

PETER, PAUL, AND PENTECOST

THE REASON THE MIDDLE OF THE BOOK OF ACTS MATTERS

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon."

~ 1 Corinthians 3:10

1. Pentecost Sunday

- a. On Pentecost Sunday churches worldwide celebrate the Church's birthday—only it wasn't
- b. The celebration of Pentecost Sunday perennially communicates why mid-Acts matters.
- c. On Pentecost in Acts 2:1-5 the Holy Ghost was poured out upon all the church.
- d. Every year churches celebrate a beginning that was not the beginning.

2. What is Pentecost

- a. A Jewish holyday God ordained 50 days after the Firstfruits - (Deu 16:16; Lev 23:15)
- b. Pentecost traditionally remembers the giving of the Law at Sinai.
- c. Peter says that Pentecost fulfilled what Joel spoke about for Jerusalem - Acts 2:14-24
- d. The Holy Ghost came upon others before, but on this day "all" received power/signs.
- e. On this day (and after) many were added to the church - Acts 2:41-47
- f. Every church celebrating Pentecost strives for pure doctrine going back to the apostles.
- g. Which apostle? If Pentecost is the beginning of the Church - Peter lays the foundation.

3. Why the Book of Acts (of the Apostles)

- a. "Acts is the beginning of the church!" ← Gross oversimplification.
- b. Acts concerns the Spirit's move from Jerusalem to Rome, Israel to Church, Peter to Paul
- c. More about Israel's fall than the rise of the Church - Acts 28:28-29, Rom 11:11
- d. The Pentecostal ministry was rejected, failure led to Paul/God's grace - Acts 8:1, 9:1
- e. The move (acts) orchestrated by God through the new apostle Paul - 1 Tim 1:11-14

4. Why Mid-Acts (Apostle)

- a. Mid-Acts refers to when Paul was saved/ordained an apostle - Acts 9:15, Col 1:25
- b. Mid-Acts places the church establishment under Paul's apostleship - 1 Cor 3:10, 11:1
- c. "We follow Jesus not Paul" - Jesus was not at Pentecost either - Peter was. 1 Cor 1:12
- d. "We all follow Jesus" – Yes, but why Pentecost Sunday? How men teach him differs.
- e. Acts 2 is not the beginning of the book, the church, nor Jesus' ministry.
- f. The cross was before Acts, Peter given Spirit, Paul given to dispense grace - Eph 3:2-7
- g. The church needs the cross, the Spirit, and the gospel of the grace of God - Acts 20:24

5. The Foundation of Church History

- a. Who was Peter's successor? (Bible doesn't say.) All apostolic successions claim Peter
- b. Who was Paul's successor? Ephesians (Acts 20:28), Timothy, Titus.
- c. What epistles from Peter describe church operation (1 Pet 5, 2 Pet 3 - "Paul!")
- d. James mentioned in Jerusalem (not Peter) - Acts 21:18-21
- e. *What does history say?* Theodosius (4th c.), Edict of Thessalonica, "delivered to Peter"

- f. Roman Catholics/Eastern Orthodox – Peter was first Pope and bishop of Rome/Antioch
- g. *What does the Bible say?* Barnabas sent by Peter, Saul ministered first - Acts 11:22-26
- h. The church did not begin on a day, but with a people - the first person is Christ.
- i. The more men claim Paul doctrine more free from religion/more Christian they become
- j. Pentecost or Mid-Acts determines the apostle Christ sent to lay the Church's foundation.

6. What If...

- a. Peter was establishing the new covenant for Israel's future earthly kingdom - Acts 3
- b. Paul had information about Body of Christ, gospel, grace that Peter did not know.
- c. The church needs more than the Spirit to operate; it needs mystery revelation. Eph 3:5
- d. You would not know Christ as the Head of the Church without Paul telling you-Eph 1:22
- e. Without Paul's epistles we no finished Bible, no explanation for 2000 years of history, no reason for God's silence, no gospel of grace without Israel/works/law, no Body.
- f. Without Paul's epistles you have a nation looking to build political power til Christ return
- g. The foundation of the church we stand on was laid by Paul, not Peter at Pentecost.