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KERYGMA IN PETER'S SERMONS

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of New Testament Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Bachelor of Divinity

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to analyze the sermons of Peter in the Book of Acts for their kerygmatic content. For this purpose, Chapter II shall serve as a rapid summary of the concept of preaching in the New Testament, called kerygma.

Chapter III is the analysis of the various kerygmatic elements as found in the Petrine sermons. This study will show that there are eight distinct elements in Peter's kerygma. In connection with each kerygmatic element found in Peter's preaching this study will endeavor to show that it is in essential agreement with the kerygma of the entire New Testament. To this end, each element in Peter's sermons will be compared with the Petrine Epistles, the teaching of Jesus, and the preaching of Paul. This comparison will show that the kerygma as found in the sermons of Peter is in essential agreement with the kerygma of the New Testament.

Chapter IV serves as an application for the preacher of today. If the modern herald wishes to be true to the New Testament kerygma, he must model his preaching after the New Testament.

CHAPTER II

KERYGMA IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

After the Ascension the disciples began to preach the story of Jesus and to tell its meaning for men. They began this work in the vicinity of Jerusalem and gradually, in ever widening circles, they brought this message to the Gentiles. In the New Testament the two most important verbs found to describe this act of preaching are *κηρύσσειν* and *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι*.¹

In classic Greek *κηρύσσειν* meant to be a herald, or to officiate as a herald.² Basic to the meaning of *κηρύσσειν* is that of serving as messenger or herald.³

The substantive form, *κήρυγμα*, is the message proclaimed or brought.⁴

In the New Testament *κηρύσσειν* means to proclaim as a herald to the people the good news of the Gospel (*εὐαγγέλιον*).⁵ *κηρύσσειν* emphasizes the idea of an "on-the-spot pro-

¹Alan Richardson, A Theological Word Book of the Bible (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), p. 171 sub "preach," "teach."

²Liddell and Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1948), p. 949 sub *κηρύσσω*

³Ibid., sub *κῆρυξ*

⁴Ibid., sub *κήρυγμα*

⁵Bernhard Kurzweg, "New Testament Preaching" (S.T.M. Thesis presented to the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., 1952), p. 40.

clamation," "an active proclamation."⁶ Throughout the New Testament this is the chief emphasis, as can be seen in the fact that the noun, κήρυξις, is found there only three times. Thus the New Testament is more concerned with the proclamation than with the herald. And again, the substantive, κήρυγμα, occurs only eight times in the New Testament⁷, showing that the emphasis is on the dynamic action of κηρύσσειν.⁸

Κηρύσσω is frequently used with τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. Thus the preaching is a proclamation of the Gospel, or good news, and this again shows that κηρύσσειν and εὐαγγελίζεσθαι are practically synonymous.

Κηρύσσω and εὐαγγελίζομαι have essentially the same meaning. There is, however, a slight difference, as Kurzweg shows:

The two New Testament expressions εὐαγγελίζεσθαι and κηρύσσειν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον are practically synonymous. Both terms may be translated, 'proclaim the Gospel' or 'publish the good news.' And yet there is a slight difference. The latter, κηρύσσειν τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, appears to be more spontaneous, on-the-spot proclamation, emphasizing even more than εὐαγγελίζεσθαι the idea of proclaiming, which was used more generally in classic Greek to proclaim good news from the scene of action, while κηρύσσω was the term used to proclaim the victor at the battlefield or the arena.⁹

⁶Ibid.

⁷Moulton and Geden, A Concordance to the Greek Testament (Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, reprint 1950), pp. 546 f.

⁸Kurzweg, op. cit., p. 46.

⁹Ibid., p. 40.

In the New Testament preaching, then, either κηρύσσειν or εὐαγγελίζεσθαι is: 1) synonymous with preaching Christ; 2) it is an active proclamation to men in a living situation; 3) it is a proclamation of a fact, of an event in history at a particular time; 4) it is the proclamation of an event that produces faith in Christ; 5) it is the proclamation of the Gospel, the good news manifested in the events of Christ's life, his death, resurrection, and ascension; 6) it is a proclamation of the reality of sin; 7) a proclamation of Law and Gospel; 8) and finally, it is the proclaiming of life, forgiveness, and peace.¹⁰

The content of this New Testament preaching, we may say, is implied in the word keryma (κήρυγμα). Modern scholarship has used this word as a designation of the New Testament preaching. Archibald M. Hunter defines kerygma thus:

Kerygma, in its usual New Testament signification and in the sense in which we use it, means the proclaimed message of salvation. It is practically synonymous with euangelion, 'gospel.' It is a proclamation containing 'good news', the good news of an event, the event, the saving act of God in Jesus Christ, whereby 'He has visited and redeemed his people.'¹¹

In this study we use the term in the same sense. We mean it to be the thing preached by the Church about the coming of Jesus into history. This kerygma, or message of the New Testa-

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 70-73.

¹¹Archibald M. Hunter, The Message of the New Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1944), p. 25.

ment preaching, runs throughout the "variegated fabric of the New Testament now clear and conspicuous, now veiled and hidden."¹² This common preaching, or kerygma, can be traced in the Gospels as well as in the Epistles.¹³

The kerygma was the preaching concerning Christ. It contained various elements, or facets, of the redemptive fact. These elements were held in common in the "apostles' doctrine" and were transmitted by them to the Church. That their preaching of the kerygma was presented in very definite elements can be seen in the fact that the later church accepted these kerygmatic elements into her creeds. Charles H. Dodd remarks:

As the Church produced a settled organization of its life, the content of the kerygma entered into the Rule of Faith, which is recognized by the theologians of the second and third centuries as the presupposition of Christian theology. Out of the Rule of Faith in turn the Creeds emerged. The so-called Apostles' Creed in particular still betrays in its form and language its direct descent from the primitive Apostolic Preaching.¹⁴

Since the New Testament preaching has a common message, or kerygma, that can be traced throughout the New Testament, those who distinguish between κήρυγμα and διδασχία ¹⁵ "should

¹²Ibid., p. 35

¹³Ibid., p. 31; Richardson, op. cit., p. 171; C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments (London: Harper and Brothers, 1951), p. 55; cf. also Rom. 1:2-5; 10:8-9; I Cor. 15:3 f.; Gal. 1:3-4 for what appears to be credal documents or outlines of the kerygma in Paul's epistles.

¹⁴Dodd, op. cit., pp. 73 f.

¹⁵Dodd is the chief proponent of this distinction. He argues: "The New Testament writers draw a clear distinction

be conscious of the fact that the distinction concerns the form of the Message and the state of the hearers, not its essential elements."¹⁶

The Epistles are detailed expansions of the kerygma which deal with the basic problems in the life of the Christians. All of this so-called ethical instruction in the Epistles is the application of the kerygma to the life of the of the Christian Church.

between preaching and teaching. The distinction is preserved alike in Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypse, and must be considered characteristic of early Christian usage in general. Teaching (didaskein) is in a large majority of cases ethical instruction. Occasionally it seems to include what we should call apologetic, that is, the reasoned commendation of Christianity to persons interested but not yet convinced. Sometimes, especially in the Johannine writings, it includes the exposition of theological doctrine." Op. cit., p. 7. For a detailed analysis of the διδασχῆν, following Dodd's distinction, cf. H. G. G. Herklotz, A Fresh Approach to the New Testament (New York: Abingdon - Cokesbury Press, 1950), pp. 83-87, where the διδασχῆν, or ethical elements in the New Testament is analyzed according to the Decalogue.

¹⁶William Backus, "An Analysis of Missouri Synod Preaching Based on the Content of the New Testament Kerygma" (S.T.M. Thesis presented to the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., 1952) p. 8.

CHAPTER III

KERYGMA IN PETER'S SERMONS

A tendency very apparent in New Testament studies today is the attempt of scholars to detect and uncover underlying similarities in the message of the New Testament writers. They contend that although the New Testament corpus contains twenty-seven books, it does not follow that their message is at variance. Although the writers may use different terminology they still all agree in their essential message. This newer approach of scholarship is "synthetic" - it is a drawing together of the various writings and teachings, showing how they all agree in substance one with another.

This "synthetic" approach received a great impetus from the little volume of C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments.¹ Dodd maintains that the older "analytic" method of New Testament study was not fair in its over-emphasis of pointing up the so-called differences and divergent teachings in the New Testament books. The "analytic" method went to great length to show the peculiarities of individual writers, but often failed to show the essential unity of teaching and message of the New Testament writers, in spite of the varied style, phraseology, and emphasis in formulation of

¹C. H. Dodd, The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments (New York and London: Harper and Bro., 1951).

doctrine in each individual writer. Dodd has been followed in his position by such men as A. M. Hunter and H. G. G. Herklotz.

If we read the New Testament in large sections we soon become aware of the fact that here we are reading a story. It is a story which is so simple in form that even a child can grasp it. "It is the story of how God decisively intervened in human history in the person of Jesus Christ."² Yet the implications of this story are so profound for man and the world that they challenge the study of learned theologians.

What is the essential content of this story? The answer is found in one of the classic passages of Scripture, John 3:16. The New Testament story concerns the love of God for the world as manifested in the sending of His own Son to die for man. It is Heilsgeschichte; that is, a story of salvation (cf. Acts 13:26; Eph. 1:13).

A story has many divisions or facets to it. That is true also of the New Testament story of God's intervention in history in the person of Jesus Christ. This, too, contains many facets, or elements, but they are all part of one truth. Hunter makes a point of this when he writes:

The Heilsgeschichte of which the New Testament speaks from beginning to end, includes many things . . . but chiefly three things; and these (to use the technical terms) are: Christology, Ecclesiology, and Soteriology. In other words, the Heilsgeschichte treats of a Savior, a Saved (and Saving) People, and the means of Salvation. And these three are at bottom one - three strands in a single

²A. M. Hunter, Introducing the New Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 114.

cord, a trinity in unity. For the "story" is of the consummation of God's saving purpose for his People (Ecclesiology) through the sending of His Messiah (Christology) and of the means of Salvation (Soteriology).³

We are endeavoring to uncover what the nature of the kerygma in the Primitive Church was, especially in the sermons of Peter. We have previously defined kerygma. Now we must show what we mean by the Primitive Church. We must also determine how we are to find historic documents for this discussion. Finally, we must show that the kerygma of the Primitive Church, especially that of Peter, is in agreement with the rest of the New Testament kerygma. We will also want to show that the Petrine kerygma, or preaching, is in agreement with the whole New Testament, with Jesus, Paul, and the rest of the writers, and that the preaching of Peter is in agreement with the New Testament Heilsgeschichte, or story of salvation.

The New Testament was the product of the second half of the first century. It has been plausibly argued that the earliest book written was the letter of James.⁴

The crucifixion of Jesus is usually regarded to have taken place in 30 A.D. Thus we have an interim period of about fifteen to twenty years between the ascension of Christ and the

³A. M. Hunter, The Message of the New Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1944), p. 11.

⁴Theodor Zahn dates James in 50 A.D. Samuel Cartledge places it in 45 A.D. Cf. Theodor Zahn, Einleitung in das Neue Testament, Zweiter Band (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchh. Nachf. 'Georg Boehme', 1907). Cf. under Zeittafel, pp. 653-656; Samuel A. Cartledge, A Conservative Introduction to the New Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1938).

beginning of the writing of the New Testament. This interim period between the ascension of Jesus in 30 A.D. and the first missionary journey of Paul (49 or 50 A.D.) is called the Period of the Primitive Church, the church being centralized in Jerusalem. Here is a period in the early church that is all too often overlooked. Yet it is just this period that is so very vital to the development of the New Testament, for on it depends the continuity of the teaching of Jesus with that of the New Testament authors.

The importance which the teaching of the Primitive Church had upon the future development of the church and its teaching as expressed in the New Testament Canon is clearly shown by Floyd V. Filson in his book, One Lord - One Faith, a study which endeavors to determine whether or not the teaching of Jesus was faithfully taught by the Apostolic Church:

In carrying out a careful study of this problem of continuity, the events of the first Christian generation are of chief interest and importance. It is the church of this first generation, extending from the Resurrection, about A.D. 30, to the emergence of Paul as writer and outstanding leader of the Gentile churches, about A.D. 50, which is here meant by the Primitive Church. And it is precisely this period which is decisive in a study of continuity. If the first generation of Christians lacked the ability or the interest necessary to preserve and transmit the spirit and message of Jesus, no later diligence could make up the loss. On the other hand, if the earliest disciples did remember with reasonable accuracy, and transmit with essential fidelity what their Master taught and lived, then the Church's conviction that there was unbroken continuity finds solid ground.⁵

⁵Floyd V. Filson, One Lord - One Faith (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1943), pp. 14 f.

The chief source available for information pertaining to the earliest Christian church is found in the Acts of the Apostles. That primitive period of some fifteen years before Paul began his successful evangelization of the Gentiles and the founding of the Gentile congregations has left us little information regarding itself.⁶ It is only in Acts where Luke records the early sermons and speeches of the primitive Christians that some substantial facts are obtainable regarding their teaching and customs, or as Luke tells us in Acts 2:42, τῆ διδασκῆ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῆ κοινωνίᾳ . Acts contains two sermons of a missionary character addressed to the people of Israel. The first is the sermon of Peter on Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40), the second is a sermon of Peter which was addressed from Solomon's Porch (Acts 3:12-26). The Acts also contains a missionary sermon of Peter to the Gentiles. This is his classic address to Cornelius (Acts 10:36-43). There are also two speeches of Peter in defense before the Sanhedrin after he and John had caused such a stir because they had healed the lame man (Acts 4:8-12; 5:29-32). Several statements of the early church regarding discipline and polity also are found (Acts 5:3 ff.; 6:2-4; 8:20-23; 11:5-17). A prayer of the Primitive Church is

⁶"Because of this lack of documentary evidence, the Primitive Church has often failed to receive the intensive study it deserves. Books dealing with the history of religious development of the New Testament church have usually touched lightly upon the primitive period and hastened on to the surer ground of the career of Paul." Ibid., p. 17.

found in chapter 4:24-30. In a majority of these instances of primitive proclamation we find Peter as the recognized spokesman. This leads us to believe that he was the leader of the Early Church. If, then, we give Peter an earnest ear we may find the ideas that were entertained by the Primitive Church in their teaching, church polity, and above all, their kerygma, or preaching.

Peter's four major sermons will then afford us substantial documentation for determining more particularly what the kerygmatic elements were in his preaching, and in a wider scope what the elements of the primitive kerygma were. His four major sermons were: 1) the Pentecost address; 2) the sermon in Solomon's Porch; 3) his first defense before the Sanhedrin; 4) his sermon to Cornelius. F. F. Bruce in his The Acts of the Apostles makes this very clear:

Most of the speeches in the first half of ac. are reports of the proclaiming of the good news to Jewish audiences, and most of these are put into the mouth of Peter. When we consider that from these speeches we can reconstruct an outline of the Gospel story . . . we have good reason for confidence that here we are face to face with the Christian kerygma in its primitive form. This confidence is supported by the primitive Christology of the speeches and by other marks of early date.⁷

We are not concerned in this study with the credibility⁸

⁷F. F. Bruce, The Acts of the Apostles (London: The Tyn-dale Press, 1951), p. 19.

⁸Filson remarks that Torrey, in his book, The Composition of the Book of Acts, maintains that these speeches in Acts are unreliable since they come from an Aramaic source. Acts 1:1 to 15:35 was written in Aramaic and translated into Greek by the author of the second half of the work. Filson, op. cit., p. 51.

of the speeches in Acts. Conservative scholarship is agreed that they are the speeches of Peter and that their contents are in substance the very words of the apostle. It may be well to quote authorities in this matter. Filson maintains that the Primitive Church accurately transmitted the teaching of Jesus to Paul and stood in direct continuity between Jesus and the second half of the first century:

The student of the Primitive church has in the Acts an important and valuable source of information. When compared with the apocryphal books giving the Acts of one or more apostles, our canonical work stands out as remarkably free from the fantastic, and as trustworthy in essential content. It was written in all probability by Luke, who had excellent opportunities to inquire into the course of events. It reflects a primitive Palestinian situation in its early chapters, and its portrayal of the development of the Gentile church from the little group of disciples at Jerusalem is in essentials credible and convincing. It is a strong witness for continuity of message in the Primitive church.⁹

G. V. Lechler, an older scholar, has this to say:

If we look back at the question in the light of the historical credibility of the Acts, we must confess that the speeches of the apostles are arranged in a way that bears all the features of internal truth in itself, and is a guarantee of their historical genuineness. Not only the entire coloring, not only the standpoint as a whole, not only the Old Testament background, and the method of Scripture proof employed in the speeches, not only the longing of the spirit after the Messianic future, but also individual traits and favourite expressions, for example, respecting the person of Jesus, are of such a nature as to present an internal testimony for their truth, so that a free composition, or more correctly, fiction, from a later standpoint, could not possibly have produced these discourses.¹⁰

⁹Ibid., p. 53.

¹⁰Gotthard Victor Lechler, The Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, tr. by A. J. K. Davidson (Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, 1, 254.

Now we may set out in our quest of sifting out the keryg-
matic elements in Peter's sermons, limiting ourselves to his
four chief speeches.

C. H. Dodd shows that all four speeches treat substan-
tially the same subject matter. Even as to their style of
presentation and phraseology little change or advance can
be detected as we pass from one speech to another. Their
contents supplement one another. If these contents are placed
into divisions or categories, a comprehensive view of Peter's
kerygma can be found. They are:

- a. The age of fulfilment has dawned.
- b. This fulfilment has taken place through the ministry,
death, and resurrection of Jesus.
- c. Jesus has been exalted at the right hand of God.
- d. The Holy Spirit in the church is the sign of Christ's
present power and glory.
- e. The Messianic age will shortly reach its consumma-
tion in the return of Christ.
- f. A general appeal for repentance and the forgiveness
of sins.¹¹

As has been mentioned, most modern scholars follow Dodd essen-
tially, varying only slightly in their presentation of the
primitive kerygma. (Cf. Hunter and Herklotz).

A study of these sermons may show that Dodd has been a
little narrow in his scope. Dodd's six elements are no doubt
essential and most evident in the sermons. Still it can't be
denied that other kerygmatic elements may be found. A recent
article written for the Hibbert Journal by T. F. Glasson

¹¹Dodd, op. cit., pp. 21-24.

entitled, "The Kerygma: Is Our Version Correct?"¹² states that at least twenty kerygmatic elements can be gathered. Dodd eliminates from his outline of the kerygma the testimony of the apostles to the miracles and life of Jesus as a sign of his Messiahship, and also the fact that the Apostles are to witness Jesus as the Messiah. These two elements should be added.

Glasson, on the other hand is in favor of a more narrow categorization of the kerygma. He would restrict it to five elements: 1) the Messiah's coming has been foretold in Scripture; 2) Christ must suffer; 3) He will rise from death; 4) repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name; 5) the apostles are witnesses to this fact. Glasson maintains that only those elements should be included which occur with prominence in each sermon. Therefore he eliminates the sending of the Holy Spirit and the return of Jesus in the "Parousia" from what he considers essential kerygma.¹³ To say only that can be considered vital and essential which occurs in every sermon is arbitrary.

The present study of the kerygma is divided into the following eight elements: 1) The age of Messianic fulfilment

¹²T. F. Glasson, "The Kerygma: Is Our Version Correct?" Hibbert Journal (Jan. 1953), pp. 129 f.

¹³Ibid., p. 129.132. Glasson claims that the last verses of Luke prove that his five elements are the most essential parts of the kerygma, cf. Luke 24:26-28. Yet the admission of other vital elements cannot be denied, otherwise how can their repeated occurrence in Peter's sermons be explained?

has dawned; 2) This fact has been attested by the life and miracles of Jesus; 3) This Messianic fulfilment has been made possible by the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus; 4) Jesus has been exalted at the right hand of the Father; 5) His exaltation has been attested by the sending of the Spirit which serves as a sign of Christ's present honor and glory; 6) The exalted Christ will return again in His "Parousia" as the "Judge of quick and dead"; 7) The call to repentance and the promise of the forgiveness of sins; 8) The apostles are witnesses to these things.

The Age of Messianic Fulfilment has Dawned

Pentecost Sermon:

Acts 2:14-23 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is but the third hour of the day; but this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel: And it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth of 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: Yea and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days Will I pour forth of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above, And signs on the earth beneath; Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the day of the Lord come, That great and notable day: And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know; him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay:

Sermon in the Porch of Solomon

Acts 3:12-15 And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this man? or why fasten ye your eyes on us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made him to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him. But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

Acts 3:17-18 And now, brethren, I know that in ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But the things which God foreshowed by the mouth of the prophets, that his Christ should suffer, he thus fulfilled.

Acts 3:22-25 Moses indeed said, A prophet shall the Lord God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me; to him shall ye hearken in all things whatsoever he shall speak unto you. And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to the prophet, shall be utterly destroyed from among the people. Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days. Ye are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Sermon Before the Sanhedrin

Acts 4:11 He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner.

Sermon to Cornelius

Acts 10:36-37 The word which he sent unto the children of Israel, preaching good tidings of peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all) -- that saying ye yourselves know, which was published throughout all Judaea, beginning from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

Acts 10:42-43 And he charged us to preach unto the people and to testify that this is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead. To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.¹⁴

¹⁴In this paper our quotations are made from the American Standard Version because of its literal accuracy. The Holy Bible. Newly edited by the American Revision Committee. Standard Edition (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1901).

The New Age which has been promised to Israel by the prophets has now finally taken place. This fact rings clearly throughout Peter's four sermons. In the Pentecost sermon Peter states that the disciples were, indeed, not drunken but were filled with the Holy Spirit. This Pentecostal gift of the Spirit was "that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel" (Acts 2:16-17), namely, "in the last days" the Spirit would be poured out upon all mankind. This prophetic promise was now being fulfilled and the New Age had dawned. This New Age had been foretold by the Old Testament Prophets. In all four sermons this note is in evidence. In Solomon's Porch, Peter declares "the things which God foreshowed by the mouth of the prophets . . . he thus fulfilled," (Acts 3:18). A little later in this sermon (vv. 22-23), Peter reminds the people that Moses had promised that God would raise up for them a prophet. This prophet has come. "Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days," (v. 24). Thus Peter here is stating that the age of prophetic promise had finally dawned.

How was this New Age brought to fulfilment? C. H. Dodd sums it up in these words:

It was a standing principle of Rabbinic exegesis of the Old Testament that what the prophets predicted had reference to the "days of the Messiah," that is to say, to the expected time when God, after long centuries of waiting, should visit His people with judgment and blessing, bringing to a climax His dealings with them in history. The apostles, then, declare that the Messianic age has dawned.¹⁵

¹⁵Dodd, op. cit., p. 21.

Peter sees the New Age as being fulfilled in the person of Jesus. "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you . . . him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:22-23) was He whom God had selected to usher in the Promised Age to Israel.

The coming of Jesus into the plane of history was not a haphazard event.¹⁶ It could not have been, for his advent had been determined by God in eternity (Acts 3:18). Jesus' coming was a historic event but in addition it had been carefully ordered in the mind of God. "He was ordained of God," (Acts 10:42) "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23). So then, we have in Jesus' coming a historic event in which the finger of God moved to effect His purposes for mankind's welfare. "The story was a recital of events in history. But they were more than historical events; they were related to history's beginning and its end."¹⁷

This Jesus who by the "counsel and foreknowledge of God" had come to bring about the promised New Age was also the Christ, the promised Messiah of Israel. In Solomon's Porch

¹⁶Filson, *op. cit.*, p. 91, advances this comment on God's use of history to effect His purposes: "But the God of personal experience was also the God of history. He was known, not by withdrawal from the complex course of events, but by understanding the significance of the world process . . . God's true nature was revealed in his concrete and timely action . . . History was the essential vehicle of divine expression."

¹⁷H. G. G. Herklotz, A Fresh Approach to the New Testament (New York Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1950), p. 62.

Peter calls Him the Christ (Acts 3:18) and the Son of God (3:26). Before Cornelius he gave Him the name Christ as a title and then adds that "He is Lord of all" *διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ οὐτόστις ἐστὶν πάντων κύριος* (Acts 10:36). This Jesus, then, was both *Χριστός* and *κύριος*.¹⁸

What is the significance of the titles, Lord and Christ, given to Jesus by Peter? Jesus was His human name given to him by his parents. The Hebrew form of this is the familiar Old Testament name, Joshua. The word "Christ", however, is not a name but a title even though we often take it as a second name. It means "the anointed one" and is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah". Thus when Peter calls Jesus the Messiah he is claiming that this Jesus is He for whom Israel has been waiting for salvation and deliverance from all her enemies.¹⁹ Hunter has this to say regarding the significance of the Messianic titles, Lord and Christ, as applied to Jesus:

¹⁸For other N.T. references to Jesus as the Christ and Lord cf. Matt. 1:23; 23:18-20; Luke 24:44 ff. The genealogies in Matt. and Luke to prove the Davidic descent of Jesus. Matt. emphasizes the fulfilment of O.T. prophecy in the person of Jesus. Mark emphasizes that Jesus is the Son of God. The prologue of John emphasizes that Jesus as the Incarnate Logos is the Messiah (Gen. 1), cf. Dodd, *op. cit.*, p. 70. John 3:16; 17:3; 1:3; 14:6; 9:25; 8:24, 28; 13:19; 10:30; 20:31; Acts 5:42; 17:3; Rom. 10:6-11; 2:16; Col. 2:9; 1:15-20; I Cor. 3:2; I Pet. 4:2, 6 ff.; 2:24; 2:13; 3:15; 3:22; 1:2; 1:21; 2:5; I John 2:22; 5:1. Hebrews as a whole proves the superiority of the New Covenant to the Old. Jesus, the Christ is its High Priest who has secured access to God.

¹⁹Herklotz, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

The designation "Christ" meant that for them he was the divinely commissioned Deliverer whom God would send to redeem Israel - a person of unique and solitary dignity: there might be many prophets; there could be only one Messiah. But they also give him the name "Lord" - a Septuagint title for God - and transferred to Jesus words used in the Old Testament of Jehovah.²⁰

Thus Peter makes it clear that the fundamental fact in his kerygma is the proclamation of Jesus as the Lord and Christ. It is through the active participation of Jesus in history that the Messianic Age has come. This is the cornerstone of Peter's sermons. He who had been promised to Israel by the prophets has come, ordained by God Himself for his Messianic mission. The ancient yearning of the Children of Israel for their Messiah has been fulfilled. This is the joyous message Peter offers the people. Small wonder, then, that it is the cornerstone of all the primitive preaching. Just how vital this belief that Jesus was the Christ for the Primitive Church is made clear by Theodor Zahn:

Doch zeigt sich vielfach noch das lebendige Bewusstsein um die nächste und eigentliche Bedeutung des Namens, dass er den im Alten Testament verheissenen und zunächst dem Volke Israel gesandten Erlöser bezeichnet. Zu den Elementen der Missionspredigt und der innergemeindlichen Lehre auch auf dem Gebiete der Heidenkirche gehörte daher der Nachweis, dass Jesus in den Hauptmomenten seines Lebens und Wirkens dem alttestamentlichen Weissagungsbilde entspreche.²¹

This Messianic Age has reached its full completion in the

²⁰Hunter, The Message of the New Testament, op. cit., p. 40.

²¹Theodor Zahn, Grundriss der Neuentestamentlichen Theologie (Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung D. Werner Scholl, 1928), p. 67.

coming of Jesus as the Messiah. Peter, in quoting the prophet Joel (Acts 2:17) says that they were living in the last days (ἔσχαταις ἡμέραις) since the Spirit has been poured out upon the people. This prophecy of Joel has been effectually fulfilled. And again in his sermon in Solomon's Porch, after he had reminded the people that Moses had promised that God would raise up a prophet from among them, he tells the people the days of prophecy have been fulfilled. "Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after" had spoken of these days (Acts 2:21; καὶ κατήγγειλάν τὰς ἡμέρας ταύτας). Peter makes it very clear that the Messianic Age has reached its full and total realization. The last days have come.

But as surely as the Messianic Age has dawned in its full significance for Israel, yet it will be consummated with the return of Christ in the "Parousia." This is a seeming paradox. Bernhard Weiss has an illuminating comment which resolves the seeming tension in the paradoxical statement that, first, the "ἔσχαται ἡμέραι" has come, and secondly, "πρὶν ἔλθειν ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην καὶ ἐπιφανῆ" (Acts 2:20):

Although the Messiah has not yet brought the completion of salvation, yet there could be no doubt that with his appearance there had commenced the Messianic time to which all the prophets had pointed (III. 24), as the last days (ἔσχαται ἡμέραι, as translation of the Old Testament דְּיָמֵי מָסַח ; cf. Gen. xlix. 1; Mic. iv. 1; Isa. ii. 2), in which all the decrees of Jehovah must be accomplished. In ii. 17 Peter expressly inserts this term. tech. of Messianic prophecy into the prophecy of Joel, whose fulfilment he there points out, in order to show

that with this fulfilment at least the Messianic end of the time had come.²²

This Messianic hope had been deeply rooted in the consciousness of Israel. A vast amount of Old Testament prophecy echoed this consciousness. Peter, realizing this, made much use of quotations from the prophets²³ in his sermons using them as proof for the Messiahship of Jesus. He interprets those psalms and prophets which were popular among the Jews, identifying their fulfilment with Jesus. He employs the same method in interpretation that was used by Jesus, St. Paul, and the author of the book of Hebrews. "He finds numerous types of the profoundest doctrines of the creed,"²⁴ that doctrine which has as its basis the Messiahship of Jesus.²⁵

In addition to the Messianic title of Christ, and the

²²Bernhard Weiss, Biblical Theology of the New Testament, tr. by David Eaton from the Third Revised Edition (Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, n.d.), I, 181.

²³Bruce, op. cit., believes that the O.T. quotations used by Peter and the rest of the N.T. writers were derived from a very early collection of Testimonia, or proof-texts, pp. 18-21.

²⁴G. T. Stokes, "The Acts of the Apostles" in The Expositor's Bible edited by W. Robertson Nicoll (Cincinnati, New York: Jennings & Graham, n.d.), I, 123.

²⁵For a clear study on Peter's method of using the O.T. prophets cf. Crawford Howell Toy, Quotations in the New Testament, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1884). pp. 96-103 for Peter's use of the O.T. and the LXX in his sermons. Cf. also R. V. G. Tasker, The Old Testament in the New Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1947). Note especially the third chapter, "The New Age" pp. 69-90, for Peter's method of quoting the O.T. in his preaching.

identification of Jesus with the Old Testament Jahwe in the title of Lord, Peter adds several other names to Jesus in his address in Solomon's Porch. In explaining how he and John had been able to heal the lame man, Peter tells them that it was not by any inherent power, as disciples of the Lord, but solely because of the power of Jesus whom they had denied before Pilate (Acts 3:13). In denying this Jesus who had the power to heal the lame man they had also denied him who was (3:13) the Servant of God, the Holy One and the Just (3:14), the Prince of Life (3:15). Finally, it was in the name of this man whom the Jews had denied and killed that the lame man had been healed through faith (3:16).

So then this healing of the lame man had served as a sign that Jesus was the author of salvation. This bringer of salvation is the Servant portrayed in the famous passages in Isaiah 42, 44, 52, and 53.²⁶ As God's Servant he must suffer in order that salvation and restoration might be secured for the tribes of Jacob. This restoration could only be obtained by his suffering as the man of sorrows.²⁷ This conception of Peter's

²⁶Cf. Edward Gordon Selwyn, The First Epistle of St. Peter (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1949). "The description of Jesus as God's 'Servant' (*τὸν παῖδα ἀβρόν* in Acts III. 13, 26, *τὸν ἀγιὸν παῖδα σου* in Acts IV. 27 (30) is almost certainly derived from the Servant passages of Deutero-Isaiah, a favorite book with the author of I Peter." Pp. 34 f.

²⁷Cf. Richard Belward Rackham, "The Acts of the Apostles," eighth edition, in the Westminster Commentaries, ed. by Walter Lock (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1919), p. 51.

that Jesus was the Servant plays a vital part in both his sermons and in his Epistle.

It is not strange that this Servant conception - this remarkable blend of strength and submission, achieving victory through apparent defeat - should appeal to Peter. He was himself an ardent, whole-souled man who knew both defeat and victory. Moreover he had hired servants (Mark 1:20), and now for years had been a servant of Christ (cf. Acts 4:29).²⁸

J. H. Farmer in his article on the Gospel of Mark found in The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, sums up Isaiah's teaching on the Servant concept under seven points. The seven points are:

1) He is God's chosen; 2) He has a mission to establish judgment on the earth. . . The word is His instrument and the Lord is in the Word, or rather He Himself is the impersonation of it; 3) His endowment is the Spirit and an invincible faith; 4) there is in Him a marvelous combination of greatness and lowliness; 5) there are inevitable sufferings - bearing the penalty of others' sins; 6) He thus redeems Israel and brings light to the Gentiles; 7) Israel's repentance and restoration precedes the broader blessing.²⁹

In addition to killing the Servant of God the Jews had killed the Holy and Righteous One. Jesus is without the slightest fault in his relation to both God and man. Israel had been unfaithful in her relation to God but this Jesus was faithful in his service to God.

Righteousness signifies the fulfilment of the law of God. Here again Israel, and all men besides, had fallen short:

²⁸J. H. Farmer, "The Gospel of Mark," The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia (Chicago: The Howard - Severance Company, c.1915), III, 1994.

²⁹Ibid.

all were transgressors and unrighteous. But Christ obeyed the will of God to the uttermost and so was the righteous one.³⁰

In killing the Holy and Righteous God, they had also killed the Prince of Life.

The word Prince or Author (1) means he who goes first or Leader; and Jesus was the first to rise . . . (2) the Leader is generally the captain or Prince . . . and Christ by his victory over death was declared to be the Prince of Life, the victorious captain."³¹

Finally, Peter states that the lame man had been healed in the name of Jesus (3:16). This Jesus who was revealed as the Servant of God, as Holy and Righteous, as the Prince of Life has power in His name, the power of healing. It had been in his name that the lame man had received strength and "perfect soundness" and "had been saved." It is only through faith in the name of Jesus that we find healing and "soundness."³²

Thus we see that in all four speeches Peter announces that the Messianic Age of restoration and healing has dawned just as the prophets had promised. The dawning of the New Age comes also with the advent of Jesus on the stage of history for this Jesus is not only man; He is also the Christ, the Lord, the Servant of God, the Holy and Righteous One, the Prince of Life.

Does the rest of the New Testament also contain this

³⁰Rackham, op. cit., p. 51.

³¹Ibid., p. 52.

³²Cf. Brooke Foss Westcott, The Epistles of St. John (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans' Publishing Company, 1953), pp. 243 f. for his comment on the significance of the "Name" as used in the O.T. and the N.T.

kerygmatic element? Peter, in his epistle states in unmistakable terms that the New Age has dawned. "Who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake" (I Pet. 1:20).

In the Gospel account Jesus makes it very clear that the New Age has dawned. This he does through his proclamation of the Basileia, or Kingdom. This Basileia is a present reality (Matt. 12:28 f.; Luke 17:21 f.), it is already among the people, it is also a present blessing (Matt. 23:13; 21:3; 6:33; 11:12; 13:44-46), and finally, the Basileia is present in the person of Jesus (Matt. 11:4-14; 12:28; Luke 4:17-21). Filson shows that the Primitive Church was faithful to this teaching of Jesus:

The developments in the Early Church indicates that it maintained the essential features of the Kingdom concept of Jesus. As movement in living touch with its situation, it naturally developed new emphases and altered its terminology. Nevertheless, it never lost the sense of the unrestricted claim of God on men. It knew that he was the active God of history. It saw his decisive interposition in the coming and work of Jesus. It sensed the continuance of that divine action in its own expanding life and experience.³³

Paul also makes frequent mention of the fact that he preached Christ whose coming had been foretold by the prophets (Acts 17: 1-4). Luke also gives us insights into the method of Paul's preaching to the Jews, "for he powerfully confuted the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was

³³Filson, op. cit., p. 106.

the Christ" (Acts 18:28). Paul says that he preached nothing but the tradition he received regarding the Christ, whose servant he was (Rom. 1:1-4; I Cor. 15:3; II Cor. 5:19; I Cor. 3:11).

Hebrews is especially rich in references to Jesus Christ as the bringer of the Promised Age. This book is expressly written to prove the superiority of the New Covenant to the Old. Christ is the High Priest who instituted this New Covenant, and thus secured access to God. This New Covenant was promised of old by the prophets and is fulfilled in the New Age which has crashed through history in the coming of Christ in the flesh (Heb. 1:1-2). The whole book of Hebrews may well be read in this light, namely, the superiority of the New Covenant in Jesus Christ in contrast with the Old Covenant of Moses.

The fact that the New Age has come can be traced throughout the New Testament. By the historic act of the Incarnation in the person of Jesus the New Age has culminated. Herklotz sums up the significance of this fact for Christian faith:

It is the Christians' claim that what man could not do, God has done; that God has once for all acted in a special series of events in history in such a way as to show men forever what he is like, and to create for all men the possibility of immediate and developing fellowship with him.³⁴

³⁴Herklotz, op. cit., p. 69.

The Messianic Fact has been Attested by the Life
and Miracles of Jesus

The second element of the Primitive Kerygma in Peter's sermons is a special emphasis on the ministry and miracles of Jesus Christ. They serve as a sign that the Age of Fulfilment has dawned.

Reading through Peter's sermons we find this kerygmatic element as follows:

Pentecost Sermon

Acts 2:22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God unto you by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, even as ye yourselves know;

Sermon to Cornelius

Acts 10:38 Even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree.

Making the teaching and miracles of Jesus a special major emphasis in the kerygma may be challenged, as it has been by Dodd.³⁵ Dodd places this element alongside and as part of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Glasson also does not include it since, according to his rule, only that element of the ker-
ygma can be considered a major emphasis which occurs in every sermon of Peter.³⁶

³⁵Dodd, op. cit., pp. 21 f.

³⁶Glasson, op. cit., pp. 129 f.

The teaching and miracles are included in this study because of the full treatment they receive in the sermon to Cornelius. In this speech the other elements of the Petrine kerygma are treated rather briefly while the miracles of the Lord have an essential part. Dodd also makes this point:

Such references [to the teaching and miracles] are only slight in the first four speeches of Peter But the case is different in the speech attributed to Peter in Acts x. 34-43. The principal elements of the kerygma can be traced in this speech--the fulfilment of prophecy, the death and resurrection of Christ, His second advent, and the offer of forgiveness. But all is given with extreme brevity, except the section dealing with the historic facts concerning Jesus. They are here treated in fairly full outline.³⁷

It is agreed that Peter does not make as much of the miracles as of the other kerygmatic elements. However, they do hold a place of relative importance. The burden of his preaching is not to substantiate the Messianic claim with the miraculous. He had a more powerful argument in reserve. A clear reason for this hurried mention of the miracles in the kerygma is hinted at in the sermons. We hear Peter say (Acts 2:22) that God has wrought miracles among them as they themselves knew. G. T. Stokes comments:

St. Peter taught boldly the miraculous element of Christ's life, describing Him as "a man approved of God by mighty works and wonders and signs which God did by Him." Yet he did not dwell as much as we might have expected upon the miraculous side of Christ's ministry. In fact, the earliest heralds of the Cross did not make as much use of the argument from miracles as we might have expected them.

³⁷Dodd, op. cit., p. 27.

to have done. And that for a very simple reason. The inhabitants of the East were so accustomed to the practices of magic that they simply classed the Christian missionaries with magicians. The Jewish explanation of the miracles of our Lord is of this description. The Talmudists do not deny that He worked miracles, but assert that He achieved them by a special use of the Tetragrammaton, or the sacred name of Jehovah, which was known only to himself. The sacred writers and preachers refer, therefore, again and again to the miracles of our Savior, as St. Peter does in the second chapter, as well-known and admitted facts, whatever explanation may be offered of them, and then turn to other aspects of the question.³⁸

Peter uses three words to describe the miracles. "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles (*δυνάμει*) and wonders (*τέρασ*) and signs (*σημείois*)." These miracles God performed among the people of Israel by Jesus of Nazareth who came with God's approval (Acts 2:22).³⁹ Peter also tells Cornelius that Jesus of Nazareth had been anointed with the Spirit and power: that he "went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil" (Acts 10:38). Even though He is ascended, Peter tells the assembly gathered in Solomon's Porch, Jesus still is working miracles. It was he who had healed the lame man by the instrumentality of Peter and John (Acts 3:16). That miracle had not been

³⁸Stokes, op. cit., pp. 121 f.

³⁹Horatio B. Hackett, A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publishing Society, 1882) p. 49 commenting on the significance of *δυνάμεις*, *τέρας* and *σημείον*. "Miracles and wonders and signs form obviously an intensive expression but they are not synonymous with each other. Miracles are called powers because they are wrought by divine power; prodigies, because they appear inexplicable to men; and σημεία (signs) because they attest the character or claims of those who perform them."

wrought by any inherent power of their own or won by their own merits and piety; it had been wrought by God to the glory of Jesus of Nazareth, in whose name the lame man had been healed.

In the Gospels, Jesus uses his miracles as a testimony that the Basileia has come. Jesus goes about in Galilee "teaching" and "healing" (Matt. 4:23 f.). While Jesus teaches he also performs miracles. When the Jews see his miracles they believe in his name (John 2:23). Jesus says that he has a greater witness to his Messiahship than the fact that John has come "to prepare his path," namely, the works which he has done. They bear witness to the fact that the Father has sent him (John 5:36). Jesus also speaks woe upon all who refuse to believe him in spite of the mighty works he had performed. It will be more tolerable for Sodom on the day of judgment, which did not have the great works of Jesus as a witness, than to that city (Chorazin and Bethsaida) which had the miracles of Jesus as an effective witness to his Messiahship and still refused to believe (Matt. 11:21-24).

Just as Peter does not emphasize the miracles for apologetic uses, so Jesus performed miracles only upon request or petition, never to demands. He does not legitimize his witness on the fact that he is a wonder-worker. When the Jews ask him for a sign (*τί σημεῖον δεικνύεις ἡμῖν*) he refuses them (John 2:18; cf. also Matt. 12:38 f.). The miracle serves as a semeion to the proclamation of Jesus that in him the Kingdom has come; he is the Messiah. His miracles are not needed as proof of this fact. They are wrought as a testimony (semeion)

that God has established his sole dominion in Christ Jesus, the Messiah (cf. John 6:26; Matt. 12:28). The dominion of the devil has been broken, as the miracles of Jesus suggest (cf. Luke 13:11-16; 10:18; Matt. 8:16 f.).

Does Paul also make use of the miracles of Jesus as a primary element in his kerygma? Dodd has this to say:

There is, indeed, very little in the Jerusalem kerygma which does not appear, substantially in Paul. But there is one important element which at first sight at least is absent from his preaching, so far as we can recover it from the epistles, namely, the explicit reference to the ministry of Jesus, His miracles (Acts ii. 22) and teaching (Acts iii. 22).⁴⁰

Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, tells them that when he first came to them he preached nothing but what he had received as tradition. "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received" (I Cor. 15:3). Since Paul was in intimate contact with the primitive congregation at Jerusalem, he must have received the kerygma from such men as Peter and James. Part of the Jerusalem kerygma was, as we have seen, a preaching of the miracles of Jesus. So it is that although Paul lays very small stress on this fact in his preaching, it can never be said he did not use it. The burden of his message was the atonement won by Christ for the people. In a message of this kind, miracles would naturally be of secondary importance. Remembering also that Paul was a missionary to the Hellenic world where the miraculous element would be far more

⁴⁰Dodd, op. cit., p. 27.

suspect then in the mystically inclined East, Paul accomodates his preaching to the specific needs of the Greek. C. H. Dodd comments on the lack of the miraculous element in Paul's preaching:

In the preaching attested by Paul, although it was similarly addressed to the wider public, there does not seem to be any such comprehensive summary of the facts of the ministry of Jesus, as distinct from the facts of His death and resurrection. It would, however, be rash to argue from silence that Paul completely ignored the life of Jesus in his preaching; for, as we have seen, that preaching is represented only fragmentarily, and as it were accidentally, in the epistles. That he was aware of the historical life of Jesus, and cited His sayings as authoritative, need not be shown over again. It may be, for all we know, that the brief recital of historical facts in I Cor. xv. 1 sqq. is only the conclusion of a general summary which may have included some reference to the ministry. But this remains uncertain.⁴¹

This Messianic Fulfilment has been Made Possible by the Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus

The New Age which Peter has announced as having dawned was made possible by the coming of Jesus, the Christ, the Servant of God. His coming was made effectual first, by his life of ministry and miracles, and, secondly and foremost, by his death and resurrection.

Peter devotes a considerable portion of his sermon to this fact. Gathering the material in the four sermons of Peter under that heading it would be:

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 28 f. A useful summary of Paul's references to the life and works of Jesus in the days of his flesh is given by Theo. Zahn in his Einleitung in das Neue Testament, 3. Aufl., Zweiter Band (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1907) 171-174.

Pentecost Sermon

Acts 2:23-32 Him, being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay: whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David saith concerning him, I beheld the Lord always before my face; For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul unto Hades, Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption. Thou madest known unto me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of gladness with thy countenance. Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Sermon in the Porch of Solomon

Acts 3:13-15 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him. But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

Sermon Before the Council

Acts 4:10 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in him doth this man stand here before you whole.

Sermon to Cornelius

Acts 10:39-40 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree. Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be manifest.

The fact of Jesus' death rings clearly throughout these four sermons. On Pentecost Peter states that Jesus was taken

by evil hands, crucified, and slain (διὰ χειρὸς ἀνόμων προσπήξαντες ἀνείλατε Acts 2:24). Again, in Solomon's Porch he asserts that Jesus was "delivered up, and denied" (παρεδώκατε καὶ ἠενησασθε) before Pilate (Acts 3:13-15). Before the council and again to Cornelius he makes it clear that he had been "crucified" (Acts 4:10) and that he was slain and hanged on a tree (Acts 10:39-40).

The responsibility for the crucifixion is placed in no uncertain terms upon the Jewish nation. It was they who were the instruments causing the death of Christ. "Ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay" (ἀνείλατε Acts 2:23). "But ye denied the Holy and Righteous One" (παρεδώκατε etc., Acts 3:14), "and asked for a murderer to be granted unto you." "Ye crucified him" (ἡμεῖς ἔσταυρώσατε Acts 4:10). Peter expressly tells Cornelius that the Jews were responsible for the death of Christ. "And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the country of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom also they slew, hanging him on a tree (ὄν καὶ ἀνείλαν κρεμάσαντες Acts 10:39).

That the Christ of the Jews would suffer and die a humiliating death by crucifixion was an absolute scandal for a pious Jew. His Messianic idea centered in the coming of the Christ who would remove the bondage and foreign yoke from off their necks. The Messianic Kingdom, the New Age, would be, essentially, the restoration of Israel to the grandeur which she inherited under the rulerships of David and Solomon. But now this crucified Jesus claimed to be the Messiah, the

Deliverer of Israel from her bondage. A Messiah humiliatingly crucified at the hands of the Romans, from whose very bondage this Messiah was to have delivered Israel, was nothing but hollow mockery for the Jew. It is this reaction to the death of Jesus that Peter attacks by telling the Jews that his death was pre-ordained and pre-determined by God.

The death of Jesus is mentioned as a well-known fact still fresh in the memory of all, but the offense to which it necessarily gave rise is removed by the notification that it was willed and pre-ordained by God, and had been foretold by the prophets.⁴²

Peter reminds the scandalized Jew that he was "delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God" (Acts 2:23; cf. Acts 3:18; 4:28). The death of Christ came about solely because it had been so willed by God.

Peter knows that the Jews stumble at the offense of the cross, so he gives them a threefold answer in his Pentecost sermon as to the why and wherefore of the scandal of the cross. First, his death, as already mentioned, is brought about by "the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Secondly, even though his death was pre-ordained by God, the Jews were the human agents of his death. By crucifying Jesus, the Jews were morally responsible for his death. And finally, death was not the end of this Christ for God raised him from the dead and thus vindicated the claim that Jesus was the promised Messiah of Israel (Acts 2:22-25).⁴³

⁴²Lechler, op. cit., p. 271.

⁴³Rackham, op. cit., pp. 28 f.

Thus Peter sees the scandal in the death of Jesus as removed in the resurrection of Jesus. The power of death has been overcome in the Messianic victory over death in the resurrection of Christ. In the Pentecost sermon Peter announced that God raised up Jesus and "loosed the pangs of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (*οὐκ ἔστι δυνατόν κρατεῖσθαι αὐτὸν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ* Acts 2:24). Then he proceeds to quote David's prophecy (Ps. 16:8-11) regarding the resurrection of the Messiah thanking God that He raised his Son from the dead and did not leave him in the realm of the dead or permit his flesh to see corruption (*ὅτι οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψυχάν μου εἰς ᾄδην οὐδὲ δώσεις τὸν ὄσιόν σου ἰδεῖν διαφθοράν*). David had received this promise from God that from "the fruit of his loins according to the flesh" God would raise up David's heir, the Promised Messiah, from the dead. This has been fulfilled, Peter says, in the death and subsequent resurrection of Jesus.

Throughout his sermons Peter's chief emphasis is on the vital importance of the resurrection. The centrality of the resurrection appears in Primitive preaching as the fundamental fact, the Alpha and Omega of Apostolic announcement Israel crucified Him, God exalted Him to be King and Lord in the kingdom of God, to be the Messiah.⁴⁴ So it is seen that the resurrection of Jesus is the central fact in the Primitive

⁴⁴Lechler, op. cit., pp. 267 f.

Kerygma. "The apostles preach the resurrection of Jesus as something new, laying stress on it as the most important fact, an act of purely divine agency."⁴⁵

Strange as it may seem, at first glance, we nowhere find a definite statement of the ascension of Jesus in Peter's sermons. The Ascension is however, implied throughout and taken for granted. Peter's chief emphasis is upon the fact of the resurrection. G. T. Stokes gives an explanation as to why Peter may have omitted an explicit reference to the ascension:

The ascension of the Lord is a topic whereon familiarity has worked its usual results; it has lost for most minds the sharpness of its outline and the profundity of its teaching because universally it is accepted by Christians; and yet no doctrine raises deeper questions, or will yield more profitable and far-reaching lessons. First, then, we may note the place this doctrine holds in apostolic teaching. Taking the records of that teaching contained in the Acts and the Epistles, we find that it occupies a real substantial position. The ascension is there referred to, hinted at, taken as granted, pre-supposed, but it is not obtruded nor dwelt upon overmuch. The resurrection of Christ was the great central point of apostolic testimony; the ascension of Christ was simply a portion of that fundamental doctrine, and a natural deduction from it. If Christ had been raised from the dead and had thus become the firstfruits of the grave, it required but little additional exercise of faith to believe that He had passed into the unseen and immediate presence of Deity where the perfected soul finds its complete satisfaction. In fact, the doctrine of the resurrection apart from the doctrine of the ascension would have been a mutilated fragment, for the natural question would arise, not for one age but for every age, If Jesus of Nazareth has risen from the dead, where is He? Produce your risen Master, and we will believe in Him, would be the triumphant taunt to which Christians would be ever exposed. But then when we closely examine the teaching of the apostles, we shall find that the doctrine of the ascen-

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 272.

sion was just as really bound up with all their preaching and exhortations as the doctrine of the resurrection; the whole Christian idea as conceived by them just as necessarily involved the doctrine of the ascension as it did that of the resurrection. St. Peter's conception of Christianity, for instance, involved the ascension. Whether in his speech at the election of Matthias, or in his sermon on the day of Pentecost, or in his address in Solomon's Porch after the healing of the crippled beggar, his teaching ever presupposes and involves the ascension. He takes the doctrine and the fact for granted. Jesus is with him the Being "whom the heavens must receive until the times of restoration of all things."⁴⁶

In the Gospels Jesus makes frequent references to his impending death and resurrection. Matthew has a classic passage in which Jesus gives definite notice that he would soon die. "From that time began Jesus to show unto his disciples, that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up" (Matt. 16:21 f.). Jesus tells the disciples of John that the bridegroom will be taken away (Matt. 9:5). And again, just as Jonah was for three days and three nights in the belly of a whale so he would be three days and nights in the heart of the earth (Matt. 12:40). While Jesus and his disciples were in Galilee he told them that "the Son of man shall be delivered up into the hands of men; and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised up" (Matt. 17:22 f.). These examples of Jesus' revelation of his coming death and subsequent resurrection could be multiplied. (Cf. John 10:11 f.; 15:17 f.; 2:19; Luke 12:50; Matt. 23:34-39).

⁴⁶Stokes, op. cit., pp. 43 f.

In his first epistle Peter shows clearly that the salvation of Israel was achieved by virtue of the death and resurrection of Jesus. The Jews were not redeemed with perishable things, such as silver and gold, but "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." The coming of this lamb, Christ, was determined "and foreordained" in eternity and now this New Age, "these last times," has arrived as witnessed to by the shed blood of Christ (I Pet. 1:18-20). The elect of God have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of the Father. Furthermore, the elect are sanctified by the Spirit "unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:2). Christ's suffering for us should be an example for all (I Pet. 2:21; 3:18-22). To "God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" is due praise and blessing because he has given us again "a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Pet. 1:3; cf. 1:21; 3:18-22). So we can see that also in Peter's epistle the death and resurrection of Jesus is central in his kerygma.

Paul also gives overwhelming attestation to the centrality of the death of Christ in his preaching. He is determined not to know anything among the Corinthians "save Jesus Christ and him crucified." Thus it was that in his preaching (kerygma) he refused to beguile men with "man's wisdom" but preached "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (I Cor. 2:2-6). In the locus classicus of Paul's kerygma, I Cor. 15, he elaborately outlines the importance of the resurrection of Christ for Christian certainty of faith. "If we have only

hoped in Christ in this life, we are of all men most pitiable," but thanks to God, "we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ" (I Cor. 15:14-19. Cf. Rom. 10:9; Gal. 1:3 f.; 3:13; I Cor. 1:23. "We preach Christ crucified" II Cor. 4:4; Rom. 1:4; 8:34).

The author of Hebrews shows the superiority of the New Covenant over against the Old Covenant of law and sacrifices because of the shed blood of Christ and his resurrection. His blood was the seal of the New Covenant. "Now the God of peace who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus" (Heb. 13:20. And again, Jesus is the source of our faith because he endured the cross and by his resurrection he is exalted at the throne of God. "Looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Heb. 12:2).

Thus we see that the Primitive Church held the belief in the death and resurrection of Jesus in common with the teaching of Jesus, the teaching of Paul, and the later church. In the cross and open tomb they saw that God was in a wondrous way working out their salvation.⁴⁷

Jesus has been Exalted at the Right Hand of the Father

Peter teaches that since Jesus has vanquished death in

⁴⁷Filson, op. cit., pp. 173 f.

his resurrection from the dead he has been exalted at the right hand of God, and now exalted at God's right hand, he has become the Messianic head (cornerstone) of the New Israel. This is the fourth prominent kerygmatic element of Peter's missionary sermons in Acts.

Pentecost Sermon

Acts 2:33-36 Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear. For David ascended not into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet. Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.

Sermon in the Porch of Solomon

Acts 3:13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied before the face of Pilate, when he had determined to release him.

Sermon Before the Counsel

Acts 4:10-12 Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even in him doth this man stand here before you whole. He is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner. And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved.

Sermon to Cornelius

Acts 10:40-41 Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

This fact of the exaltation of Jesus occurs in each of the four sermons under consideration. Thus it holds an impor-

tant place in his kerygma. To the gathered throng on Pentecost Peter states that since death has not been able to hold Jesus in its grasp he has been exalted at God's right hand (*τῇ δεξιᾷ οὐ τοῦ θεοῦ ὑψωθεὶς* Acts 2:33). This has come about just as David prophesied in Ps. 110:1. The Lord of all creation had told David's Lord (Christ) that he would sit upon his right hand and subdue all his enemies (*εἶπεν κύριος τῷ κυρίῳ μου κάθου ἐκ δεξιῶν μου, ἕως ἂν θῶ τοὺς ἐχθρούς σου ὑποπόδιον τῶν ποδῶν σου* Acts 2:35). God has, indeed, glorified his Son Jesus (*ἐδόξασεν τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ* Acts 3:13). He whom the Jews rejected as Messiah by condemning him as a deceiver, God has made the "head of the corner" (Acts 4:11). Peter makes it clear that Jesus has vindicated his Messiahship by virtue of his resurrection and his subsequent glorification and exaltation at the right hand of God.

It is to be noted that the exaltation was consummated not by the power inherent in Jesus himself. God has made him both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Servant Jesus" (Acts 3:13). Thus the Father, in bringing about the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, gives notice that this Jesus is the Christ. Thus the dignity of Jesus as the Messiah is proven.

The exaltation takes place at the right hand of God. What is the significance of the phrase "right hand of God?" H. Hackett makes this statement:

In the New Testament⁴⁸, when Christ is represented as sitting at the right hand of Divine Majesty (Heb. 1:13), or at the right hand of God (Acts 2:33 and Heb. 10:12), or at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. 12:2), participation in supreme dominion is most clearly meant.⁴⁹

Thus Jesus as the exalted Messiah has the power of dealing with the children of the New Age since he has "supreme dominion" over them.

In the Pentecost sermon Peter had quoted the prophecy of David which foretold that his greater seed (Jesus) would, indeed, die. But dying his body would not be left in Hades, neither would his flesh decay, but God would raise him from the dead. Jesus, then, had arisen; but how would Peter explain the fact that Jesus was no longer bodily present? He shows the Jews that his resurrection was the logical step in his progression to exaltation at his Father's "right hand." He shows this by again quoting from a psalm of David (Ps. 110).⁵⁰ "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet" (Acts 2:34-35). Jesus, in rising from death, was not abandoned in Hades but was exalted

⁴⁸Cf. I Pet. 3:22; Rom. 8:34; Mark 16:19; Phil. 2:6-11; Eph. 1:20-23.

⁴⁹Hackett, op. cit., p. 52.

⁵⁰Rackham, op. cit., p. 30: "The resurrection was only the first step: For as God with a mighty hand had brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea and 'exalted them out of Egypt' (XIII 17), so with the same right hand or almighty power had he now exalted Jesus to heaven." Rackham, ibid., also maintains that Peter in quoting Ps. 110 is inferring the ascension, although it isn't explicitly mentioned. It is a logical part of the exaltation.

in glory to the right hand of the Father. Since Jesus has been exalted at God's right hand it also follows that he is "both Lord and Christ" and should be recognized as such by Israel.

Rackham sums up this fact:

From this it appears that the Messiah is also Lord. The exaltation into heaven and the anointing with the spirit would of themselves have demonstrated his lordship or sovereignty over the human race (x. 36), and the house of Israel, the peculiar household or family of God, may fearlessly recognize this crucified Jesus not only as the Christ but as their Lord and Master.⁵¹

Similarly, in his address before the Sanhedrin Peter maintains that the lame man was not healed by any power inherent in himself or John, but the lame man "stood before them whole" in the name of the crucified Christ of Nazareth. This crucified Christ, rejected by the Jews is now "the head of the corner" (Ps. 118); he is the exalted Messiah. Rackham gives a comprehensive and significant commentary upon Peter's use of Ps. 118, (Acts 4:10-12). David's prophecy has found a full completion in Jesus as the exalted Christ.

God raised him from the dead, and by that proved him to be the Stone - both (a) foundation-stone and (b) corner-stone - of God's temple. The Jews were familiar with the idea of Israel as 'the house of God'; they called themselves 'the Temple of the Lord.' The rulers of their polity would be the builders; but the chief stone was the Messiah or Christ. 'The stone had been laid (a) for a foundation in Zion by God, but the rulers had set it at naught, and cast it out.' God however had lifted it up from the rubbish heap where it had been cast, that is from the grave, and made it (b) the head of the corner. The corner is the critical part of the building - (1) structurally, because here the side walls meet; and (2) in warfare, because it is the vantage point of defense,

⁵¹Rackham, op. cit., p. 30.

and here the battlements often rise into a tower. Strength then should be the mark of the corner, and this is typified most of all in the head of the corner, or the stone or tower which crowns the battlements. We can understand then the metaphorical use of 'corner' for 'prince' in the O.T. and now Jesus is made head of the corner (1) as the foundation-stone his Messiahship had been lying hid in God's foreknowledge, but now it had been made manifest to the world; it was raised from the lowest layer to the top. (2) As corner-stone he binds the two walls of Jews and Gentiles into the one building of the Christian church. (3) As corner tower or battlement he is a defense, and this building is the house of salvation. This is evident from Ps. CXVIII which St. Peter is quoting, where the preceding words declare that 'the Lord became my salvation.' This interpretation of the psalm is sanctioned by the Lord's own use of it. In this corner-stone, then, is true safety or the salvation to be found; and the variety of terms employed in this passage shows its completeness - to make strong and give perfect wholeness, save and make healthy, cure, heal.⁵²

The whole purpose of Peter's defense is to show that this healing has been done solely in the name of the crucified and exalted Christ.

Summing up then Peter's teaching of the exaltation of Jesus, he shows that God has given him the divine stamp of approval as the Messiah. Passing, by virtue of the resurrection, to the right hand of God he has come to partake of his full power in the Messianic kingdom. Let Israel then faithfully accept the crucified Jesus as Lord and Christ, the fulfilment of the Messianic hope, as he who has been promised to Israel as her salvation and healing.⁵³

Jesus speaks of his exaltation as a means by which he will

⁵²Rackham, op. cit., pp. 58 f.

⁵³Cr. Weiss, op. cit., pp. 179 f.

continue his activity among men after his death. Jesus reminds the disciples that his death didn't mean the end of his communion with them, but it was rather the sign that he as the ascended and exalted Lord would intensify his activity among them. He shows this by saying his death is not a real separation but rather a real victory (cf. John 12:31; 13:31 f.; 14:30; 16:11; 17:4; Luke 22:53). This victory over death was the token that he, as the exalted one, would continue to rule. This rule will be mediated by the Comforter, (cf. John 16:7) while he dwells in exaltation with the Father. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John 14:2; cf. also John 10:15-17; 12:20-24).

Also in his epistles, Peter mentions the kerygmatic fact of Christ's exaltation. Among the most explicit passages is I Pet. 3:22. Here Peter states that Jesus is (1) gone to heaven and (2) is at the right hand of God; (3) He has subjected all things under him.

Paul also gives added attestation to the fact of the exaltation of Christ. Just as Peter had quoted Ps. 110:1 in his Pentecostal sermon, so Paul also says of Christ that "he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet" (I Cor. 15:25). The purpose and end of the death, resurrection, and revivification of Jesus was that he might be attested as the Lord, the Christ and Messiah, of the dead and the living (Rom. 14:9).

Paul adds a note to his kerygma, in connection with the exaltation, not found in Peter's sermons in Acts, namely that Jesus at the right hand of God makes intercession for us. "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34).

The book of Hebrews is exceedingly rich in direct references to the exaltation. It also abounds in numerous allusions to that fact. Since Jesus, the Christ has instituted the new eternal covenant, sealing it with his own blood, he has entered into his glory at the right hand of God. His exaltation attests that also our redemption has been secured with him in the new covenant. "When he had by himself purged our sins, he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high (Heb. 1:3), and again, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12). Just as Paul had stated (Rom. 8:34) that Christ intercedes for us in his exalted state, just so Hebrews says that he entered "into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24). These examples of the exaltation of Jesus in the book of Hebrews could be multiplied. (Cf. Heb. 9:12; 12:2; 1:13).

The Holy Spirit is the Sign of Christ's Present Power and Glory

The fifth kerygmatic element in Peter's preaching is the announcement that the Spirit has entered into the hearts of men. Christ, in his exaltation at the right hand of the Father, has not left himself without witness among men. He sends the Holy

Spirit upon the church. The reality of the Spirit dwelling in the hearts of men serves as a sign of Christ's present power and glory while sitting at the right hand of the Father.

The whole Pentecost sermon is a defense of Peter in explanation of the strange phenomena of the descent of the Spirit and the speaking with tongues. All of the kerygmatic elements are presented to show the people that the sending of the Spirit is also of God. The definite reference to the Spirit in the Pentecost sermon follows:

Pentecost Sermon

Acts 2:14-21 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and spake forth unto them, saying, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and give ear unto my words. For these are not drunken, as ye suppose; seeing it is but the third hour of the day; but this is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel: And it shall be in the last days, saith God, I will pour forth of 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: Yea and on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days Will I pour forth of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in the heaven above, And signs on the earth beneath; Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the day of the Lord come, That great and notable day: And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Acts 2:33 Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear.

The Pentecost miracle is part of the mission of Jesus; another manifestation that he was, indeed, the Messiah. This sending of the Spirit had also been promised by the Father.

"Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having

received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, (ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου λαβών he hath poured forth this, which ye see and hear" (Acts 2:33). This strange miracle is, then, in fulfilment of a promise. What the Jews are seeing and hearing is a manifestation of this promised Spirit. The gift of tongues is a miracle, but it is also a spiritual gift, the gift of the indwelling Spirit in the hearts of men. Tasker explains the Pentecost miracle as:

. . . a miracle of hearing and a miracle of speech. The significance of the gift, thus interpreted, is that it demonstrates the unifying power of the Spirit of Christ, and the catholicity of the Christian church. The punishment for man's pride in erecting the tower of Babel consisted in the confusing of his speech and the rise of those numerous languages which have had such a disintegrating effect upon human life. This punishment is, on the view of the writer of the Acts, reversed at Pentecost by the "common" language of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁴

Before his ascension Jesus had commanded his disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the Spirit should descend upon them. The ascension left the church bereft of the presence of her Master. But in her naivete⁵⁵ she failed to realize the full

⁵⁴Tasker, op. cit., p. 73.

⁵⁵Stokes, op. cit., makes the point that also secular history bore witness to the tremendous growth of the church after the ascension, cf. pp. 129 f. "Secular history tells us, as well as the sacred narrative, that Christianity rose again from what seemed its grave at the very spot where, and at the very moment, when the crucifixion had apparently extinguished it forever. The evidence of the historian Tacitus is conclusive upon this point . . . His testimony, written at a period when, as some maintain, neither the Acts of the Apostles nor the Gospels of the New Testament were in existence, exactly tallies with the account given by our sacred books. In his Annals, book xv., chap. 44, he writes concerning Christianity: "Christus, from whom the named Christian has its

meaning of Christ's ascension. The ascension was the sign that the Spirit would descend and the church would receive the full measure of the blessings of the New Age. "The departure of Christ into the true Holy of Holies opened the channel of communication between the eternal Father and the waiting church."⁵⁶

. . . Not only was the ascension a natural and fitting termination to the activities of the eternal Son manifest in the flesh, it was a necessary completion and finish. "It is expedient," said Christ Himself, "that I go away; for if I go not away the Comforter will not come to you." For some reason secret from us, but hidden in the awful depths of that Being who is the beginning and the end, the source and condition of all created existence, the return of Christ to the bosom of the Father was absolutely necessary before the outpouring of the Divine Spirit of Life and Love could take place.⁵⁷

Peter represents the ascension as a real and actual passing of the risen Christ out of the realm of the seen and natural into the realm of the unseen and supernatural. Here at his Father's right hand, as the exalted Messiah, he has secured for us access to the Father. This access has been made a reality with the outpouring of the Holy Ghost.

Peter had shown that Jesus had himself predicted the

origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilate, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out in Judaea." So we see that pagan history mentions that Christianity had been stamped out, and then suddenly came to the fore again. How can this be explained? The outpouring of the Spirit is an only plausible answer.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 128.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 49.

descent of the Spirit upon his church. So as to further strengthen his argument to the Jews in explaining that the disciples were not drunken but had the gift of the Spirit, he shows that this incident had been promised by the Old Testament prophets. This is documented from Joel 2:28-32 (Acts 2:17-21). Joel prophesied that in the last days the Spirit would be poured upon all flesh and they would prophesy: sons, daughters, young men, old men, servants and handmaidens. In short, the Spirit would descend on all mankind (*ἐκχεῖ ἅπασαν τὴν σὰρκα καὶ προφητεύσουσιν* Acts 2:17).

Toy, in his book which analyzes the use of Old Testament quotations by the writers of the New Testament, shows that Peter maintained the Pentecost miracle as God's way of showing that the New Age was in process. Israel had been saved, and was being saved as witnessed to by the Spirit in their midst. This was not, however, a victory over Israel's political enemies, but a victory in the spiritual sphere. The exalted Messiah had graciously interposed in history by sending the Spirit and enlightening the spiritual lives of the people through this same Spirit. Peter shows that Joel had already prophesied this event. Joel saw it as a salvation from national ruin; Israel as a whole will come to know God and thus find her salvation in him. Peter declared that this prophecy of Joel has been fulfilled by the diffusion of the Spirit upon all flesh.⁵⁸

⁵⁸Toy, op. cit., p. 98.

Peter, in quoting Joel, says that they were witnessing the "last days." His Jewish audience naturally could not understand why or how this eschatological event for which they as a nation had waited for so long took place under these unusual circumstances. It was inconceivable that the New Age, the "last days," should dawn with such manifestations as speaking with tongues and cloven tongues of fire. Therefore they explained this Pentecost miracle in a simple way by saying that the disciples were drunken. In the second part of his Pentecostal address Peter shows the Jews that these were, indeed, the "last days," and Israel's yearning for a realization of those eschatological times was actually being fulfilled before their very eyes.

In the second part of the speech an answer is given to the question why this eschatological phenomenon, this phenomenon of the "last days," took place at this particular moment in history; and the answer given is that the Spirit is the gift of Jesus of Nazareth, who in spite of the signs and wonders that He had wrought by God's power when on earth had nevertheless been destroyed by the Jews, but who had been raised up by God on the third day, it being impossible that he should be held by the bonds of death. The resurrection, of which this gift of the Spirit was the sequel, is all part of the determinate counsel of God as set forth in the Davidic psalm, which says, "Thou shalt not leave my soul in Hades, nor suffer my holy one to see corruption." The words could not refer to David himself for he did see corruption, but point forward to the coming of Him, who though the Son of David, was also Son of God. It was His Spirit which had been poured out upon His followers.⁵⁹

What then is the meaning of the Pentecost miracle? What

⁵⁹Tasker, op. cit., p. 74.

effect did this outpouring of the Spirit mean for the future of the church? What new change would come upon the church? What new change would come upon the church now that the Spirit was dwelling in her midst? To quote Rackham:

The change lies in the relation of the Holy Spirit to the human spirit. This relation was made quite new. Previously the Holy Spirit had acted on men from without, like an external force; as the prophet Ezekiel describes it, 'the hand of the Lord was upon me.' But now the Holy Spirit acts from within. He is in man (John xiv 17). Before Pentecost his manifestations had been transient and exceptional: now his presence in man's heart is an 'abiding' one and regular. This change had become possible because the Holy Spirit is 'the spirit of Jesus.' It was the union of the divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ which first made it possible for the divine Spirit to dwell in a human personality. When the Word was made flesh, the Holy Ghost became the Spirit of consummated humanity, and through the channel of that humanity he could be poured out upon the brethren of Jesus.⁶⁰

Jesus always spoke of the church in connection with the sending of the Spirit. The Spirit is never thought of apart from the Ekklesia.⁶¹ This Ekklesia is spoken of as a future fact which will come about after the death and resurrection (John 10:3 f.; 13, 17). Jesus tells the Jews that by crucifying him they are destroying their own temple and community. In its place he will found a new temple and community embracing all people, Jew and Gentile alike (Matt. 21:42-43; John 10:16; 12:20; Matt. 13:38; 28:19). It is into this new community that the Exalted Christ will send the Spirit.

⁶⁰Rackham, op. cit., pp. 14 f.

⁶¹Jesus used the term Ekklesia only in two instances, cf. Matt. 16:18; 18:17.

Jesus promised the Spirit in John 15 and 16. The Spirit is described there as the Comforter: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me" (John 15:26; cf. Acts 1:4; Luke 11:13).

The Spirit will descend not upon mankind generally but will work his effect on the world through the disciples (John 7:38-39; 15:26). The Spirit will be known as: 1) the Paraclete, or Comforter (John 14:16); 2) the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17; 16:13), and, 3) the Teaching Spirit (John 14:26).

Thus we see that the promise of the Spirit has a vital place in Jesus' teaching. Jesus and the Primitive Church taught similarly regarding the sending of the Spirit and the effect this presence would have upon the church and her life. Filson also makes this position clear:

Nevertheless, this clear conviction of Jesus, and the first Christians that God had been active in the past, and that a record of his revelation had been preserved, was strictly subordinate to the inspiring consciousness that God was purposefully active in the present. They sensed a fresh working of God both in personal experience and in wider contemporary life. God was working in history as he had never done, providing spiritual opportunities and resources never before available.⁶²

A fact to be noted, however, is that Jesus' teaching regarding the Spirit was not in as great evidence as it is in the primitive preaching. Jesus' main emphasis was with the preaching of the Kingdom, or Basileia. When the Early Church

⁶²Filson, op. cit., pp. 93 f.; cf. also p. 193.

was parted from her ascended Master it was natural that the Church would lay a greater stress upon the Spirit. Jesus had also promised that this Spirit would be theirs as soon as he was parted from them.

The Early Church made more of the gift of the Spirit. The fewness of the references to the Spirit in the Synoptics is a testimony to their essential faithful preservation of the Gospel tradition. Jesus centered attention upon the Kingdom. He led the movement personally. Occasionally he spoke of the Spirit as the guiding presence and power behind his work. But when he was gone, it was natural and inevitable that the Church should feel thrown back upon the Spirit for resources and guidance.⁶³

In the Petrine Epistles the work of the Spirit is also taken into consideration. Those who have been elected by God's foreknowledge have been elected because of the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" and "through the sanctification of the Spirit" (I Pet. 1:2). The Gospel has been revealed through preaching and "with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven" (I Pet. 1:12). Therefore, as every man receives the gift of the Spirit he will minister that Spirit to his fellowman as a "good steward of the manifold grace of God" (I Pet. 4:10).

The whole book of Acts⁶⁴ in general may well be thought

⁶³Ibid., pp. 180 f.

⁶⁴Dodd, op. cit., p. 59. "The primitive Church, while it enjoyed the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (somewhat naively conceived) as evidence of the dawn of the New Age, did not reflect upon it. Nor did it embody any clear doctrine of the fellowship in its preaching. Such doctrine first appears in the epistles of Paul."

of as a revelation of the Spirit; it is a witness to the veracity of the fact that the Spirit had been sent on Pentecost, and had been effectively present in the life of the Early Church and in the missionary work of Paul (cf. Acts. 5:32; 8:15; 10:45; 19:2 f.).

In Paul's epistles the doctrine of the Holy Spirit finds a prominent place. The Spirit is always shown as manifesting itself in the lives of the Christians. The Christian is united to the Father God in a vertical relationship because of his being in Christ. This relationship is his because of the mediating work of the Spirit. And again the Christian is bound to his fellowman in a horizontal relationship, or *κοινωνία* with both God and his fellows because of the work of Christ mediated through the Spirit.

In Ephesians, Paul gives us a classic statement as to the function of the Spirit in the work of salvation. "In whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, -- in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is an earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of God's own possession unto the praise of his glory" (Eph. 1:13-14; cf. also II Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Gal. 3:2-5).

If we have the Spirit within we will be in fellowship with Christ and our fellow redeemed. Paul here is beginning to construct a theology of the doctrine of the Spirit. In the Primitive Church there seems to have been only little reflection on the significance of the Spirit. Paul, however,

begins to draw implications and sets down the fact that to have the Spirit means a change of the whole life of the man.

The Christian has his hope (Rom. 5:3) in his faithful God who has called him into fellowship (*κοινωνία*)⁶⁵ with his Son, Jesus Christ (I Cor. 1:9; II Cor. 3:17). The Christians are in Christ (*ἐν Χριστῷ*), members of one body. "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and severally members one of another" (*ἐν σῶμα ἕσμεν ἐν Χριστῷ*) Rom. 12:5; cf. also Rom. 12:4-8). It is the work of the Holy Spirit to establish this fellowship (cf. Rom. 8:9; 8:11; I Cor. 3:16; 12:28; II Cor. 6:16 f.; Gal. 4:6; 6:15-16; Eph. 3:17; 4:8-13; cf. also I Cor. 12-14 for a critical analysis of the gifts of the Spirit).

Thus it is clearly seen that the preaching of the Holy Ghost had a vital part in the teaching of Jesus, the Primitive Church, and the Apostle Paul. Herklotz also makes this point. We quote him by way of summary:

The exaltation of Jesus has been followed by an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The idea of the Holy Spirit was not new. Luke records that Jesus preached his first sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth from the text in Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (Luke 4:18). The word "Spirit" means literally breath or wind; it thus conveys the sense both of life and of invisible power constantly at work. The Christian missionaries believed that the Spirit had inspired the prophets, but they were also convinced that they themselves had experienced a new and abiding manifestation of the Spirit,

⁶⁵ Paul always sees the Holy Ghost as operative through fellowship. This is a development of the O.T. Cf. Is. 4:3-5; Ezek. 37:12-14; Mal. 3:16-17; 4:1-2; Dan. 7:13-14; 7:22-27.

who was the very Spirit of Jesus. He had promised that a Paraclete - one called to a man's side to help him - would take his place after his physical presence was withdrawn from his followers (see John 14-16), and that promise had been fulfilled. The work of the Holy Spirit in the Church was the evidence of Christ's power and glory.⁶⁶

The Exalted Christ will Return Again in His "Parousia" as
the Judge of Quick and Dead

The sixth element in Peter's kerygma is the eschatological hope of the primitive Church that the Messianic Age will find a speedy consummation in the return of Christ in his "Second Advent." The new Messianic Age has arrived with the appearance of Jesus, the Messiah. The truth and effectiveness of his Messianic mission was shown in his miracles and teaching; God was decisively working anew among his people in Christ. His death had shown that the Old Covenant was destroyed and the New Age had been brought in. His resurrection and following exaltation at the right hand of the Father preceded the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh. This was just as the prophets had declared years before and God had pre-determined in eternity. Now the young church was eagerly awaiting the promised return⁶⁷ of the Exalted Christ to save his people and to execute wrath and judgment upon those who had not identified themselves with

⁶⁶Herklotz, op. cit., p. 66; cf. Dodd, op. cit., pp. 57 f.

⁶⁷Rackham, op. cit., p. 53. ". . . the apostle has already learnt to distinguish between a present realization and a final and glorious establishment of the kingdom."

the Messiah and the New Age.

Peter states his belief in the return of the Lord in his sermons as follows:

Pentecost Sermon

Acts 2:20 The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the day of the Lord come, That great and notable day.

Sermon in the Porch of Solomon

Acts 3:19-21 Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets that have been from of old.

Sermon to Cornelius

Acts 10:42 And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead.

It can be readily seen that Peter saw the "Parousia" or Second Coming in a logical context with the rest of the kerygma. It is another salient factor in the Messianic act of bringing the New Age to pass. This was begun already in the earthly ministry of Jesus to be completed with his return.

The whole was conceived as a continuous, divinely directed process, in which past, present, and future alike had eschatological significance. In the recent past lay the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; the experience of the present attested His power in the Church through the Spirit; the near future would bring the final revelation of the meaning of the whole.⁶⁸

⁶⁸Dodd, op. cit., p. 36.

A fact to be noticed, however, is that the "Parousia" is not preached as often and prominently by Peter as may be supposed. This holds true to the whole first half of Acts generally. Therefore its inclusion in the essential kerygma has been criticized by T. F. Glasson. He makes a strong case for not including the "Parousia" as an essential element in the Primitive kerygma:

The evidence of these apostolic speeches is in striking contrast to the popular view that the early Church from the day of Pentecost onwards was possessed by an overpowering conviction that the return of Christ to judge the world was imminent. Whether this was so is not our immediate concern; the point at issue is rather the question, Was this an unvarying and essential part of the Christian message? These five speeches have one reference between them to Christ as Judge, one further reference to his return, and it is impossible to maintain that the note of imminence is at all prominent, if indeed it is present anywhere.⁶⁹

This may be answered by stating that the Second Advent is, indeed, prominent enough to warrant its inclusion. The whole second half of the Joel prophecy has an eschatological setting. Consider the cataclysm in the heavenly bodies. "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the day of the Lord come, that great and notable day" (Acts 2:20). What can this refer to but the return of the Lord on the last day in judgment? In verse 21, Peter continues, "And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." This can only be a definite reference to the "Parousia." Again, in Solomon's Porch Peter enjoins the

⁶⁹Glasson, op. cit., pp. 131 f.

people to repent that they may be in preparedness for the "seasons of refreshing" to come and "the times of restoration of all things" (Acts 3:19-21). And again before Cornelius, Peter confesses that Christ was "ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42). This should indicate that the "Parousia" does play a sufficiently prominent place in these sermons to warrant its inclusion as an essential part of Peter's *kerygma*. That each element must occur in each sermon to make it a prime factor rests upon an arbitrary premise.

The eschatological note is very much in prominence in the Pentecost sermon, especially in Peter's use of Joel's prophecy regarding the outpouring of the Spirit. It is Peter's purpose to show the people that the Messianic Kingdom is manifested in two ways. First, it is a dispensation of mercy as shown by the outpouring of the Spirit. Secondly, it will dispense judgment and punishment upon those who spurn or reject him in whose name the Spirit is sent. The sending of the Spirit is "a savor of life unto life" to those who believe the Gospel; but to those who reject the Spirit, it is "a savor of death unto death" (II Cor. 2:16). Those who spurn the work of the indwelling Spirit must expect judgment on the "great and notable day of the Lord" *ἡμέραν κυρίου τὴν μεγάλην ἐπιφανῆ* (Acts 2:20).⁷⁰

⁷⁰Hackett, *op. cit.*, p. 48. "The expression the day of the Lord, in v. 20, according to a very common use in the Hebrew prophets, denotes a day when God comes to make known his power in the punishment of his enemies - a day of the signal display of his vengeance for the rejection of long-continued mercies."

Thus already on Pentecost we find the Primitive Church expressing faith in the "Parousia." Peter reminds the gathered throng that Jesus, who was so graciously sending the Spirit as his mediator among men, was also the "Judge of quick and dead."

With the pouring out of the Spirit the prophecy of Joel immediately connected the coming of the day of Jehovah, i.e., of the great Messianic day of judgment, amid dreadful signs in heaven (Joel ii. 30 f.). By adopting this part also of the prophet (ii. 19, 20) Peter wished to intimate explicitly that, as the immediate sequel of the last days which have already commenced, the Messianic day of judgment is near at hand; . . . this is the day of the second sending of Jesus, seeing that he comes as the Lord and Messiah who has been appointed judge.⁷¹

Again in Solomon's Porch, Peter shows that not only will the "Second Advent" be a time of doom and judgment, but also a time when Jesus will gather his own to himself and restore the full Messianic glory and Kingdom to Israel and to the world. Peter and John had healed the cripple by the power inherent in Jesus Name. The Jews had sinned in killing Jesus but now if they repent God will bring to pass "seasons of refreshing" (*καιροὶ ἀναψύξεως* Acts 3:19), and the "times of restoration" (*χρόνου ἀποκαταστάσεως* Acts 3:21). The former, refers to the present comfort found in Christ and also the blessedness which awaits those who follow him when he returns to receive his own to himself in heaven. It is a refreshing time because it will bring joy and peace in contrast to the anxiety found in the old time of the Old Covenant. The latter refers to that time when God will restore all things

⁷¹Weiss, *op. cit.*, pp. 184 f.

both in the life of man and that of the world. Rackham explains the term "times of restoration" in these words:

So S. Paul taught that the recovery of Israel would be the salvation of the world: and that the creation also would share in the liberty of the glory of the children of God. The restoration then was the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy of a new heaven and new earth. But apart from this literal prediction, all the holy prophets which have been since the world began, i.e., the whole O.T. from Genesis III, 15 to Malachi IV, 6, had looked forward to a restoration and the times for this restoration would come when Jesus, as a second Elijah, returned from heaven.⁷²

Peter tells Cornelius also that Jesus is "the Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10:42). All who are alive at his "Second Coming" and all those who have died, Christ will bring to judgment by virtue of his office as the Universal Judge. To those who believe on him, membership is freely granted in the Messianic Kingdom; to those who spurn him, expulsion from the Kingdom. Lechler describes the significance of the coming of Jesus in judgment as follows:

These words afford a glance into the view of things which, according to the apostles, lies at the foundation: the historical appearance of Jesus as Saviour, and His resurrection from the dead are already a fulfilment of divine prophecy. But there still remain many great promises of God, given through the prophets, which have not been fulfilled during the life of Jesus now ended, and yet must be fulfilled. The time of the fulfilment and full realization of these promises can only begin when Jesus returns from heaven; which is not to happen until all Israel shall be converted. This, therefore, is the time of the judgment of the world (x. 42), for believers a time of comfort and refreshing from the presence of the Lord, but in itself the period of fulfilment of all things.⁷³

⁷²Rackham, op. cit., p. 54.

⁷³Lechler, op. cit., pp. 282 f.

C. H. Dodd makes much of what he calls "realized eschatology." He maintains that the Primitive Church laid inconsequential stress in its preaching upon the eschatological imminence of Christ's return. The chief stress, he would say, lies in the completed reality of the Messianic Kingdom with the coming of Christ in the flesh and his finished work of atonement. The "Second Coming" is not in the mind of the Primitive Church as vitally as that of their realization and belief of the present fulfilment of the Kingdom in their lives at that very moment. A quotation from Dodd in which he explains his idea of the "realized eschatology" follows:

The more we try to penetrate in imagination to the state of mind of the first Christians in the earliest days, the more are we driven to think of resurrection, exaltation, and second advent as being in their belief, inseparable parts of a single divine event. It was not an early advent that they proclaimed, but an immediate advent. They proclaimed it not so much as a future event for which men should prepare by repentance, but rather as the impending corroboration of a present fact.⁷⁴

This is no doubt, an over-emphasis of a truth. Certainly the Primitive Church laid great stress upon the present reality of the Kingdom as shown in their preaching regarding the death, resurrection, and exaltation of Jesus, and the giving of the Spirit, coupled with their new life of fellowship. But again, just so certainly did they yearn for the full realization of the Messianic Kingdom in the "Parousia" of their Lord when he would take them to himself in heaven. The present

⁷⁴Dodd, op. cit., p. 33; cf. also pp. 33 f. and 42.

reality of the Kingdom among them and also the eschatological hope in the return of their Lord was held, at one and the same time, as a paradox of faith. The Messianic Age was at once a present reality and a future hope. Numerous commentators concur in this view. To quote Filson and Lechler:

The mention of such vital values in the Christian hope is enough to make clear that the Primitive Church's eschatology was no meaningless survival or capricious spinning of unsubstantial dreams. The eschatology of these Christians was an integral part of their faith. They needed a strong hope, and they possessed it.

They faced the coming experiences of this life unafraid. They firmly counted upon personal survival and privilege in the life to come. And they held all these phases of faith in the light of their ultimate conviction that there was a divine purpose behind the seeming confusion of life. That purpose was moving on to absolutely certain realization.⁷⁵

And again Lechler holds a very sane view of both the present reality of the Kingdom and also its future eschatological realization in the "Parousia":

The centre of Christian consciousness is in the future, in which all the prophecies of Scripture are to be perfectly fulfilled, although the Crucified One occupies an exalted place by virtue of His resurrection and ascension. The fact that Scripture had been already fulfilled in Jesus, in His sufferings and death (iii. 18), as well as in His resurrection and ascension, and in His gift of the Spirit, together with the conviction of what the apostles had personally seen and heard, constitutes the religious substance of their preaching with respect to all that was and is. The climax of the primitive Christian faith and confession is the fact that Christ should come again as judge of the world, that all Scripture should then first be fulfilled, that all the words of God should become facts and deeds, and that all His promises should be realized.⁷⁶

⁷⁵Filson, op. cit., pp. 231 f.; cf. also p. 102.

⁷⁶Lechler, op. cit., pp. 283 f.

Caution must also be maintained, on the other hand, not to overemphasize the "Second Coming" in the preaching of the Early Church. That would only serve to slight their emphasis on the present reality of Christ's Kingdom. Both were believed by the Primitive Church in a delicately balanced paradox of faith. Tasker makes this point clear:

Many of the earliest Christians had a deep feeling that the Lord Jesus would soon return again; but they were not so absorbed with awaiting His return as to be unconscious of the new spiritual powers that were operative in their midst. It is wholly erroneous to suppose that they were "Second Adventists" and nothing else. The main emphasis in the New Testament is upon the Spiritual blessings of the new age, which resulted in new energy and new moral power.⁷⁷

The teaching of Jesus also had a strong eschatological flavor. Jesus, not only reminded his disciples that he would soon be parted from them but also of the inevitable counterpart of this fact that he would return a second time. His second return would serve as the fulfilment of his "Basileia" throughout the world, (cf. Matt. 25:13: "Watch therefore, for ye know not the day nor the hour." See also Luke 9:26-27; 21:27-31). The return of the exalted Christ in glory will mean that the present course of this world has been terminated and the beginning of the new has begun (Matt. 13:39; Luke 20: 35 f.). The "Parousia" will bring deliverance from all oppression and bring with it the blessings promised in the "Basileia" (Matt. 25:34; Luke 21:28). On the other hand, the "Parousia"

⁷⁷Tasker, op. cit., pp. 69 f.

will mean judgment for every enemy of Christ and his "Basileia" (Matt. 24:30; Luke 19:27). Thus it can be seen that the primitive kerygma also had this in common with the teaching of Christ, namely, the exalted Christ will return again in his "Second Coming" as the judge of "the living and the dead."

Peter's epistle also bears witness to the primitive belief in the "Parousia." The Christian is admonished to heed the example of his Lord and prepare for his return because the Christian must "give account to him that is ready to judge the living and the dead" (I Pet. 4:5). And again the Judgment will come when the Judgment begins in the House of God. If this judgment begins among the children of God "what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (I Pet. 4:17).

Paul also lays great stress upon the "Parousia" of his Lord. The return of the Lord places an urgency to Paul's message. Repent, the day of Judgment swiftly approaches. Col. 3:1-4 is a classic passage of this imperativeness and also a statement of the comfort inherent in the "Second Advent" of the Lord for all who are in Christ Jesus:

If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory.

The "Parousia" will be a day of Judgment; for the believer and him who walks in righteousness, life eternal but for the unbeliever and unrighteous man, judgment "according to that he hath done" (cf. Rom. 2:16; 14:10; I Cor. 4:4 f.; II Cor. 5:10).

Paul never argues as to the truth of the "Second Coming." He accepts it without question as the teaching of Jesus and the Primitive Church from who he has received this kerygmatic tradition.

The fact of judgment to come is appealed to as a datum of faith. It is not something for which Paul argues, but something from which he argues; something therefore which we may legitimately assume to have been a part of his fundamental preaching. Judgment is for Paul a function of the universal lordship of Christ, which he attained through death and resurrection, and His second advent as Judge is a part of the kerygma - as Judge, but also as Saviour, for in I Thess. 1:9-10, Paul sums up the effect of his preaching at Salonica in the terms: "You turned from idols to God, to serve the living and real God, and to await His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead - Jesus, who saves us from the coming Retribution."⁷⁸

The author of Hebrews also includes this element. "But my righteous one shall live by faith: And if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him" (Heb. 10:38; cf. Heb. 9:28; 10:25 f.).

Thus it is the unanimous opinion of Jesus, the Primitive Church, and the New Testament writers that Jesus, the Christ, as the exalted Messiah, will return as the "Judge of the living and the dead."

The Call to Repentance and the Forgiveness of Sins

Peter can announce that a new age has arrived because new creative acts of God were shown. A new beginning has been inaugurated for the whole human race as a direct result of the

⁷⁸Dodd, op. cit., pp. 12 f.

forgiveness of sins. This forgiveness of sins has been brought about by the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross. The effective soteriological nature of this sacrificial dying is seen in the resurrection of Jesus which serves as proof of the power of death. This death supplies the key to all that follows in the New Age. The powers of the New Age, then, are the powers of the risen and exalted Christ and it is the manifestation of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of believers which serves as a sign that the salvation wrought by Christ is, indeed, wondrous and efficacious.

So it is that Peter's kerygma also has in it the message of the offer of forgiveness and a strong appeal for repentance. An acceptance of forgiveness assures the believing heart the promise of salvation and a life in the "Age to Come." This kerygmatic element occurs in each sermon of Peter under consideration.

Pentecost Sermon

Acts 2:21 And it shall be, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Acts 2:38-39 And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto him.

Sermon in the Porch of Solomon

Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

Acts 3:25-26 Ye are the sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying unto

Abraham, And in they seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Servant, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.

Sermon to Cornelius

Acts 10:34-35 And Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him.

Acts 10:43 To him bear all the prophets witness, that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.

On Pentecost Peter enjoins the throng to "Repent and be baptized" when they inquire of him, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter tells them that a change of heart and a firm faith in Jesus are requisites for participation in the salvation offered by the Messiah (*μετανοήσατε καὶ βαπτισθήτω* Acts 2:36). It is to be noted that Peter shows baptism as being in a close connection with confession of faith in Jesus. So it is that a change of mind, or repentance is held as inseparable from faith. Together, repentance and faith are for Peter the conditions on which forgiveness is based. It is true that "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21), but this call upon God is nourished in the repentant heart. This repentance and faith will move the Christian to be baptized and this baptism, in turn, carries with it the promise of the Holy Ghost. This baptism is received "in the name of Jesus Christ," the Messiah. Thus baptism serves as an assurance to the believer that he is sharing in the blessings of the New Messianic Age.

Also in Solomon's Porch Peter demanded the Jews to "repent

and turn again" that their sins might be blotted out (*μετανοήσατε οὖν, καὶ ἐπιστρέψατε πρὸς τὸ ἐξαλειφθῆναι ὑμῶν τὰς ἁμαρτίας* Acts 3:19).

Peter here not only takes their general sinfulness for granted, but thinks especially of their horrible crime in slaying the "Holy One and the Just," through their choice of Barabbas. Thus they were guilty of denying Jesus and became sharers in the guilt of his death (Acts 3:13-15). Therefore the demand for repentance without which there can be no assurance of forgiveness makes this change a condition for their obtaining the forgiveness of sins.

Although the Jew was hideously responsible for the death of Jesus, his repentance should mean that he will completely abandon his former state (*ἀπὸ τῶν πονηριῶν ὑμῶν* Acts 3:26). Since God had sent his Son Jesus to bless them, so the Jew in his repentance is to see that a positive blessing has come upon the Jewish nation because of the fact that the Jew had crucified his Messiah.

To the assembled Council, Peter utters a beautiful statement of Christian faith. After he informs the Sanhedrin that Jesus, the stone rejected by the Jews, has become "the head of the corner," Peter identifies salvation with that stone. With him alone salvation is to be found (*καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν ἄλλῳ οὐδενὶ ἢ σωτηρία οὐδὲ γὰρ ὄνομά ἐστιν ἕτερον ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν τὸ δεδομένον ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἐν ᾧ δεῖ σωθῆναι ἡμᾶς* Acts 4:12). Jesus of Nazareth is the *σωτήρ* and all power of deliverance comes

from him alone, in his name. Every other name whereby men would seek salvation is sheer futility.

It is an interesting fact that Peter in addressing Cornelius, a Gentile, lays great stress upon Jesus as the Judge of all men. The coming of salvation in terms of the national Messianic expectations of the Jews would be difficult for a Gentile to understand. So Jesus is presented not so much as the Christ but more as the Judge of all men.⁷⁹ God as Judge "is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34-35). And finally, "every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

With the coming of Jesus the "Basileia" has also arrived. The primary function and purpose in his coming was to be the Savior, the *σωτήρ*, of men (cf. Matt. 15:24; 23:37; Luke 19:10; John 3:16). He brings eternal life in himself and whosoever believes on him is removed from all power of death (John 5:34; 6:48; 8:51-55; 10:11, 17-18). Man receives this eternal life through Jesus Christ since God has revealed himself in Christ Jesus (John 8:32; 14:7-11).

Jesus' proclamation of himself as Deliverer of the world also means that he comes as the Universal Judge. He bids all to repentance since man apart from him is lost, dead, and alienated from God. If man relies on his own righteousness, it

⁷⁹Rackham, op. cit., p. 154.

is totally insufficient, for in God's eye man's righteousness is only a form of conceit (cf. Matt. 5:20; 7:11; Luke 16:15; 18:9-14; John 3:18-19).

In the teaching of Jesus three things are required of man: first, repentance; secondly, faith; and finally, righteousness (cf. Matt. 11:20 f.; 12:3-37, 39-41; 19:16-22; Luke 5:32; 14:33).

Repentance on man's part through his own power is impossible. It is God's gift bestowed upon the "publican and sinner" who has faith in Jesus as the Christ (cf. Matt. 5:3; 9:12 f.; Mark 10:26-27; Luke 4:18 f.; 15:3-32; 18:9-14; John 9:39).

Thus Jesus' teaching of repentance and faith through the sacrificial death of himself as the Messiah was faithfully taught by Peter and the Primitive Church. Filson makes this same observation:

The God of the New Testament was conceived as a God whose power was tempered and controlled by mercy, and whose righteousness found expression in active love. Although deeply indebted to Jewish sources, Jesus and the Primitive Church possessed a fresh apprehension of the kindly, fatherly working of God. The result was a vigorous and unselfish mission to all men, since it was realized that all were objects of God's concern. Jesus' conception of God and loyalty to his redemptive work were shared by the Primitive Church In grateful worship, in teaching, and in persistent mission service, the Primitive Church faithfully preserved the essential attitude of Jesus, and brought home to as many as it could reach the reassuring message that God was their seeking Father.⁸⁰

⁸⁰Filson, op. cit., pp. 123 f.

The Petrine Epistles again bear testimony that "repentance unto faith for the remission of sins" was essential in the kerygma. There Peter says that we were redeemed by the precious blood of Christ "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Pet. 1:18-20). This redemption by the blood is an "inheritance incorruptible" and nothing can take it from us since it is "reserved in heaven" for us (I Pet. 1:4). Our inheritance has also made us members of the "holy priesthood" and now as living stones, our whole life is built up "a spiritual house" to offer pleasing sacrifices "to God by Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 2:5). As his redeemed priesthood, we also spontaneously follow the example of the lamb, our High Priest (I Pet. 2:21). The Christians "faith and hope" is in God who raised this lamb, Jesus from the dead (I Pet. 1:21).

Central also in Paul's preaching is the soteriological value of Christ's coming as Messiah and his following exaltation. In I Corinthians 15, Paul tells the Corinthians that when he began his ministry among them, his message was centered in the fact that Christ died for their sins. He says that he had received this message from his Lord and also from the Primitive Church. This Gospel which he preached "is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). God has reconciled the world and has forgiven our trespasses (II Cor. 5:19). This is the great demonstration of God's love "toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). God in his inscrutable love "spared not his own Son, but delivered him

up for us all" (Rom. 8:32). The blessings of salvation, "all things," are freely ours.

But now if we are really risen with Christ, we shall live a life patterned after the example of Christ (Col. 3:1-4).

The Christian is initiated into this life in Christ by baptism. "Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in the newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4). Baptism initiates the Christian into the body of Christ, Christian fellowship, and newness of life" (I Cor. 12:13; cf. also Eph. 4:5). Herklotz summarizes the significance of baptism in Paul's preaching as follows:

Through baptism they entered the new fellowship of the Church. Paul emphasizes again and again in his letters the decisiveness of the act which the Christian has made; his use of the aorist tense makes clear the "once for all" nature of what had taken place. Christ had died; in baptism they too had died to the world. He had risen from the dead; in baptism they also lived and died as men in Christ. The often repeated missionary message becomes the basis for a life in which the baser passions of life are mortified.⁸¹

The inauguration of the New Age means for the Christian that he by faith will be shielded by the righteous God on the day of Judgment (I Thess. 1:10 ". . . who delivereth us from the wrath to come; I Thess. 5:9: "For God appointed us not unto wrath, but unto the obtaining of salvation through our

⁸¹Herklotz, op. cit., p. 68.

Lord Jesus Christ"; cf. Rom. 3:25; 8:3; Gal. 1:3 f.; 3:13; II Cor. 5:21; Rom. 10:13).

The whole book of Hebrews is a witness of the greater nature of the sacrificial offering of Christ made for the sins of the world, compared with the Old Covenant of sacrifice. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard" (Heb. 2:3).

Thus it is seen that the Primitive Church and the later New Testament writers gave unanimous testimony to the fact of redemption in Christ, and along side of it, in logical necessity, taught of the righteousness which is to be found in Christ Jesus, Christian fellowship, and the new life of the Messianic Age. Filson also draws the same conclusion:

These examples enable us to assert confidently that the entire New Testament was at one in holding that faith was neither morally futile nor morally indifferent, but morally effective. This was not a perfectly demonstrated reality in every Christian life. There were glaring failures, and there was an element of incompleteness. But that true faith is morally creative and fruitful was a common experience in the Christian group.⁸²

And again Filson shows that this righteousness had its motivation in the forgiveness of sins. This too was unanimous opinion in the New Testament.

Faith did release power, and make men live in accord with God's will. Christians knew the need and blessing of forgiveness. But they also knew the joy of living on a level they had not known before conversion. In the insistence and demonstration that faith builds moral fiber,

⁸²Filson, op. cit., pp. 205 f.

the Primitive Church was faithful in preserving and transmitting another important aspect of the mind of Jesus.⁸³

The Apostles Are Witnesses to These Things

The final fact in the primitive kerygma is the element of Apostolic witness. Since the apostles had been witnesses to the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Christ, they now become the witnesses of this fact to the people. This element occurs in each sermon.

Pentecost Sermon

Acts 2:32 This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we all are witnesses.

Sermon in the Porch of Solomon

Acts 3:15 And killed the Prince of life; whom God raised from the dead: whereof we are witnesses.

Sermon to Cornelius

Acts 10:40-41 Him God raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest, not to all the people, but unto witnesses that were chosen before of God, even to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.

This element in Peter's sermons is usually excluded from the kerygma by such men as Dodd, Hunter, and Herklotz. F. F. Glasson takes exception to this and insists that it be included. He maintains that the witness element occurs with such regularity that it must not be overlooked, and places it as the last of the five basic elements of the kerygma. Glasson excludes the speech in Acts 4 and includes the speeches of Acts 5

⁸³Ibid.

and 13. The five elements are: 1) resurrection; 2) Old Testament prophecy fulfilled in Christ; 3) the death of Christ; 4) the offer of forgiveness; and 5) the apostles are witnesses to these truths. His argumentation for the inclusion of witness follows:

The unanimity of the five speeches in Acts is sufficient evidence. But if we refer to the one place in St. Paul's letters where he explicitly sets out the Gospel which he "received" (I Cor. xv. 1 ff.) we find the same five factors outlined above, including the witnesses of the resurrection. The fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy is indicated in the recurring phrase, "according to the scriptures." The death of Christ is given in verse 3; but again the main emphasis is upon the Resurrection (vv. 4 ff.). The offer of forgiveness is indicated in the statement that "Christ died for our sins" (xv. 3). Particular attention is drawn again to the witnesses of the resurrection: "he appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve" (xv. 5), etc. If we want the actual word "witnesses" in this connection as well as the substance, we have it in verse 15, "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead are not raised." No one would wish to contend that the burial of Christ (xv. 4) should be reckoned as an additional and separate item - it is clearly mentioned only to underline the real death of Christ and the miracle of the Resurrection. We thus have in I Cor. xv. 1-11 (ending with the words, "Whether then it be I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed"), precisely the five matters which occur in all the early speeches of Acts and no others. The matter could hardly be established with more certainty.⁸⁴

Glasson marshals his evidence well. It can't be denied that the witness theme occurs in each sermon and that Paul also received this tradition from the Primitive Church. But whether witness is kerygma may well be challenged. It is not, in a strict sense, an element of the Messianic mission of Christ.

⁸⁴Glasson, op. cit., pp. 130 f.

Witness is rather the confession of the truth of the Messianic Kingdom in Christ and the propagandizing of this fact to all nations. Be this as it may, witness will however, always follow when someone has come to realize the truth that Jesus is the Christ. The two factors are inseparable. But since witness has such a repeated occurrence it may be well to include it as a factor in the kerygma. The witness of the Primitive Church to the life of Christ and witness to the Holy Spirit dwelling in them gave to their message the stamp of authority. That they were compelled to preach is evident, the Holy Ghost within drove them by an inner necessity to preach the kerygma. They had received the command to preach from their Lord. "Preach the Gospel to every creature." That they faithfully carried out this command of their Lord is reflected in the whole New Testament.

Summary

Having completed our gathering of the kerygmatic elements in Peter's sermons it may be well to gather a few features in his preaching that arrest our special attention.

Before we began our study of Peter's sermons it may have appeared that he would have little organization and co-ordination of his ideas, for he was far too close to the great events he preached. The superhuman personality of Jesus had only recently ceased to associate visibly with men. Would this not render it difficult for Peter to make a real objective estimate on the life and teaching of Jesus? In retrospect it must be

said that Peter follows in a consistent pattern and varies slightly from it. In each sermon the same elements come to the fore. This is amazing. It is very rare than an objective appraisal of any man can be made until he is removed from the active scene by many years, a few decades at the very least. A historian can't write a thoroughly objective history until the historical events under consideration can be surveyed in the light of time. Be this as it may, Peter has formulated his thinking clearly and thoroughly regarding the nature and mission of Christ as the Messiah.

We must observe, however, that the Christology in these early sermons is very simple in outline, and primitive in character. It is nevertheless a Christology. The Christological portrayal can be found substantially in each sermon in somewhat the following order: 1) Jesus is the divinely appointed Savior as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy in him clearly reveals; 2) this Jesus was put to death according to the divine foreknowledge and determinate counsel of God. Prophecy fulfilled in him again underlines this fact; 3) God raised him from the dead on the third day by his power; 4) as the resurrected Lord he has been exalted at the right hand as Lord and Christ. These facts are rudimentary and fundamental, and although they are not an intricate Christology as that found in Colossians or Romans, it is a Christology nonetheless.

Also to be noted is the way the Primitive Church reacted to the fact that they were now parted from their Master.

Their whole thinking had to be recast. This Peter also does effectively. The Church now begins to formulate belief regarding the presence of the Spirit in their hearts and the new life in fellowship with God through the Spirit and in fellowship with the fellow believer. Since Jesus no longer was the daily companion, they now had to reorientate their thinking. Peter does this very effectively by placing an emphasis on the eschatological hope of the return of Christ. The Christian lives and works in a realization that his Christ is still with him through the presence of the indwelling Spirit. Zahn also makes the same observation:

Die Predigt und Lehre der Apostel ist nicht eine blosse Wiederholung der Predigt Jesu, sondern eine durch den späteren Fortschritt der Geschichte umgestaltete Verkündigung des in der Person Jesu erschienenen und im Besitze der Gemeinde befindlichen Heiles. Die Umgestaltung musste eine durchgreifende werden, weil Jesus nicht mehr der sichtbare Mittelpunkt der sich um ihn scharenden Gemeinde des Gottesreiches war, sondern der unsichtbare Gegenstand ihres Glaubens und weil die für das Heil grundlegenden Tatsachen des Todes, der Auferstehung und Erhöhung Jesu, welche jetzt in den Vordergrund des Evangeliums traten, zur Zeit des Lehrens Jesu noch der Zukunft angehörten und nicht Gegenstand der öffentlichen Verkündigung sein konnten.⁸⁵

Although the Primitive Church had to reorientate much of its thinking, nevertheless in its preaching, it substantially retained the thought of Jesus, changing only a little of the terminology. Each element in Peter's kerygma had its ultimate basis and root in the mind of Jesus. There was nothing substantially new in Peter's preaching that could not be found in the

⁸⁵Zahn, op. cit., p. 64.

Gospel narrative concerning the teaching and life of the Christ. We found this similarity between the mind of Jesus and the preaching of Peter in the following pattern: 1) God rules and reveals himself through the processes of history; 2) God is the seeking Father of men; 3) Jesus is the central fact in the Gospel message; 4) the cross holds a central position in the work of Christ; 5) the Holy Spirit dwells in the heart of the believer; 6) faith in Christ is inseparable from repentance; 7) the future of the believer is safe with God. Therefore we can say with Filson, "The evidence shows that Jesus was correctly understood. The Primitive Church was loyal in preserving his viewpoint."⁸⁶

We have also found that Peter and Paul preached in essentials the same kerygma. Each element found in Peter's sermons can also be found substantially in the preaching and epistles of Paul. We can see this also in the speech which was delivered by Paul at Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:16-41). The gist of Paul's sermon corresponds with the sermon of Peter. Dodd has summarized the Pisidian sermon as follows:

God brought Israel out of Egypt, and gave them David for their king. Of the seed of David Jesus has come as Saviour. He was heralded by John the Baptist. His disciples followed Him from Galilee to Jerusalem. There He was brought to trial by the rulers of the Jews before Pilate, who reluctantly condemned Him. He died according to the Scriptures and was buried. God raised Him from the dead, according to the Scriptures, and He was

⁸⁶Filson, op. cit., p. 240.

seen by witnesses. Through Him forgiveness and justification are offered. Therefore take heed.⁸⁷

There is nothing particularly Pauline in this sermon except the term "justification." The whole sermon when broken into small parts or elements can be found in any sermon of Peter. We notice, however, that it has a full treatment of the miracles and teaching of Jesus. In this respect it differs from the sermons in Acts 2 and 4, where the miracles and teaching of Jesus are hardly alluded to. When compared with the sermon preached to the Gentile Cornelius, on the other hand, we see that its references to the miracles and teaching of Jesus are not as fully treated, no reference being present to the baptism of Jesus by John and the miracles performed in Galilee.⁸⁸

We have thus seen the Peter and Paul agree substantially in their kerygma. We must also note that they differ in a few points. Paul has various emphases which do not appear in the Petrine kerygma. They are four: 1) Peter does not call Jesus "Son of God"; 2) he doesn't say that Jesus died for our sins; 3) he does not mention that Jesus as the exalted Christ intercedes for us; 4) and, Jesus is never described as the pre-existent divinity.⁸⁹

⁸⁷Dodd, op. cit., p. 29.

⁸⁸Cf. Hunter, The Message of the New Testament, op. cit., pp. 28 f. To show how similar the preaching of Peter and Paul is in their kerygmatic elements, Hunter has constructed a graph set up in parallel columns to illustrate this point.

⁸⁹Cr. Dodd, op. cit., pp. 25 f.; Lechler, op. cit., p. 69.

These differences are more a matter of emphasis and manner of expression. We have seen, that in spite of these various differences, there is an essential unity of message and purpose in their preaching. And that purpose is to present the good news that God has graciously interposed in history by sending his own Son, Jesus Christ, to save and redeem his people and the peoples of all nations. It is the kerygma which presents this Christ to the world.

In a course of the Church today that is "apostolic" in the sense that it has the task of proclaiming the apostolic message. This message is still effective today and the main message which we preach God to save man. A pertinent question for the Church of today is: "Does the modern Church still preach Christ? Does it bring to the needs of man the good news presented in the primitive message?" More pertinent still, "Does the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod in her preaching adequately present the kerygma? Is it apostolic in her preaching?" A master's dissertation presented to the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., studied this question. A number of sermons found in the Concordia Journal were analyzed to see just to what extent these sermons contain the key kerygmatic elements. It is well to note that preachers represented in the Journal are the more prominent preachers and certainly

William Backus, "The Kerygma of Missouri Synod Preaching Based on the Content of the Journal" (M.A. Thesis presented to the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., 1952).

CHAPTER IV

APPLICATION

We have seen with what fervor the Primitive Church disseminated the Gospel message in her preaching, or kerygma. The message of salvation was brought by "the foolishness of preaching" to the hearers and applied to their needs, especially their need of a Savior from sin.

We confess of the Church today that it is "apostolic" in the sense that it has the task of proclaiming the apostolic kerygma. This Gospel is still effective today and the sole channel whereby it pleases God to save men. A pertinent question for the Church of today is, "Does the modern Church still preach Christ? Does it bring to the needs of men the same salvation presented in the Primitive Kerygma?" More pertinent still, "Does the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod in her preaching adequately present the kerygma? Is it apostolic in its preaching?" A master's dissertation presented to the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., studied this question.¹ A number of sermons found in the Concordia Pulpit were analyzed to see just to what extent these sermons contain the key kerygmatic elements. It is well to note that preachers represented in the Pulpit are the more prominent preachers and certainly

¹William Backus, "An Analysis of Missouri Synod Preaching Based on the Content of the Kerygma" (S.T.M. Thesis presented to the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., 1952).

do not represent the rank-and-file of the clergy. Backus summarizes his study on a sad and thought-provoking note:

The preaching of our study has virtually omitted essential elements in the story, and it has time and again attempted to present the story outside the context of the needs of its hearers. We have learned that it included elements which are not only foreign to the kerygma, but actually contradictory to its sense and import for people. From this dour picture the conclusion must not be drawn that all the preaching studied was non-kerygmatic. There was a recurrent emphasis on the kerygma among some of the contributors. . . . However on the whole the preaching examined represents a pulpit fare which, whatever its merits, cannot lay claim to close identification with the preaching of the New Testament.²

This woeful lack of the kerygma in Missouri Synod preaching should spur every preacher to reanalyze: 1) his calling as a herald; and 2) the message, or kerygma which he is to herald and proclaim.

The Gospel of the Lord is to be brought to the whole world in general and to the individual congregation in particular. For this purpose the Lord calls heralds to announce the Gospel as his ministers.³ Those who receive this call into the ministry exercise their prerogative of heralding the Gospel not as something which they have at their disposal but rather a thing which has been given to them and for which they must also give an accounting.⁴

The modern herald bears witness to Christ. In this re-

²Ibid., p. 52.

³Anders Nygren, The Gospel of God, tr. by L. J. Trinterud (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, c.1951), p. 21.

⁴Ibid., p. 18.

spect he stands in a direct relationship to the Apostolic Church as the chief function of Apostolic heralding was to bear witness to Christ. The message the modern preacher heralds was similarly the message of the Apostles. Although the modern preacher is not an actual eye-witness of the message he proclaims, he still bears the "apostolic office." Otto Piper comments on the efficacy of the modern ministry:

The apostolic office consists in bearing testimony to our Lord Jesus Christ. We are not eye witnesses of the life of our Lord; we were not called and commissioned to our ministry by a special, extraordinary manifestation of the Holy Spirit's power. But the difference of historical situation that exists between us and the first followers of Jesus does not make us unfit for bearing testimony. Through the apostles we know of the great decisive events in History, by means of which God has called us into the fellowship of the Church and called forth faith in our hearts.⁵

The chief duty of any herald, or messenger, is to deliver the message entrusted to him authentically and absolutely without the least evidence of any tampering with message. The herald dare never deliver his own message or that which his fancy may suggest. This holds especially true for the heralds of God. What he has received from his Lord to preach he must hold as sacred and inviolable. The herald will deliver the Lord's message just as the Lord gave it to him. Nygren makes this fact clear very pointedly:

We are heralds - that and nothing else. The Gospel which we have received from God constitutes our whole being as

⁵Otto Piper, "Doctrine and Preaching," Reality in Preaching (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, c.1942), p. 56.

ministers. All that which otherwise can be said of our task as ministers is secondary to this, and must be traceable back to the fact that we are heralds, and that God has a Gospel which He will have proclaimed through us.⁶

The herald dare never present a message which has as its basis his own words. Above all he dare not herald as facts something which he has spun in his own thinking. "He has a message which is to be delivered with just exactly that content which the sender has stipulated."⁷

Again the herald as a messenger brings a message from God. The congregation to which he preaches is to encounter their God in the message the herald brings to them. Thus if the congregation is only aware of its preacher the encounter of the hearer with his God is lost. Therefore, as Donald G. Miller remarks, worthwhile preaching will focus the attention away from the preacher and centralize it on God.

In ideal preaching . . . the presence of God becomes so real that the preacher himself drops almost entirely out of the consciousness of the worshippers, so that even as the preacher speaks they and God seem to be left alone.⁸

We noted that the disciples of Jesus preached with a very small emphasis on the apologetic. It is also to be noted that there is hardly any use of polemics. They preached a fact and presented it as such and this fact needs no authentication by

⁶Nygren, op. cit., p. 21.

⁷Ibid., p. 51.

⁸Donald G. Miller, "Words or a Deed," Interpretation, VI (April, 1952), 134.

man's argumentation and sophistry. The event they preached was eternally true and was preached with a factual urgency that those hearing should speedily repent. Again we note that their preaching was nor moralizing exhortation nor minute formulation of religious doctrine. They preached the simple fact of the kerygma and urged faith on the part of the hearer in the message their kerygma represented.

The emphasis of the New Testament kerygma is always the preaching of a series of events climaxed in the great event of the Resurrection. The witness to these kerygmatic facts is of prime importance; all else has little relevance. These events are seen as parts of the total event of redemption. Redemption is always seen as taking place in "the entire history from Creation to the Parousia."⁹ The modern herald also has no other message but the fact of the incursion of Jesus into history and the effectiveness of this fact for the salvation of men in all ages. He must also present the kerygmatic elements as pertinent truth for man's salvation today. It is the same Jesus that the Primitive Church preached who also today saves man. It is this Messiah and Lord who by the same life, death, resurrection, and ascension saves us today. It is this same kerygma which the Primitive Church preached that we must preach today. Otto Piper underlines this truth:

Thus as witnesses we have to present Jesus Christ himself

⁹Ibid., p. 138.

as the inescapable fact in the life of the race. . . . There are his incarnation and his earthly ministry, his atoning death, his glorious resurrection, and the sure promise of his return. They are historical facts, undeniable and inescapable, and they alone are apt to satisfy the anxious longing of our contemporaries. These facts reach right into our lives because Jesus as the risen Lord makes us contemporaneous with himself.¹⁰

Thus the modern preacher will live his life realizing that the Incarnate Christ dwells in him and that this Christ is presented to a dying world through his ministry. He will preach with a fervor and present his Christ as the Lord of the primitive kerygma. The preaching of the Apostolic Church will serve as his model and just as the Early Church preached a risen Christ to that dying world so he, as John Gossip suggests:

. . . is going to try to bring home to the world something of the mind of Christ concerning God, and man, and life, and sin, and judgment, and destiny, and the amazing salvation God has offered . . . in him.¹¹

The tool of the modern preacher is the kerygma.

¹⁰Piper, op. cit., pp. 60 f.; cf. also Arthur John Gossip, "The Whole Counsel of God," Interpretation, I (July, 1947), 325-340 for a discussion of the presentation of the kerygma as doctrine. If doctrinal sermons are based on the kerygma, modern so-called doctrinal preaching will lose its odious reputation.

¹¹Gossip, op. cit., p. 325.

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