

To you who are elect according to the foreknowledge of the Father, sanctified by the Spirit, and sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ, grace to you and peace be multiplied.

Whatever things were written before were written for our learning. That Scripture which forms the basis for our patience and comfort today comes from

Acts 2:14a, 22–36 (NKJV) —

- 14** But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them,
- 22** “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know —
- 23** Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;
- 24** whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.
- 25** For David says concerning Him: ‘I foresaw the Lord always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.
- 26** Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope.
- 27** For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.
- 28** You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.’
- 29** “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.
- 30** Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne,
- 31** he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.
- 32** This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.
- 33** Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.
- 34** “For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: ‘The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand,
- 35** Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.’”
- 36** “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

**The Triune God is Sure,
Your Salvation is Assured**

In the name of Jesus, your Savior,

“Nothing is certain but death and taxes.” This quote by Benjamin Franklin seems whimsically true. What is more certain in this world than death?

Peter has something to say on the matter of certainty. “Peter stood up and declared...” There is good reason to open our ears. Peter raises his voice to be heard. Which in all actuality means, the Spirit is being poured out in words to be heard and believed. v.22 “Men of Israel, hear these words...”

Peter stands up – not to preach what you already know about death and taxes; but to preach a certainty that you could never have known or believed if not for the Triune God. If not for the Father, there is no sure plan to deliver Jesus for the sins of the world. If not for the Son, there is no resurrection from the dead that declares us forgiven. If not for the Spirit this work of the Father and the Son would remain sealed from us, never to be known or trusted. The three work as One for they are One and they give One certainty that cannot be taken away. Peter stands up to give you something more sure than death or taxes:

v.36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.

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LET US PRAY: Dear Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as You came to give us certainty in our baptism, so come to us today to make us know assuredly that we are saved eternally.

1. You are assured by God's sure plan of miracles, death, and resurrection and His exaltation to the right hand of God.

Prove it! ... “Well My dad can lift like 1000 lbs.” You can hear the kids on the playground: “Prove it!”

Jesus had to prove Himself. As Peter says in v.22, He was a Man. He looked like a man; walked like a man; suffered like a man. So prove it. That was the charge leveled against Jesus. Prove that you are the Christ, the Chosen Savior, the Son of God. So He did.

So He said, *Luke 5:24* ²⁴ *But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins*—He said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.”

Jesus was a Man. But He was also attested by God – that is, “proven” – by miracles, wonders and signs. Peter directs these words right to the hearts of his audience – “you know it!” You were there. You, men of Israel, have saw Him; you heard Him; He stood, lived, and died in your midst.

Yes, like a Man, He died. Who would believe that this was the Christ?

He faced the same certainty that we all face – death. Sin binds us to this curse. Pain, troubles, and sadness are all symptoms of the inevitable death that permeates creation. Tornados that devastate whole communities in a matter of minutes. Cancer that haunts the hereditary gene pool. An accident that leaves the injured paralyzed.

Romans 8:20 ²⁰ *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; ...* ²² *For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.*

The Son of God must become mortal man. Jesus must face the groaning, the labor of this creation. He must feel the pain. He must have the troubles. He must experience the sorrow. Jesus would be delivered to death by the hands of lawless men.

Why would the Son of God submit to this? As v.23 reveals, this was “the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God.” The Triune God had orchestrated this plan long before Judas held the 30 pieces of silver in his hand. And although the people were indeed at fault for what happened, God had not lost control. *Luke 22:22* ²² *And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!*”

You crucified Him. We hear these words and what are we tempted to think: boy, I’m glad that wasn’t me. I’m glad I didn’t kill Jesus. Well, what if it were you or I? What if we were in that crowd, that angry mob who cried out: “Crucify Him!” Would we do differently? When everyone is shouting for this man to be put to death, would we stand up and tell them to stop? Do we stand up when God’s name is used in vain, when friends or co-workers say “Jesus Christ” or “O my God” for no good reason. Do we stand up when someone is taken advantage of ... when a Christian is in need?

No one stood up for Jesus ... except for the Father. God had promised not to abandon Jesus to the grave. Peter quotes the words of Psalm 16...

v.25-28 I foresaw the Lord always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You

allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.

Centuries before Jesus was born, His wisdom and confidence was heard. “I will not be shaken.” In the face of eternal death, Jesus sees the face of His Father. For He knows the promise. God had sworn an oath – if Jesus offered a perfect sacrifice … then God would raise Him up.

Assuredly I say to you, Jesus has paid for the worst of sins and has overcome the worst of pain. God had overcome the most wicked plans our lawless hands could devise. He took our lawlessness into His own hands and paid the death deserved. Therefore death could not bind Him to the pain of hell. His body would not see decay. The Triune God is sure, Your salvation is sure.

2. You are assured by God's sure exaltation of Jesus and the sending of His Spirit.

At the nursing home last week, someone stopped me and asked, “What is God’s plan for me?” And here in my rush to shake hands and move on, I said, “I’ll be right back...” And I never was. I pray that God allows me to get back there this afternoon and answer this question — God’s plan is to make you sure of your salvation.

Prove it? He has. Prophecies in the Old Testament predict with the utmost detail the suffering and resurrection of Christ. The New Testament with amazing honesty reveals exactly how Jesus fulfilled these expectations.

v.32 This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.

These disciples have seen this resurrected Jesus with their own eyes; they have sat and eaten with Him; they have touched with their own hands this resurrected body. Over 500 people at one time would witness this truth, as Paul writes in 1 Corinthians. God is sure. The resurrection of Jesus is sure. Your salvation is sure.

But we remain so unsure. This last week I saw an interview with an elderly lady who had her house destroyed by a tornado – for a second time. They said it was 1 to 100 trillion chance that a person would have her house destroyed twice in a lifetime. People are searching for something reliable. It may take the form of money, a secure job, good health, or one’s own works. But all these temporal things left to themselves will eventually crumble.

The first commandment calls for a confidence we have failed to produce on our own – the loss of all these temporal gods for the immeasurable Trinity. We cannot fulfill the first commandment by our works; it is fulfilled by faith; by a trust in Him who rose from death, who lives and reigns over all things.

v.32 Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.

There is a 3 in 1 chance that your salvation is sure.

The Father's perfect love in sending His Son. The Son accepting and carrying out the plan of the Father, giving Himself to death freely for you and rising to the right hand of God forever. And just as importantly – the Spirit being poured out that we might know with confidence this salvation is ours.

Your salvation is assured because God is sure. Only He can convince you. And He pours this confidence out through Word and Sacrament. You have been baptized into the name of this One True God. In that washing, God gave you His name, called you His own by pouring out the forgiveness of your sins. This fulfills the first commandment. He declares Himself the only God for you and gives you faith to believe – this Jesus is both Lord and Christ.

God's plan is to make you sure again and again. As much as we commit sins, as much as we witness sin and the tragedy of the fall – God is that much more active in giving you confidence through the means of grace. You won't see this right hand of God exerting its power in the mighty force of nature, in the bank account, or in your own determination; you see it here in Word and water, bread and wine. Here Jesus reveals Himself; here He rules your heart. "He pours out that which you see and hear."

v.34 "For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, Till I make Your enemies Your footstool."

We are waiting until... until... until... Until God's enemies are made His footstool. We remain in a world where around us the only thing that seems certain is death and taxes. Pain, troubles, and sadness; tornados; cancer; paralysis – all these are reminders that we are waiting, ever ready and longing for our Lord's return.

As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 15 – **1 Corinthians 15:25–26** ²⁵ For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. ²⁶ The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.

God's plan is sure. In Christ, God has overcome the worst tragedies, the worst of sins, the most wicked plans of mankind – for He has raised up this Jesus and make Him Lord. Jesus is at the right hand of God ruling all creation for one eternal purpose – to keep your salvation sure.

Be assured – All these things will be put under foot. We wait until. We wait until all things are under Christ's foot. And so we face death just like Jesus – in faith. "I will not be shaken."

What is God's plan for me? ***Jeremiah 29:11*** ¹¹ *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

The future holds some sure and certain; not just the end of taxes, not just the end of Tornados, the end of cancer, the end of paralysis, but we wait for the end of death itself – for this Jesus, who was crucified, God has made both Lord and Christ. The Triune God is sure. Your salvation is sure. Amen.