



'Acts' - Extra Teaching Points #5

Acts 3:17 – 4:22 (NASB)

Pages 56-69 in *'Acts For Everyone' (Part 1)* by N. T. Wright

Acts 3:17-26 (NASB)

*"And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. ¹⁸ "But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. ¹⁹ "Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that **times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;** ²⁰ and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, ²¹ whom heaven must receive **until the period of restoration of all things** about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time. ²² "Moses said, 'THE LORD GOD WILL RAISE UP FOR YOU A PROPHET LIKE ME FROM YOUR BRETHREN; TO HIM YOU SHALL GIVE HEED to everything He says to you. ²³ 'And it will be that every soul that does not heed that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.' ²⁴ "And likewise, all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and his successors onward, also announced these days. ²⁵ "It is you who are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, 'AND IN YOUR SEED ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE EARTH SHALL BE BLESSED.' ²⁶ "For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways."*

Q: What does Peter mean when he talks about, "the restoration of all things?"

- "There is coming a time when God will restore all things. And, though that final day will be truly wonderful, it can be anticipated with 'times of refreshment' in the present." P. 57

- "The ultimate promise of verse 21, that there will be a final restoration of all things, is firmly rooted in the Jewish prophets. What has changed now is that the final restoration has already happened to Jesus Himself: What God is going to do to the whole of creation, He has done for Jesus in raising Him from the dead. That is why Jesus now remains 'in heaven', in other words (as we have already seen) in God's sphere. Heaven is the place where God's purposes for the future are stored up, like pieces of a stage set waiting in the wings until they are needed for the final great act of the play. When Jesus finally reappears, heaven and earth will come together as one. That will be the great renewal of all things." P. 58

Q: What are the "times of refreshing" that Peter mentions in verse 19?

- "This notion of 'refreshment', though itself unusual in the New Testament, is by no means unusual in Christian experience, as again and again, in worship and sacrament, in reading the scriptures, in Christian fellowship and prayer, we taste in advance just a little bit of the coming together of heaven and earth, the sense that this is what we were made for, the new world which we shall finally enjoy. It is there, available, for all who seriously seek it. P. 58-59

Q: Why does Peter quote Moses, Samuel, Abraham, and the prophets?

- "He is understanding the Old Testament as a single great story which is constantly pointing forward to something that God was going to do through Abraham and his family, something that Moses, Samuel, Isaiah

and the rest were pointing toward as well. This great 'Something' was the restoration of all things, the time when everything would be put right at last. And now, he says, it's happened! It's happened in Jesus! *And you can be part of it.*" P. 59

- "Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, anyone who turns away from the life they've been leading, and turns to God instead – anyone, including the crowds who bayed for Jesus' blood, and the Jewish rulers who sent Him off to Pilate to be crucified – anyone at all can know in advance the joy of being forgiven, of being refreshed by the love and mercy of God, of discovering new life and purpose in following Jesus." P. 59-60

Acts 4:1-12

As they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to them, ² being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ And they laid hands on them and put them in jail until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand. ⁵ On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem; ⁶ and Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent. ⁷ When they had placed them in the center, they began to inquire, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?" ⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people, ⁹ if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, ¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified, whom God raised

*from the dead — by this name this man stands here before you in good health. ¹¹ "He is the **STONE WHICH WAS REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNER stone.** ¹² "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."*

Q: Why would the priest, captain of the Temple guard and Sadducees be "greatly disturbed" by Peter and John "teaching and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead?"

- "But resurrection always was a radical, dangerous doctrine, an attack on the status quo, and a threat to existing power structures. Resurrection, you see, is the belief which declares that the living God is going to put everything right once and for all; He's going (as we saw in the previous chapter) to 'restore all things', to turn the world the right way up at last." P. 63
- "So, what made them angry wasn't just Peter's announcement that God had raised Jesus from the dead. It was, as Luke puts it, a much larger thing: That Peter was preaching the resurrection from the dead, and announcing this revolutionary doctrine 'in Jesus'. In other words, Peter was saying not only that Jesus Himself had been raised, but that this was the start and the sign of God's eventual restoration of everything ([Acts 3:21](#)). P. 63

Q: What exactly is Peter getting at when he quotes Psalms 118:22 in vs. 11?

- "...Jesus is the place where God is building... the new Temple!" P. 64

Q: Why is it so unpopular, or “politically incorrect” today for us to say what Peter said in verse 12?

- “It is the secularists and the relativists who have acted the part of the chief priests, protecting their cherished temple of modernist thought, within which there can be no mention of the resurrection, no naming of a name like that of Jesus. And the apostles, in any case, would answer: Well, who else is there that can rescue people in this fashion?” P. 65

Acts 4:13-22

Now as they **observed the confidence of Peter and John** and understood that **they were uneducated and untrained men**, they were amazed, and **began to recognize them as having been with Jesus**. ¹⁴ And seeing the man who had been healed standing with them, they had nothing to say in reply. ¹⁵ But when they had ordered them to leave the Council, they began to confer with one another, ¹⁶ saying, “What shall we do with these men? For the fact that a noteworthy miracle has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷ “But so that it will not spread any further among the people, let us warn them to speak no longer to any man in this name.” ¹⁸ And when they had summoned them, they commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹ But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; ²⁰ for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.” ²¹ When they had threatened them further, they let them go (finding no basis on which to punish them) on account of the people, because they were all glorifying God for what had happened; ²² for the man was more than forty years old on whom this miracle of healing had been performed.

Q: Peter and John were speaking truth and power; proclaiming there was a better way to live and serve God. Where did they get the confidence to do that?

- They had been with Jesus!
 - They didn’t get their confidence from popular support, education, or training.
- They had “...already shown that they are living by it, and that it has power, kingdom-power, healing power. It makes the lame walk, just like Jesus did. Paul put it crisply: The Kingdom of God is not about talk, but about power ([1Cor. 4:20](#)). Where God’s power is at work to bring real change, real healing, real new life, there the people who are naming the name of Jesus to bring it about can stand up before judges, whether political or religious, and say with integrity that they are speaking for God. It will be costly; but that’s part of the deal. But it will be true.” P. 69

Follow Up Assignment

Q: Have you experienced ‘times of refreshing’? Explain.

Q: Is Jesus’ resurrection a historical fact to you, or the beginning of ‘the restoration of all things’?

- What does the way you use your time, talents, and treasure say about your understanding of the resurrection?

Q: Do you have the confidence to ‘stand up before judges, whether political or religious, and say, with integrity’, that you are ‘speaking for God’?

- If not, what will you do to have such confidence?