's a brand plucked from the fire, you say. So are you and me if we're in this text, my friends.

If you're under the promise, you're a brand plucked from the fire. You say God will be eternally just to arrest Saul of Tarsus, to perish in his sins, consider what he was guilty of.

[36 : 33] My friends, if you've never justified God in your own condemnation, you know there's a lot of people sing the hymns lustily and without thinking.

And if my soul be sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well. My friends, you sing that lustily, God forbid you do, sing it in sobriety.

The dying thief said to his fellow thief, said to his companion under the judgment of the crucifixion, we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, thus justifying God in your own condemnation, my friends.

We indeed justly. O, but for free and sovereign grace, I still have lived estranged from God, to hallowed through the destined place of my deserved, but dread abound.

Amazed, I see the hand that stopped me in my wild career, that a miracle of grace I stand, the Lord has taught my heart to fear. My friend, there's no degrees in sin, there's no degrees, my friends, if it's possible to sin once, you'd be under the same wrath and condemnation of someone who's walked through their life in sin and iniquity.

[38 : 09] The promise is unto you, the promise of the Spirit, the Church of Christ, poor, wretched sinners, ruined by the fall, taught of the Spirit.

Do you need the Spirit's teaching, my friends? You know, I've said this before, there's never a soul that prayed for the new birth, you know.

There's never been a soul that's prayed for the new birth. You say, well, I pray often, put me amongst his children. My friends, if that was the Holy Ghost Spirit, if that's the Holy Ghost taught prayer, my friends, you're already amongst his children.

no one in their dead state and condition as a fallen sinner has ever prayed to be amongst the children of God.

My friends, because a dead condition is a dead condition. There's not life in them, there's no prayer in them, no spirit in them. My friends, if God by his mercy calls you by invincible grace, then you will pray to be put amongst his people.

[39 : 21] I've often said this, we had an old beacon at Hanover when I was young, used to give out 938, I love to meet among them now and at thy gracious feet abound, and I used to get tired of listening to it.

But I tell you what, my friends, the day came when I used to pray that prayer, I still do, bless him be God, I still do, I love to meet among them now and at thy gracious feet to bow, though vilest of them all, the promise is unto you.

What is in this promise we must come to a close, my friends, eternal night and his request to every saint is given, safety on earth and after death the plenitude of heaven, that the blessed spirit will teach you your sad state by nature, will show you as we said about thee, prodigal, show where mercy is to be found.

Now, my friends, and I say it very carefully and would say it very reverently, my friends, the Lord put the cry of mercy in your soul, but you see there's a blessing yet to come, my friends, that's the way to the blessing, that's the way to the blessing, the Lord put that cry in your soul and mine, you're under this promise, but you're under the fulfilment of it also, the day will come, David said in the psalm, didn't he, the set time to favour Zion, yea, the set time has come, and you know, in the calendar of divine mercy, there's a day, there's an hour, there's a moment, where that saint of God and the divine teaching will come into the possession of that blessing, the promise is unto you, cry on child of grace, if you think you're too far off, if you feel your sins are beyond healing, or removing, or pardoning, my friends, cry on, it's not a sin to be a poor and needy soul, my friends, the benefit is a blessing, and Holy Spirit will make you poor and needy, and dependent, but you see,

God never begins his work, but he doesn't fulfil it, and I must close, the time's gone, I did hope to come to the promise, because the promise here, my friends, is to all the church of Christ, that the promise is unto you, and to your children, and I'll say this, my friends, and then I'll finish, you know, you look at some of these, that are amongst the people of God, and you'll say, could it really be so, if God has put a promise in your heart, concerning your family, or concerning some, that is laid there, is a burden to your spirit, as one of our hymns says this, glory to God, they ne'er shall roam beyond the limits of his love, thanks by Jehovah's shells and wheels, firm as the everlasting hills, the promises unto you, and to your children, to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord, our God shall call, amen.