

**Preaching Christ....
...by the power of the Holy Spirit
...and the authority of the Word of God**

Date: 8th May 2022
Services: Across the diocese
Series: New beginnings
Title: Peter preaches
Passage: Acts 2:14-41
Outline: **What does this mean?**
What should we do?

Knowing **Jesus**, changes **everything**.

I realise Anzac Day was a couple of weeks back, but I wanted to share a moving story Prince Charles shared at the dawn service in Gallipoli on the 100th Anniversary of the Anzac campaign.

Prince Charles was recounting part of a **diary** a Gallipoli soldier

It was the night before the landing and he was saying goodbye to his wife in case he didn't make it the next day.

That was moving in itself... but then he asked his wife to look out for his **mother** in the latter years of her life.

He said 'tell mother 'I'm not afraid of being **killed** or what is on the **other side**'; tell her 'I **know** in whom I have **believed**...'

That's it... tell her 'I **know** in whom I have **believed**'

Obviously the soldier knew his Bible and knew his **mother** would know **hers**...

It comes from 2 Timothy 1 v 12 – the full quote is *I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.*

What has been entrusted to God that he guards until the last day?

Eternal life!!

The **soldier** – in a very short hand way – tells his mother that even if he **dies**, he will be **OK**, because God has **eternal life** waiting for **him**.

Tell mother 'I know in whom I have believed...' //

Knowing **Jesus** changes **everything**. //

It changed everything for those **first** disciples we are reading about in the Acts of the Apostles.

They went from being locked away in a room - scared the Jewish leaders were coming for **them**, // to telling the wonders of God to all those from the four corners of the world gathered in Jerusalem for the ancient feast of **Pentecost**.

We finished last week with the **hundreds** – possibly **thousands** of people having heard the **120** Jerusalem disciples speak about God in their **native language** - '**amazed and perplexed**' and asking '**what does this mean?**'

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So Peter explains **exactly** what this meant.

And they have another question.

'what shall we do?'

So I'm going to use those two questions as our outline this morning:

'what does this mean?', and

'what shall we do?'

1. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

... **amazed** and **perplexed**....because they heard Galilean men and women – speaking **all** the native languages represented by the crowd gathered in Jerusalem.

What's going on?

they may have also heard **wind** when there was no actual **wind**

And seen **fire** that wasn't actually **fire** rest on everyone's head.

So it was a perfectly **understandable** question: *'what does this mean?'* //

It certainly wasn't because some of the disciples were **drunk** as some mockingly suggested.

So Peter stands to explain... We don't have **everything** he said – ...but we have recorded for us the **crux** of what he said in answer to that question *'what does this mean?'*

Peter says that they saw and heard that day...

1. ...**always expected**
2. ...after you **killed Jesus**

Always expected? Yes. Go read our prophet **Joel**. It's all **there**.

*"in the last days... I will pour out my **Spirit** on **all people**...*

People will **prophecy**, there will be **dreams** and **visions**...

'the sun will be turned to darkness' before the coming of the Lord – probably referring to the darkness of the **cross** before the coming of the **Spirit**....

And then look with me at v21 – ***everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved...***

In the time of the **Spirit**.... anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be **saved**...

Saved from **sin and death**...

Saved from eternity **without God**... //

it's still true **today** that anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be **saved**... ! Anyone watching

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today..... who wants to turn to God and have him **rescue them...** will be **rescued...!**

That's why we **long** to share Jesus across **central** and **western NSW...** because we believe that it's **still** true that anyone who calls on his name will be **saved..** and we **want** that news to **spread** so **everyone** hears it!!!!
///

So – **no** – not **drunk** with **wine...**

But what prophet Joel **said** would happen, has **happened!!**

...THIS WAS **always expected...** ///

...and it was **expected,** says Peter, **after you killed Jesus...** //

Well this must have been very hard for them to hear.

Peter now puts the coming of the **Spirit** in the context of **Jesus' ministry** – which they **saw** and **knew** – his amazing **healings** and **other miracles...** /

He puts it in the context of Jesus' **death** – which he attributes both to **God's set purpose** and **foreknowledge** **AND** to **those listening to him**

v23... *"you, with the help of wicked men put him to death by nailing him to the cross"* ///

I wonder if you've ever been involved in something where you didn't realise the **seriousness** or the **significance** until **after?**

I think of the man charged with landing a **king hit** punch on his **brother** a few years back... // a night out at the pub with his **brother** and few **mates...** and before you know it things got out of **hand** and he found himself looking at his brother in **hospital** on **life support** wondering whether he'll **come to** and he's **already** been charged with causing **grievous bodily harm...**

It's then you have one of those moments when you asked '**what have I done!?**'

Is that what it was like for the **Jews** listening in to **Peter** that day? //

They had been caught up with the crowd at the **previous** feast for which they were in Jerusalem... **Passover** - and the religious leaders had **whipped** them up into a **frenzy...** asking **Pilate** to release **Barabbas...** /

Asked him to **crucify Jesus...** yes – **crucify** him – he's a **blasphemer**

And before you know it, **Jesus** is up on a **cross....** //

perhaps they'd not given it a lot of thought until Peter **speaks** of it...

And when he does, it **hits** them – oh **man** – **what have we done!?**

Furthermore... in v36 Peter says – *this Jesus whom you've crucified is both **Lord** and **Messiah!***

Oh man – what have we done!?! We killed the **Messiah!**

v37 *when the people heard this, they were cut to the heart*

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ever felt cut to the **heart**? //

It's the knowledge that you have done something **terribly wrong**.

It's the wanting to **undo** what you have **done**. //

I think I know **something** of that from a situation I found myself in a few years back. I say *something* because the situation I was in doesn't exactly correspond. / I was talking to a Christian friend about a someone **else** – and sharing some **frustrations** I had with that **person**.

Completely **unknown** to me, however, that very person I was **talking** about, overheard some of our **conversation**! causing that **third** person **great hurt**. //

Now I hadn't set **out** to be **hurtful** - but when I found I had been - **I was 'cut to the heart'**! //

and when you realise that your religious leaders - with your **encouragement** - with you shouting '**crucify, crucify**'; had actually **strung** up the long-awaited **Messiah** - **YOU** would be **cut to the heart**!

what had they done? /

How could they have been so **blind**, so **slow** of **heart**, so **hard**? ///

So they have a **second** question for Peter now:

2. WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

This shows how **real** their 'cut to the heart' feeling was.

It wasn't **shallow**... not just a **temporary** feeling of **regret**...

It was **real** and **genuine**.

How can we **adequately respond**?

Of course Peter has already made it abundantly clear that Jesus didn't **stay** dead.

So back in v24 Peter had said *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.*

v32 *God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses to the fact*

Great news

Wonderful news

But **still** they want to know '**what should we do?**'

Peter is clear: they are to

REPENT and be **BAPTISED**...

...they're linked of course – the **baptism** a sign of **repentance**.

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It's a big deal to **repent**

Because it means to **change** your **mind** and people typically, don't want to back **down**.

It means to **change** your **mind** about **God** and **Jesus** – I was **wrong** – he is **real**... **he** calls the shots... **Jesus** is **God's Son** – **Lord** – **Messiah**. I now **change my mind**

It's still a big deal **today**. //

It's **always** hard to admit you're **wrong**

Hard to admit you're wrong about **God**, when it means your **whole life will change**.

It not only means to change your mind about **God**, it means to change your mind about **yourself**

I'm no longer in **charge**

Neither am I **self-sufficient**...

Rather – I realise I've been **sinful, wilful**... I've kept **God out**... I've done my own **thing**... I've called the **shots**... I've ridden **roughshod** over other **people**... //

And I'm now changing my **mind** about **all that**... /

I'm going to turn my life around from **sinfulness** to come under the **authority** of this one **God** has appointed **Lord**.

and as a **sign** of your faith - be **baptised** - take up the sign - the **symbol** of what **God** will do in you when you have repented.

...For he will wash you **clean** from your **sin** and put a new **heart** in you that is **soft** and **tender** to him! ///

Peter – we are cut to the heart – what should we do?

Repent and **be baptised**.

Peter follows up **those two instructions** with **two promises**... //

forgiveness - the **removal** of **sin** – the **slate** is **clean**.

Sin **removed** and **forgotten**. **Gone**. End of **story**.

and then the OTHER **great** and **marvellous** promise:

... they will receive the **gift** of the **Holy Spirit**, the moment of their **repentance** and **baptism** - just as the first **120** believers had **received the Spirit**! //

Forgiveness... and the **Holy Spirit** – to **empower** and **gift** and **transform** –

These two amazing gifts are there for **all** who **God** calls to him - down through the **generations**

... two great gifts available **today**....

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...both to our **children** and to those who are **far off** – if you like – those as far as you can imagine from the kingdom of God – the promises are **held out...** to those who will take **them...** to those whom God will **call...**
///

How brilliant is this... //

Again – it's one reason why we keep going as **church** across **central and western NSW** – because we **firmly believe** that God's **promises** – his promise of **forgiveness** and his promise of the **Holy Spirit** are still on the **table...**

Still on the table for our **children** – which is why we raise them in relationship with God from day 1

And still on the table both for the **near** and the **far off...**

For those who **grew** up in **church** and have become **disconnected...**

And for those who know **very little** about **Jesus** and have never been **involved before...** //

Well what was the result that day?

v41 – those who accepted his message were baptised and about 3,000 were added to their number that day.

Must have been a **long baptism service!!!**

3,000!

The church in Jerusalem grew that day from **120** to **3120!**

Knowing Jesus, changes everything....

And when you realise there's something **true** to the Jesus story and you ask those **two questions**

'**What does this mean?**' – and you're told and it all falls into place and as a result, you're cut to the **heart...**

AND **then** you ask '**What shall I do?**' – and you **repent** and receive God's **holy Spirit...**

...then everything **changes.**

You **know** where you're **at** with **God**

You're clear and confident

And whether you're in trenches at Gallipoli 107 years ago or out here, anywhere in the central west – you can say 'I **know** in whom I have **believed'**.. he will guard what I've entrusted to him – my eternal life...

...and I have great **assurance** and **comfort** and **peace** and **joy** and **clarity...** because of **him!**