

The First Sermon of the Church

Acts 1:1-3 KJV The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, [2] Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen: [3] To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

Acts 2:14-37 KJV But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: [15] For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. [16] But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; [17] And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out 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: [18] And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: [19] And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: [20] The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: [21] And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. [22] Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: [23] Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: [24] Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. [25] For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: [26] Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: [27] Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. [28] Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. [29] Men *and* brethren, let me

freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. [30] Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; [31] He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. [32] This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. [33] Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. [34] For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, [35] Until I make thy foes thy footstool. [36] Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. [37] Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?

I. INTRODUCTION—EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT

It is important to understand that when Peter stood to preach on the day of Pentecost that he had been filled with the Spirit. This gave oldness to his actions and there was an abiding authority that had not been present prior to Pentecost. If a man does not have authority he should not endeavor to fulfill the call to ministry. The burden of preaching is on the preacher therefore he must be equipped by the Holy Ghost to fulfill this role of speaking the word of the Lord. Any effective preaching will always have the work of the Holy Ghost involved in the delivery of the message.

What is significantly amazing about the sermon that Peter preached was the accusation that would come later of being an unlearned and ignorant man (Acts 4:13). Peter did not have the words of a gifted orator. His speech was marked by a Galilean accent that betrayed his upbringing. He obviously did not have the polish of a professional scholar as did the scribes of his day. But when he stood to preach on that day, his words were not silver or filled with platitudes, instead the

thunder of the conversion filled him with a passion and anointing that arrested all hearers—whether supportive or in opposition. He simply takes the force of the Old Testament and confronts the actions and ultimately the conscience of those who are hearing him for the first time.

It was not too long before the words had smitten their hearts. Shame, grief, tears, and conviction spread throughout those gathered to hear him. Soon their critical tongues were silenced and those who did not want to be confronted by the Word and their conscience slipped quietly away from the gathering. Those who remained found the message to be scriptural, faithful to the Word, and evangelistic in its call. The preacher had preached and now the response was entirely up to those who heard the message.

An inspired doctrine demands an inspired ministry. The Book is inspired but when uninspired readers read it they kill the very fire of heaven when it touches their reluctant tongues. It is there that the holy influence is lost. When the Holy Ghost is both in the doctrine and in the people who profess it, the mountains of difficulty will fly away like dust upon the mocking wind.

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Here was a gathering of people and God used the evangelistic message to turn people to Him. Any evangelism that is effective always turns people toward spiritual power that leads to their conversion. Much of this can be accomplished with prayer and unity among the group of believers that make up the local

church. We have to be very careful that the function of the church does not get so complex that it fails to do the job. I have frequently quoted Brother John Harrell who pastors in Bridge City, Texas when he told me “three songs, an offering, a sermon, and an altar service are hard to improve on.” When we get beyond those elements of worship, there is a tendency for flesh to begin to be promoted more than the work of the Spirit.

II. THE CONTENT OF PETER’S MESSAGE

The point of Peter’s message was Jesus Christ. He reaches back to the Old Testament to show how that Jesus fulfilled the message of the prophets. Peter gives the strong evidence that Jesus Christ was God manifested in the flesh. The true message of the Gospel resides in the death, and the burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Furthermore Peter asserts that Jesus is going to return and that there is no other way for one to be saved. What is recorded here in this message sums up every aspect of the Gospel.

As a point of reference it should be understood that when we read the sermons that are in Acts, they are understood to be a summary of what Luke heard or was reported to him. In our previous lesson a chart was given to note the major sermons throughout the book of Acts but to reiterate in a bit more detail there are about nineteen instances of preaching in Acts. This is not including the words spoken by Gamaliel, the Ephesian town clerk, and the words of Tertullus. There are eight sermons given by Peter (Acts 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, and 15). Both Stephen and James give sermons (Acts 7 and 15) followed by Paul with nine (Acts 13, 14, 17, 20, and 28) and he also gives four defenses of the Gospel (Acts 22-26).

The epistle of Hebrews is a representative sermon and if it is read aloud it will take about 50-55 minutes to go through it. This is a typical time for a sermon to have been preached in the opening stanza of the church. We also gather

additional thoughts on preaching when Paul instructed Timothy to read the Word and then preach the Word (1 Tim. 4:13-15; 2 Tim. 4:2).

Justin Martyr, writing in his First Apology 1.67 gives a description of what is to happen on the day of worship:

And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things.

All apostolic preaching should have a component of teaching in it also. It is crucial to understand that teaching involves the mind. I believe that there must be a rational and logical understanding of clear biblical principles for the preservation of the truth. When a preacher weaves teaching into the presentation of the message, doctrine becomes a mighty force to be dealt with. The teaching of doctrine brings great stability to individuals as well as to the corporate body of believers. This is the kind of biblical content that protects us from the error of the age.

From ***A Hill To Die On*** by J. R. Ensey, pp. 48-49:

Since we obviously cannot stop the fulfillment of prophecy that tell us false teachers will arise and some will be turned away from the faith, how can we protect ourselves from the ravages of deception? Let me suggest three ways:

1. **Develop a fresh love for the truth.** It was the truth which set us free from sin, from the bondage of habit, from denominationalism, or from some cult. Read the

Word, study the Word, listen to your pastor preach the Word. Embrace truth. The vast majority of our pastors are acutely aware of these dangers. Listen to their wise counsel.

2. **Try the spirits by the Word of God.** Truth and truth tellers are known by the fruit that is produced. Are the positive results of their ministry lasting, God-honoring, and soul-building? Or are they temporary and self-honoring? Paul warned the Galatians with these words: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). Trust no one with your soul who does not bring the full apostolic message. May God grant a special measure of discernment to the church for these end times.
3. **Let us occupy ourselves in an effort to win souls and get the gospel to the world.** If we are doing what we are supposed to be doing, we won't have time to be bored and involved in questionable activities, and thereby fall prey to deception.

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A.

Acts 2:14-16—An Explanation of Pentecost

Acts 2:14-16 KJV But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: **[15]** For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is *but* the third hour of the day. **[16]** But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel;

This outpouring of the Spirit had never before taken place in history and it was a very strange and supernatural occurrence that Peter stood up to explain. The reason that an explanation was needed was due to the expressions of joy, the surrounding excitement, and the evidence of men speaking with tongues. In fact there was such a demonstration that they were accused of being drunk.

Peter immediately tackles the issue of drunkenness. He informs the crowd that it is only the third hour of the day and that no Jew would be drunk prior to that time of day. Most Jews fasted during the morning hours and did not eat until after the early services were completed. Apparently the tongues were what created the most stir among the detractors.

The following points are to be noted about tongues.

- It was not the results of intoxication. The fruit of the Spirit is self-control and not a loss of it.
- It was not a mistake or a miracle of their hearing. They literally heard people speak with the tongues of various nations. These early Christians were speaking in a language they had not learned.
- It was not a case of gibberish or incoherent utterances. Some would like to suggest that it was merely an outburst of excited speaking.

- It was literally a supernatural event taking place where people who had not been schooled in the languages of the nations.
- For a more in-depth look at tongues, refer back to Lesson 4—The Birth of the Church, pp. 7-9.

B. Acts 2:17-21—An Explanation from Joel

Acts 2:17-21 KJV And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out 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: **[18]** And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: **[19]** And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: **[20]** The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come: **[21]** And it shall come to pass, *that* whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Then Peter turns from addressing the issue of drunkenness and appeals to the prophet Joel in the Old Testament. This is a prophecy concerning the kingdom of God. This comes to light with the words “it shall come to pass in the last days.” The Lord Jesus Christ will return as Messiah and there will be great judgment. It is also important to interject at this point that the Church was never known to the Jews.

The term “last days” was an Old Testament term that the Jews were familiar with (Isa. 2:2; Jer. 23:20; 49:39; Ezek. 38:16; Hosea 3:5; Micah 4:1). What they did not understand was that the Messiah would return twice. He came to Bethlehem and was rejected. This rejection leads to a long interval before the second return. The first time the Lord appeared it was as a suffering Savior to save the world

from their sins (Isa. 53). The second time the Lord appears will be a time of judgment and power (Isa. 9:6) and He will set up His kingdom at that point.

The last days are now in progress and Peter is saying to them that they are now about to see the beginning of the last days. It is a common theme throughout the epistles:

1 Peter 1:20 KJV Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these **last times** for you,

Hebrews 1:1-2 KJV God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, **[2]** Hath in these **last days** spoken unto us by *his* Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

1 John 2:18 KJV Little children, it is the **last time:** and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the **last time**.

Hebrews 9:26 KJV For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in **the end** of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

1 Peter 4:7 KJV But **the end** of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.

Everything that will take place in the future of the Kingdom has been set in motion and has begun with the Church. Obviously Acts 2:17-18 were fulfilled on the day of Pentecost and have continued on throughout the Church age. However, the promises and patterns of judgment that are found in Acts 2:19-21 have yet to be fulfilled and will come to pass at a future point. There are certain aspects of the Church age that will compare to the Millennium and they have been partially experienced by believers.

- In the millennial kingdom, God will pour out His Spirit on all of mankind without any limitations—Matthew 24:29-25:46.
- In the Church age, God has poured out His Spirit on believers—Titus 3:5-6.
- In the millennial kingdom there will be perfect peace—Isaiah 9:7.
- In the Church age, peace rules in the hearts of believers—John 14:27; Gal. 5:22.
- In the millennial kingdom, Jesus Christ will rule—Luke 1:33.
- In the Church age, Jesus Christ rules in the heart of believers—Ephesians 3:16-17.
- In the millennial age, Jesus Christ will judge all men—Acts 17:31; 2 Timothy 4:1.
- In the Church age, judgment comes through the convicting voice of the Spirit—Romans 8:1-10; Colossians 1:27; 1 John 4:4.

Everything that we see taking place in the Church presently will one day come to rule the entire world. This will be an amazing experience to live in. Perfect peace, free from the temptations of this world, entirely delivered from the evilness of evil, and in a place that worship will be directed toward God. But there is a process by which all of this will have to come to pass and it was prophesied by

Joel. There will be accompanying signs that take place at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (1 Thess. 5:2-3; 2 Thess. 2:2).

- There will be wonders in heaven above.
- There will be signs in the earth—Blood, fire, and vapor of smoke.
- The sun shall be turned into darkness.
- The moon will be turned into blood before that great and notable day of the Lord comes.

One must look to the book of Revelation to find out where the specifics are mentioned. Concerning blood, note the following references:

Revelation 6:8 KJV And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

Revelation 8:7-8 KJV The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. [8] And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

Revelation 9:15 KJV And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

Revelation 14:20 KJV And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand *and* six hundred furlongs.

Revelation 16:3 KJV And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead *man*: and every living soul died in the sea.

The prophecy of Joel also mentioned fire to which the following verses are noted:

Revelation 8:5 KJV And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast *it* into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

Revelation 8:7-8 KJV The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. [8] And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

Revelation 8:10 KJV And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

Lastly Joel prophesied about the vapor of smoke which is also present in Revelation:

Revelation 9:2-3 KJV And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. [3] And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Revelation 9:17-18 KJV And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. [18] By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

Revelation 18:9 KJV And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning,

Revelation 18:18 KJV And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What *city is* like unto this great city!

However, Joel was not alone when he prophesied of the calamities that were to befall the earth. Jesus was very clear in presenting the same message in Matthew 24:

Matthew 24:29-30 KJV Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: [30] And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the

earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

From these passages, it is important to understand and affirm that such a time of judgment and chaos will visit this earth just as the beginning of the Church took place. These difficult times that are certainly coming should not be dreaded but rather as Paul told the Thessalonians, we should encourage each other with knowing the coming of the Lord is near (1 Thess. 4:18).

Before moving to the next segment of the passage, one more phrase should be dealt with as concerning the element of prophecy. Acts 2:20 mentions “the great and notable day of the Lord.” This event has numerous biblical references that accompany it: Isaiah 2:12; 13:6; 13:9; Ezekiel 13:5; 30:2-3; Joel 1:15; 2:1-11; 3:14; Amos 5:18-20; Obadiah 15; Zephaniah 1:7; 1:14-18, Zechariah 14:1; Malachi 4:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:2; and 2 Peter 3:10. From the composite of these references, it can be determined that there are four events associated with the day of the Lord: the return of Jesus Christ, terrible tribulation, judgment, and the remaking of the earth.

- The return of Jesus Christ as Lord: He will rule and reign in glory on the earth. This is also known as the Millennial reign of Christ—Revelation 20:4-6.
- A terrible period of tribulation lasting seven years that includes the last half of the period known as the great tribulation (3 ½ years). This is the fulfillment of Daniel’s “seventieth week” (Daniel 9:27).
- It will also include the resurrection and final judgment of all men. This will include men who are described as sheep and goats (Matthew 25:31-46; Revelation 20:11-15); the Beast or the antichrist, the false prophets, and their followers (Revelation 19:11-21) along with Satan and his angels (Revelation 20:10).

- It will also include the destruction and remaking of the earth and heavens (2 Peter 3:3-15; Revelation 21:1; cf. Isaiah 65:17; 66:22).

Obviously to get a much better composite picture in greater detail, reading through the book of Revelation would be helpful.

C. **Acts 2:22-37—Four Elements of Peter’s Message**

Acts 2:22-37 KJV Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: [23] Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: [24] Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. [25] For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: [26] Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: [27] Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. [28] Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. [29] Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. [30] Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; [31] He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. [32] This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. [33] Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. [34] For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, [35] Until I make thy foes thy footstool. [36] Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. [37] Now when they heard *this*, they were

pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do?

Peter has quoted Joel and now he moves on the work of Jesus Christ. In this presentation of truth there are four distinct elements in his message and all concern Jesus. Peter presents His life, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension as proof of the Messiah.

- Acts 2:22—The Incarnation.
- Acts 2:23—The Crucifixion.
- Acts 2:24-32—The Resurrection.
- Acts 2:33-35—The Ascension.

This is the power of the Gospel summed up in three verses. When Peter starts to explain the resurrection he pulls two very obscure psalms that could have only be fulfilled by Jesus Christ. The crux of those psalms is about someone who the grave could not hold and whose body did not begin to decay. The references are Psalm 16:8-11 and 110:1. Peter brings David into the picture to prove that it could not have been speaking of him because his body never left the grave and he did not ascend up to heaven.

Peter preaches that Jesus was a man who was “approved” of God. That word is crucial in establishing credibility with those who were listening to him. Jesus was extending grace to the unbelieving and to those who had crucified Him. In the Old Testament they would have been stamped with the word “Ichabod” and God would have walked away from them. But this man from Nazareth, a place and a man whom they had despised held the key to salvation. The church is being mocked in much the same way in our day but do not be disheartened by this

because Paul affirmed that “not many wise. . . not many noble” (1 Cor. 1:26-28) are the constituents of the Kingdom. In another place Paul noted that the church would be the “gazingstock” of the world and would have to endure a stigma put on them by the world (Hebrews 10:32-34).

He was approved by the miracles, signs and wonders that took place. In the miracles, Jesus performed mighty deeds. In the wonders, the human minds marveled at the results of His ministry. In the signs, there was a pointing or identification point that He was divine. After the five thousand were fed, He identified himself as the Bread of life (John 6:35). At the resurrection of Lazarus, He declared that He was the resurrection and the life (John 11:25). Despite all of the wonderful things the Lord did in His earthly ministry, the Pharisees still did not turn to Him (John 11:46-47; 12:17; 14:10; 15:24). The reason for this is because men love darkness more than light (John 3:19).

All of the actions in the life of Christ, was predetermined by God (Acts 2:23). All of this activity is the working of the mighty God in Christ. The work on the Cross is also to be included in this work of God.

Next Peter moves into the area of the resurrection. This is one of the foundational doctrines of the apostolic church. We believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead and it is mentioned over 100 times in the New Testament. Acts 2:24 states that the resurrection of Jesus “loosed the pains of death” and the word “pains” is associated with birth pains. For an unbeliever there is great pain in death, but for a saint of God death has lost its power. Jesus Christ has conquered death and has made it harmless. In fact, death is actually the most glorious and joyful experience for a believer (John 5:24; Heb. 2:14-15; 1 Cor. 15:55-57). However, for every saint of God there will be birth pains that will take us into the presence of the Lord (1 Cor. 6:14).

III. CONCLUSION—DEATH COULD NOT HOLD JESUS CHRIST

Neither death nor the grave could hold Jesus Christ because He had too much power. Remember His words from John 2, destroy this temple and in three days, I will raise it up. This was a divine promise working to fulfill a divine purpose that Jesus mentioned in Luke 24:44-45. He was going to have a people that He would call to Himself.

1 Corinthians 15:54-58 KJV So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. **[55]** O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? **[56]** The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. **[57]** But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. **[58]** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.