

*Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ--he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." Acts 10:34-43*  
NRSV

One of the most remarkable outcomes of Jesus' resurrection was the change in the disciples after Pentecost. The boldness of Peter in this passage of Acts denotes a completely different man than the one wound up denying Jesus three times. While the Holy Spirit was the means, the power was centered in the message, the resurrection of Christ. It was central to all the preaching of the early church. It made a difference.

The resurrected Christ continues to make a difference even over two thousand years. This old poem always says it well:

## **The Touch of the Masters Hand**

*Tw'as battered and scarred, and the auctioneer  
thought it scarcely worth his while to waste much time on the old violin,  
but held it up with a smile; "What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,  
"Who'll start the bidding for me?" "A dollar, a dollar"; then two!" "Only  
two? Two dollars, and who'll make it three? Three dollars, once; three  
dollars twice; going for three.." But no, from the room, far back, a  
gray-haired man came forward and picked up the bow; Then, wiping the dust  
from the old violin, and tightening the loose strings, he played a melody  
pure and sweet as caroling angel sings.*

*The music ceased, and the auctioneer, with a voice that was quiet and low,  
said; "What am I bid for the old violin?" And he held it up with the bow.  
A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two? Two thousand! And who'll make  
it three? Three thousand, once, three thousand, twice, and going and  
gone," said he. The people cheered, but some of them cried, "We do not  
quite understand what changed its worth." Swift came the reply: "The touch  
of a master's hand."*

*And many a man with life out of tune, and battered and scarred with sin,  
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd, much like the old violin, A  
"mess of pottage," a glass of wine; a game - and he travels on. "He is  
going" once, and "going twice, He's going and almost gone." But the Master  
comes, and the foolish crowd never can quite understand the worth of a soul  
and the change that's wrought by the touch of the Master's hand.*

*Myra 'Brooks' Welch*

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