

# Beth Moore doesn't 'have an axe to grind'

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*EDITOR'S NOTE: A video of Beth Moore's sermon can be viewed in our [Baptists Preaching column](#).*

"I got no personal agenda here. I got no axe to grind. I got Acts to teach," Beth Moore declared during her sermon at the inaugural National Preaching Conference hosted by Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary.

Those words appeared soon afterward across social media. Others at the conference described Moore's sermon as "historic" and a "watershed."

During her sermon, Moore addressed the controversy surrounding [John MacArthur](#)'s assertion that she "go home" when he was asked to respond to the phrase "Beth Moore."

## Moore's lifelong love for the Bible

After being welcomed "home" by Baylor President Linda Livingstone, Moore recounted her upbringing, stating that if she had an earned doctorate, "it would be in being First Baptist."

She also spoke of being raised in a troubled and unstable home in which she fell victim to abuse and endured the confusion of seeing her abuser serve in prominent positions in her church.

Moore preached on Acts 1:1-11, continuing into Acts 2. The title of her sermon was "Knowing This from That."

Speaking of her love for the Bible, Moore said she is “62 and a half years in to being mesmerized by the inspiration of the God-breathed word.”

“To me, one of the marvelous things about the word of God” is that after so many years teaching the Bible, “no matter how many times you’ve seen a passage, something jumps out at you,” she said, referring to her recent reading of the Gospel of Luke and deciding to continue straight into the book of Acts. Both books of the Bible were written by Luke, Acts being a continuation of the Gospel.

Moore noticed a recurring phrase Luke used in Acts—“this Jesus.” Luke accentuates “this Jesus” “because there is ‘this Jesus’ and ‘that Jesus,’” she said. The challenge is to figure out which one we know, Moore said.

## **Differentiating ‘this Jesus’ from ‘that Jesus’**

She described several ways in which Christians have accommodated Jesus, including monetizing and politicizing him. Since Christians no longer recognize Jesus, he is no longer recognizable in them, she said.

Describing “that Jesus,” Moore said people see eye-to-eye with “that Jesus,” and “‘that Jesus’ evolves.”

By contrast, “this Jesus” calls people to follow him and become fishers of people. Instead, Christians tell “‘that Jesus,’ ‘You follow me, and I will make you fishy to people,’” Moore said.

After describing “that Jesus” as an idol, Moore declared, “You can tell somebody’s Jesus by looking at someone’s life.”

“‘This Jesus’ is most conspicuous in the Gospels” that tell of his ways, Moore said. “Make me to know your ways, O Lord,” she said, quoting Psalm

25:4.

Citing Acts 4:5-12, Moore said, "Only 'this Jesus' can save." Preachers and teachers must know the difference so they don't preach another Jesus.

Citing Acts 17:2-4 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, she pointed out that "this Jesus" is anticipated by the Scripture, fulfills the Scripture and illuminates the Scripture.

## **Moore addressed women in ministry**

Stating she is a representative of her gender, Moore declared "this Jesus," who called and cloaked and gifted women, still calls and cloaks and gifts them. "I don't know about 'that Jesus,'" she said, stating also that she is not confused about "this Jesus'" take on women, noting he went out of his way to include women. Moore then quoted Acts 2:17-18, which records the Apostle Peter's recitation of Joel 2:28-32:

"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.  
Even on my servants, both men and women,  
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,  
and they will prophesy."

"I got no agenda here. I got no axe to grind. I got Acts to teach," Moore stated.

She went on to say that Acts doesn't "show women displacing men" but being placed in positions of ministry along with men. "'This Jesus' didn't dream of wasting half the gospel witness," Moore said.

In response to those who say Acts describes a temporary situation necessary briefly following Pentecost, Moore pointed out biblical accounts of women leading in ministry decades after Pentecost.

Addressing the power of “this Jesus,” Moore said he is the one who poured out his Holy Spirit on the people at Pentecost, enabling them to do miraculous things.

“The biggest miracle we’ve been able to perform is to turn wine back into water,” Moore said. “Surely, there are bigger wonders than that.”

## **Another difference between ‘this’ and ‘that Jesus’**

Citing the story of Stephen in Acts 6-7, Moore acknowledged “‘this Jesus’ can get you into trouble” while “that Jesus” is much safer.

“That Jesus” would never put us in an awkward position, put our lives at risk or call us to give anything up, Moore said. “‘That Jesus’ calls us to take up our car and follow him to church.”

She also described “that Jesus” as a house cat and “this Jesus” as a lion.

“‘This Jesus’ makes us no longer that same person,” Moore asserted.

## **A personal and powerful closing**

Turning personal, Moore closed the sermon with a story about her young granddaughter, who was present during the sermon.

When asked who she would most like to meet, Moore has responded, “There’s this face I can’t wait to see that I’ve never seen.” Likewise, she has a favorite place she hasn’t been but where she will go someday.

She described being at her home recently when a vehicle drove into the driveway, and the car door opened. Her granddaughter jumped out, ran to her and gave her a big hug. Moore asked her granddaughter if, when she was a young woman at college, she would still run like that to her grandmother.

Moore said she started running to Jesus when she was a child and continued running to him as a college student, a young woman, a married woman and a mom. Imagining Jesus asking her, "When you die, will you run to me," Moore said, "Oh yes, and no one better get in my way" because then I'll be "going home."