



## "His Heart Cutting Work" Sermon Series: "The Way of the Spirit"

Acts 2:12-41

By: Dr. Jim Bankhead

September 26, 2010

### Acts 2:12-41

(New International Version)

<sup>12</sup>Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?"

<sup>13</sup>Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."<sup>[a]</sup>

#### **Peter Addresses the Crowd**

<sup>14</sup>Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. <sup>15</sup>These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! <sup>16</sup>No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup>" 'In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,

your old men will dream dreams.

<sup>18</sup>Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,

and they will prophesy.

<sup>19</sup>I will show wonders in the heaven above

and signs on the earth below,

blood and fire and billows of smoke.

<sup>20</sup>The sun will be turned to darkness

and the moon to blood

before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

<sup>21</sup>And everyone who calls

on the name of the Lord will be saved."<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>22</sup>"Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. <sup>23</sup>This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men,<sup>[c]</sup> put him to death by nailing him to the cross. <sup>24</sup>But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. <sup>25</sup>David said about him:

" 'I saw the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand,

I will not be shaken.

<sup>26</sup>Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;

my body also will live in hope,

<sup>27</sup>because you will not abandon me to the grave,

nor will you let your Holy One see decay.

<sup>28</sup>You have made known to me the paths of life;

you will fill me with joy in your presence."<sup>[d]</sup>

<sup>29</sup>"Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. <sup>30</sup>But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

<sup>31</sup>Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ,<sup>[e]</sup> that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. <sup>32</sup>God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. <sup>33</sup>Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. <sup>34</sup>For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,



"The Lord said to my Lord:

"Sit at my right hand

<sup>35</sup>until I make your enemies  
a footstool for your feet." <sup>f</sup>

<sup>36</sup>"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

<sup>37</sup>When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

<sup>38</sup>Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup>The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

<sup>40</sup>With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

<sup>41</sup>Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

**Footnotes:**

- a. [Acts 2:13](#) Or sweet wine
  - b. [Acts 2:21](#) Joel 2:28-32
  - c. [Acts 2:23](#) Or of those not having the law (that is, Gentiles)
  - d. [Acts 2:28](#) Psalm 16:8-11
  - e. [Acts 2:31](#) Or Messiah. "The Christ" (Greek) and "the Messiah" (Hebrew) both mean "the Anointed One"; also in verse 36.
  - f. [Acts 2:35](#) Psalm 110:1
- 

*The living God in Christ Jesus I am so aware that apart from You I can do nothing and it will just be words. I ask You to do that miracle of grace where You breath your breathe in the words that I say, but also in the words we think so that we will know that You are at work among us. And all God's people said, thanks be to God.*

I am the guinea pig to try something that is a little over the edge of what we normally do – I'm going to direct you to both screens and most of my message will appear there and some of you are visual learners and some of you are audible learners and so do what is comfortable for you. I haven't told the elders here yet, but I've always lobbied for pillars for those who I put to sleep that you could just stretch out where you are and be very comfortable.

The title of this morning's message is "The Way of the Spirit: His Heart Cutting Work." All of you are not from Presbyterian backgrounds, but John Calvin who is known as the father of the Presbyterian system. He began to study the method in scripture for how to govern a church. This morning I want to jump into the middle of this passage, I want to review it and go through some it to look at the method that the Spirit uses through Peter and the Apostles toward this crowd. Let's work through this message.

We will go back Acts 2: 12-41 and as you remember the Spirit poured out and people are confused. It says "Amazed and perplexed." They didn't know what was causing this or what it meant. Some people thought they were drunk. They had too much wine – there is one translation that says, "They have new wine" – which actually drunks you up more. Peter who is the one who always jumps up and sticks his foot in the mouth, has been praying with the others. Peter has seen the resurrected Jesus over forty days – had this incredible encounter with the risen Jesus multiple times and so he jumps up with the eleven. He is not alone. He is with the group, raises his voice, and addresses the crowd. Let me explain this to you. In other words, I'm going to tell you what is causing this.



Listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk as you suppose. In other words he stops there thinking, he jars them to say, don't think that, that is not what is causing this – and then he adds, at nine o'clock in the morning. In the first century, a Jewish person would not be drunk at nine o'clock in the morning. Now, some of us Protestants might do that today, but never in the first century. Then he connects what is going on in the present with the past, what they knew and believed God had said and he quotes this prophecy from Joel – "I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh." Then he say, "Who will be affected in this prophecy? You sons and your daughters will – in other words, male and female, your old men will dream dreams and your men will see visions, in other words, not just for the old, not just for the young, all ages, even on the men servants and the maid servants will I pour out my Spirit on them. In other words it is not just for free rich people, but it is for the servants, male and female, it is for everybody. He is connecting what they are seeing, this exuberant praise.

He is connecting it with what they already believed the prophet had said that God had said. Now let's see if we can do that. Then he says, "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles...as you yourselves know." Now there was a debate going on whether it was the prince of demons, Beelzebub, that was causing the miracles or whether God was causing it and a lot of Jews, people believed that God was causing it. They didn't understand everything, but they were convinced because a sinner couldn't do this. He brings it to the present and he goes on, "This man who is doing these miracles that you know about, was handed over by God's set purpose and foreknowledge." This has gone back into the Old Testament, connected it to God's prophecy in the Old Testament, has connected it with recent miracles and now makes it very, very personal and "you with the help of wicked men putting Him to death by nailing Him on the cross."

Now, I don't know about you, but when somebody is standing up and given me a message, I don't like them to point at me and I have a tendency to resist and I wonder, but appears that they didn't resist because the Holy Spirit was at work. Peter takes them back to what occurred in the past and their decision about it. They might not have driven the nails, but they were a part of the public that went along with the execution of Jesus and they couldn't deny that.

But he doesn't stop with what they did to Jesus or who Jesus was and what Jesus did. God raised Him from the dead, freeing Him from the agony of death because it was impossible for death to keep it's hold. Peter reminds them of what God did in the face of what they did. It goes back to the past, connects it with the scriptures of the past, brings it to the present, you did this, this is what God has done and then goes back and connects it with what David said. "Brothers, I tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and His tomb is with us today."

How many of you have been to Israel. (Show of hands.) Several of you have been to Israel. This is the King's Tomb and this is David's Tomb, verified in the Old City and you can go there today. They don't like you to be this close (see photo).



“God has raised this Jesus to life and we are all witnesses of this fact.” Forty days – a month and ten days – they had this experience over and over and over again of Jesus appearing and talking and interacting with them and answering their questions. They are fully convinced He is raised from the dead. “We are eye witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God he is received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you see and hear.” In other words, the Holy Spirit is causing this to happen and remember they had seen Jesus ascend with their very eyes and the angel appeared to them and say, “Go back and wait for the promise of the Father.” Now he connects it with their experience. “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’”

Sometimes you can hear message today and it will cut you open to a place that is wounded and damaged. They were cut to the heart and Peter faces them with what had occurred in their past and they desired to rectify it. How to go back and undo the execution of Jesus? You don’t.

Some of you have been exposed to the study method of Lectio Divina where you read a passage of scripture through three times and you hold onto what sticks in you. What stuck in me was this being cut to the heart. I made a list over my lifetime, and I’m an old man now, and it was a long, long list of places where I have been cut and wounded in my heart. As I prayed through the way of the Spirit is heart cutting work, I got convinced that I wanted to address the Holy Spirit’s heart cutting and healing work in hearts and make crystal clear if I can what we must do practically to allow Him to complete His heart healing work in us. This is about the way of the Spirit and the focus is heart cutting and heart healing work as I said with the children [during children’s sermon].



Isn’t amazing what we can do today with technology. X-rays, MRIs. I don’t how this made this picture of human heart and it was beating when I found it. It is not beating on this slide, but you can see now on the inside.

I want to explain carefully to you about this cutting, healing work and I want you to listen carefully, if you can. You heard me say to the children, “The Holy Spirit’s Sword (Ephesians 6:17) is the Word of God and when they are referring in that time to the Word of God it is the spoken word. It is that word that they received and speak it, but it is also the written Word and sometimes a spoken message whether it is now or some other time this past week.

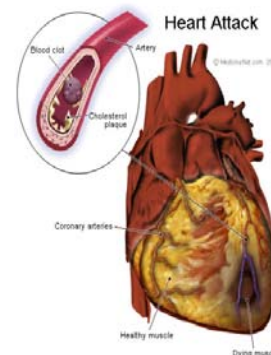
I have permission to say this, my wife spoke a word to me and it cut my heart. The fact is it was a true word. I had done something to hurt her, wound her and embarrass her in a public situation. Everything within me wanted me to defend myself. In fact, I waited a minute and then did a little more damage. However, she loves me and has forgiven me, I hope. *Sword of Spirit.*

I also said to the children the Hebrews (4:12-13), “For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword,” cuts both ways. Look at what the author of Hebrews says, “..it penetrates even to dividing of the soul and spirit, joints and marrow,” in other words it cuts deep the



Word of God does. "...it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Like today with the MRIs and the X-rays and the other equipment to see if we have heart damage, the Word of God is do that with our hearts – we are to love Him with all our hearts, soul, mind and strength. "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." Giving an account is reporting to someone to whom we are responsible, what has occurred. We all are going to give an account to the Lord and part of growing in Christ is learning how to do that now.

I want to talk about a damaged, wounded heart. This is a picture of heart that has clogged arteries. In my wife's family, we've had three of them who have had open heart surgery. How many here have had either stints or open heart surgery of some nature? You know the painful part of that, but you also know that healed you and you are living today because of that surgery. Everything is uncovered. A part of growing in Christ is learning to lay bare before the Lord our hidden heart wounds. I'm going to illustrate that in my own life.

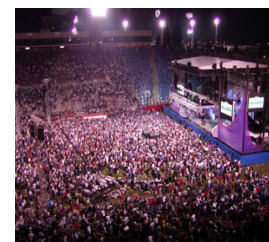


Heart wounds block up our ability to trust and obey Him. My tendency, all my life, was to bury them because I didn't know what else to do with them. The list I made in preparation, I had to stop the list and begin praying – which of these do I share? It is learning to report accurately to the Lord the blockages in our trust in Him and learning to do whatever the Lord says to do about our heart blockages so that he can cut open our heart and repair it.

The first time I went to see a member who had open heart surgery, it scared me to death. They had all these tubes stuck in them and they were in intensive care. I learned that that was a part of healing the damaged heart. We know now what damages hearts. It can be our genetics, smoking, a bad diet and we know how to take corrective measures on the physical heart. But this is about the way of the Spirit, His heart cutting and His heart healing work in that proverbial, metaphorical way. So, let me tell you about my damaged, wounded heart in part.



I committed my life to Christ when I was 13 years old at a Billy Graham Crusade. I was there with my social group and I was seated next to the guy in my social group who every girl I had a crush on, had a crush on him and I figured if I could be like Buddy, maybe a girl someday would have a crush on me.



We are sitting up in the Charlotte Coliseum, much like this crowd – this is a modern picture, none of the big screen was there. Dr. Graham gave his invitation at the end of the message and I had that experience of the tug on my heart to go forward. I don't even remember what he said. I just knew that I was being called to give my life to Christ. I turned to Buddy and said, "Let's go forward." He immediately said, "No. If you do that you've got to be preacher or a missionary." Now, don't tell Peter, Peter or Carol – that wasn't on my list of possibilities. But I didn't know any missionaries and that was like aliens from a foreign planet and if I got up, and I think back about this now – I didn't understand it at the time, I was having to die. I was a jock and my career was going to be athletics in



some form or fashion. I made a deal with the Lord. If I get up and give my life to You, You've got to take care of all the rest. That is all I said. Finally, there were tears streaming down my face and I got up and pushed by friend. Now, I didn't know this at the time, but two other friends followed me out. I found out about that thirty years later – a significance that I share. I went forward and I don't have words to describe it. But it was as if God the Father wrapped me in His arms in my heart. There was this sense of warmth of love that was overpowering to me. It melted my heart. I finished down on the floor and they directed us out the side door into the parking lot – so our friends could come meet us. I'm standing out there and all of a sudden as if an arrow penetrated my heart. I flinched and I felt my friends had rejected me. I thought, I can't tell them I've done this.

Now, silly me, they knew I did it. I hid it. I started this secret journey of trying to follow Christ without knowing a thing about how to do it. But I sure wasn't going to talk about it with my friends. Damaged heart one – a picture of people going forward. Damaged heart two – in the way of the Spirit is heart cutting and heart healing work. Again, it is about my damaged, wounded heart.



For those of you who don't know, I love basketball. I still try to play at it. In fact, Peter only brought me here so he could school me on the basketball court now that I'm 65 and going to be 66 next month. Went to college on a full football scholarship, at a small school called Presbyterian College, affectionately known as PC in South Carolina. I would not sign the scholarship unless they agreed to let me go out for basketball. But the background on that is, in my junior year in high school I'm the leading scorer on the team, averaging 20 points a game. My picture is in the paper. I'm eating the attention up. I said to my mother one day, "Mom, I don't want get conceited." She said, "What do you have to be conceited about?" Cut my heart open!

My hero coach left and went to our arch revival. Our new coach when we were about to play them, took me aside all weeklong and said, "You've got to not just shoot your jump shot, you've got to drive to the basket." He had me practice all week long. I was the type of athlete if the coach said jump and would ask how high. Before the game started, he came over to me and said, "So and so said you'd never make it as basketball player, go out there and disprove it." We played through the game, about two minutes to go we were tied. I remembered what my coach said, "The forward comes out to guard me, I need to drive by him to go to the basket." It is an old tile floor and it was wet and I hit the wet spot, fell, busted myself, lost the ball, they picked up and went down and scored. Our coach calls time out.

He sits us down and says, "You guys, don't worry about this. If we lose this game, it is His fault." (Audience laughter.) It wasn't funny back then. I can laugh about it now. I went into shock then. My heart started racing. I couldn't move. He kept me on the bench for about another thirty seconds and said, "Now, can you go in without making a mistake." I said, "Sure coach, sure." I got in. Clocking ticking down and they're playing zone and we are around the outside of the zone. I'm the leading scorer and they passed me the ball, I passed the ball back and I don't even look at the basket. Clock clicks down, passes me the ball, I pass it back. Six seconds to go and Bill Gaston passes me the ball, go for it Billy, his eyes get big, he turns and shoots. The worst shooter on our team. The ball bounces around and goes through and we won by two points. I lived the rest of my life after that for number years as if we lost the



game. Coach came up and put his arm around me and says, “I lost my temper, you did good & are you ok?” I said, “Yes coach I’m ok.” Wound, deep wound. I can score in practice, in a game my hand trembles and I get to where I will not score. I go to college. I make the team. I’m averaging twenty points in practice. One time I scored thirty & forty in practice. He starts me, I do not take a shot, because of the wound in my heart. I’ll come back to that.

I go to Columbia Theological Seminary and they have an annual missions conference called, Rocky Go Mission Conference that the students put on. They had this famous football player from a school in California, that I will not mention, because of the game yesterday (audience laughter), who was an All American and a jock that just spoke to my heart and when he went to give the invocation at this conference for people to commit their life to Christ, I got nauseated physically. By this time, I have friends who are picking me back up and recovering my walk with Christ and I go outside and wondered what is going on? I remember vividly that arrow in my heart back in that parking lot at age thirteen.

I said to myself, “Lord, what do I do with this blockage in my heart?” Can you imagine what the Lord would have me do? He said to me, “Go forward, give your life to Me again.” My friends made fun of me now, because every time there is an invitation to give, I usually go forward. But, I had to do it over and over again for Him for His Spirit to minister to that wound in my heart, because I didn’t want anybody to experience the pain I experienced when I committed my life to Christ and evangelistic messages did that do me earlier in my life and healed my heart.

The basketball scene, that is not me either, though I was blond headed. I tell you this because my senior year in college the leading scorer on the team was kicked off the team. All the other scorers transferred. I finished playing football on Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, and then we played Appalachia State University on Saturday night and we were defeated by 53 points. Coach took me aside after that game and he said, “Bankhead, if you don’t start shooting we are going to get 53 points every game. We have nobody to score but you.” It wasn’t nausea, but it was this painful – and I don’t know anything about prayer, but that was the only thing I knew to do. Lord, what do I do? All of a sudden it hit me that I was senior in college and what do I have to lose? The coach is not going to jump on me if I miss a shoot or fall down on the floor since he has already told me we are going to get beat anyway. I can’t lose the game because we already are going to get beat. So, I committed and said to myself that I was going to start learning how to shoot in a game. I scored 13 points the first game. We took a trip to Indiana and played Ball State University and I scored 23 points. Now, bring it full circle and we come to come to Appalachia State came down to Clinton, South Carolina where we play and we beat them by 8 points and I scored 26 points in the game.



I tell you those illustrations of the Apostle Peter account because he took them back to where the wound occurred and had them back a new decision in obedience to Christ, relevant to that wound that had blocked their ability in their heart. That is what he did with me because the way of the Spirit is heart cutting and because He wants to heal our hearts. The Spirit of God will take you back to the place the wound occurred in order to correct and heal it. It is painful and most of us do not want the pain.



I remember I was at a church in Dallas and I was in my twenties and I was learning to pray very vulnerably. I prayed my doubts, faith and questions. After the 9:30 am service, I was sitting in the senior pastor's office and he said, "You can't pray like that." Now, I don't know about you, but I don't like somebody telling me I can't pray a certain way. That coach mentality in me said, "Why not?" I hope my voice was not rebellious. He said, "People come into the sanctuary with wounds and hearts and if you pray that vulnerably it induces vulnerability in them and they walk out and they are not equipped to handle it. You can't pray that way." I hesitated on given this message, because some of you are like me, you have wounds from the past that all you knew to do is bury them; cover them up because there was nothing else you knew to do.

Well my challenge to you is let the Spirit take you back to those wounds. He says, "Repent." The word repent literally, means change your mind or way of thinking. I thought I'd lost the game and it hit me seven years later...wait a minute we won that game. Why am I living as if we lost it. I believed a lie. I thought with basketball, with the Billy Graham Crusade that people were going to suffer like I did when they committed to Christ. Some of you know the joy of your relationship with Christ. Turn back to the Lord with your wound and no longer hide it from Him. You are in a safe place and nobody knows. Submit and surrender the wound to God in Jesus for His Spirit's healing work and He will do it in His time. Do whatever God in Jesus says to do to receive is His healing work.

I had to walk forward again and again until the healing came at evangelistic meetings. I had to shoot over and over again to get over the pain in my heart and the blockage be drilled out of it. The same thing is true in Christ – do whatever he says to do, but continue to do it until Jesus gets that healing so fully into you that you know you are healed, because this is a part of the Spirit's cutting and healing work.

So, I'm going to call us to pray silently and if there is anything that pops in your head that is buried that you never knew what to do with and it is only painful, just acknowledge that to the Lord and ask Him to bring His healing hands upon that place.

*Father, you know my fear in this message that I would do further damage to someone who the only way they knew to survive was to bury that stuff, just like I did. Oh, Living Christ thank you that you are risen and thank you that you pour out the gift of your Spirit in surprising ways and that you continue to heal broken and damaged hearts. Do that work of grace among us and in us until we know you are alive in us. And all God's people said, Amen.*

