**FAVORITE PASSAGES OF THE BIBLE**

***Acts 2 – The Hub Of The Bible***

In 1957 James D. Bales wrote a book called *The Hub Of The Bible*. When I entered college in 1971 I saw a paperback copy of this book and bought it for $3 (I remember that because it is written on the inside cover, with my signature and date of purchase). Mr. Bales wrote 295 pages to explain why one chapter (Acts 2) is the epicenter, the main focus, the hub, of the entire Bible. It fascinated me then (nearly half a century ago), it fascinates me still. In fact, I strongly believe it is true and should be proclaimed from the mountaintops.

When I was a six year old boy I very vividly remember getting my first bicycle on Christmas morning. My dad video recorded my first wobbly ride (I remember running over a lady’s hand on the sidewalk down the street). We still have the reel-to-reel tape to prove it. It was a cool-as-all-get-out red and white Schwinn Hornet bike! Oh man, I was “the cock of the walk” in my neighborhood (at least in my own mind). I immediately put at least 25 baseball cards in the spokes so as to make the loudest “muffler” sound possible as I cruised the sidewalks of Meadow Drive in Memphis, Tennessee. My pride went before a fall. It was not long before I slammed into a fire hydrant. It bent the spokes, pulling them from the hub. That is when I learned the mechanics of a tire and the value of the hub. Everything revolves around the hub, whether it’s bikes or Bibles.

In the past 50 years of teaching the gospel I cannot remember an example where I didn’t reference Acts 2 when leading someone to Christ. It is so central to the story of the whole Bible that it seems a fool’s errand to try to convert someone without quoting how the very first Christians were made. The entire Old Testament pointed toward that birthday of the church, and the entire New Testament seems to point back to that day.

God’s great scheme of redemption came true on that first Pentecost after Christ’s resurrection when 3,000 souls responded to the apostles’ preaching. “*Men and brethren, what shall we do*?” they cried after being told they had crucified the Lord (vs. 37). The answer from heaven was, “*Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call*” (vs. 38-39).

Have you ever seen the chart that looks something like this?

**Isaiah 2 + Joel 2 + Daniel 2 = Acts 2**

I’ve used that chart many times in Bible studies. If you haven’t, you need to now. Look:

Isaiah 2:2-4 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the LORD’s house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Daniel 2:44-45 And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

Joel 2:28-32 “And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.
And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. “And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, As the LORD has said, Among the remnant whom the LORD calls.

Acts 2:14-21 But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.’

Can you now see why Acts 2 is so central to the prophecies of the Old Testament? Yes, everything pointed to the Death, Burial and Resurrection of Christ. But the D-B-R pointed to the Kingdom of Christ over which He would rule and reign from heaven. The kingdom / church that had been foretold came into existence in Acts 2. When Jesus told Pilate during His trial, “*My kingdom is not of this world*” (Jn. 18:36), He was referring to this day. When He told the apostles at His ascension to wait in Jerusalem for the outpouring of the Spirit (Ac 1:6-8), He was referring to this day. When Peter preached that first gospel sermon, he quoted these prophecies when he cried out, “*This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel*…” (2:16). And Daniel. And Isaiah. And so many other prophets who foretold of the coming kingdom.

I hope you get down on your knees often and thank God that you are so blessed to be in this spiritual kingdom that was in God’s mind from the foundation of the world. As I sit down with my Bible to read, its not an accident that it so often falls open to the book of Acts. I have used that book more than any other to lead someone to Christ. Acts is the book of conversions, and Acts 2 is the first place we go to tell others how to obey the gospel. If 2,000 years ago it was good enough for 3,000 (2:41), then 5,000 (4:4), then a “*great multitude*” (14:1), to hear the simple message of “*Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins*,” then it should be good enough to teach today.

Just as my Schwinn bicycle could not move without its hub, so sinners cannot be saved without the Bible’s hub – Acts 2. Sit down and read it again as if for the very first time.

I love you. - Rick