

INTRODUCTION

Peter uses the miracle of the crippled man to proclaim Christ to the large crowd that gathered. The crowd had gathered no doubt confused about the miracle and looking for an explanation to the miracle. Before giving that explanation Peter asks two questions designed to clear up any confusion about the source of the healing.

His first question “why does this surprise you” (v 12) is a mild rebuke, for as Jews they knew from their history that God was a miracle working God.

They also must have witnessed the miracles performed by Jesus to demonstrate that He was the Son of God. Therefore why should they be surprised that God could work another miracle through His apostles?

Peter’s second question was (v 12) “why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk.” The crowd should have known that two ex-fishermen had neither power nor godliness to perform such a miracle on their own. The questions left the crowd in a dilemma. While they acknowledged that God alone had power to do miracles, yet they denied that Jesus was God and that his followers had been granted power by God to perform miracles in the name of Jesus Christ. Therefore they were left with no explanation of what they had just witnessed although the explanation was simple if they only believed what was clear to them.

But Peter like every good preacher directs attention away from himself and John and focuses upon Jesus Christ.

1. THE SERMON (vs. 11-18)

Peter describes Jesus Christ in five ways to highlight the fact that He is the Messiah approved by God yet rejected by the People.

a) Servant (v 13) - As Peter is preaching to a Jewish audience, he describes God in typical Jewish fashion the God of Abraham etc. to stress God’s covenant faithfulness to Israel. By using this description Peter claims continuity with the Old Testament prophets since he is declaring the same God they preached and the same Messiah that they promised.

Peter proclaims that the God of the covenant, the God of the Patriarchs and the prophets, has glorified His servant Jesus. The word “servant” here is an unusual word to use for it’s not the normal Greek word for servant but it is used here to describe Jesus as God’s personal representative or ambassador. However the term servant was a familiar Old Testament title for the Messiah and in Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12 the servant is depicted as suffering, being obedient even unto death.

Matthew in his gospel identifies this suffering servant as Jesus (Matthew 12:18-21). Even Jesus said that he did not come to be served but to serve (Matthew 20:28). This is the servant whom God glorified through his resurrection and ascension into heaven.

b) Jesus (v 13) - This servant is identified as Jesus and the name Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, which means, “The Lord is salvation.” His name tells us about his purpose, which was to be the Saviour. He did not come into our world to be a leader, healer, guide or friend but to be the Saviour of sinners.

But instead of welcoming this Saviour the people rejected him because they wanted a Saviour who would deliver them politically and militarily from the power of Rome. They did not want a Saviour who confronted their sin in order to offer deliverance from it. This same Jesus whom God glorified was handed over by the people to be killed and disowned. Even though Pilate had decided to let Jesus go free because he was aware that it would be unjust to have Jesus killed yet the people led by their leaders insisted on his death. Peter here boldly confronts his Jewish audience with the seriousness of their sin look at the word “you.”

All true gospel preaching must confront sinners with this fact and pronounce them guilty before God. Men and women will never see the need for salvation until they see the truth that they are guilty before God and in need of salvation.

c) Holy and Righteous One (v 14) - To emphasise their guilt Peter repeats his charge that they disowned Jesus who is the Holy and Righteous One; But more than that they asked that a well-known murderer should be released instead of Jesus. The word “holy” means to be separated to God. Jesus is not only holy by nature but also separated to God to do his will.

Of course the Holy one is also an Old Testament Messianic term (Psalm 16:10). What Peter is saying is that the people’s rejection is unthinkable. Jesus was their Saviour He was holy, separated to do God’s will yet they killed him and that placed them in rebellion against such a holy God. The word “righteous” carries the idea of innocent of any crime. The people were faced with a choice between a guilty murderer and Jesus the innocent one and they chose the murderer in the place of an innocent man. Peter is piling on their guilt.

d) Author Of Life (vs. 15-17) - Peter has been presenting a series of paradoxes. Although Jesus was a servant, God exalted Him; He was the people’s Saviour yet the people put him to death. They rejected the Holy and Righteous One in favour of a murderer. Now he comes to the greatest paradox of all. They put to death the “author of life,” while asking for the release of one who took life.

The term “author of life” refers to the originator or beginner of life and that term alone is claiming that Jesus is God for only God is the author of life. Throughout the New Testament we are told that Jesus is the source of life (John 1:4; 1 John 5:11 & 20). Jesus himself claimed to be source of life (John 5:26 & 11:25). The One who gives life is the very One that the people handed over to death.

Yet death could not contain him for God raised him from the dead and that fact cannot be disputed because Peter and John are witnesses of that fact (v 15). If Jesus did not rise from the dead then their claim would have been easy to disprove, all that had to be done was to produce Jesus dead body and those claims by Peter and John and the rest of the disciples would have been killed instantly.

But of course they could not do that because Jesus did rise from the dead and the testimony of the apostles could not be discredited.

Peter’s point in all this is that the Jews who were listening to Peter claimed to love and serve God, yet Peter clearly shows that they were in rebellion against God. They came to the Temple to worship him yet by their actions towards Jesus they proved themselves to be enemies of God. The one God approved off they had handed over to death and disowned.

The people's guilt was enormous but their murder was unsuccessful because Jesus was alive and the miracle that they have witnessed is proof of that fact for it was done in his name and by his power (v 16).

However Peter acknowledges that although the people were guilty they acted out of ignorance, they followed their leaders (v 17). But their ignorance was inexcusable because the evidence that Jesus was God and their Messiah was clear from the Old Testament prophecies and from the words and works of Jesus, including his death and resurrection.

But what Peter is saying is that there is hope for them, even though they acted in ignorance there was no excuse for it yet if they repent and turn to Christ they would be forgiven (v 19). We too are guilty before God, we have no excuse for our sin and our rebellion but there is hope for us, as well if we turn to God in repentance we will receive forgiveness.

e) Christ (v 18) - In the final section of the first half of the sermon Peter reassures his hearers that their rejection and execution of Jesus had not frustrated God's plan. The crucifixion did not alter God's plan in fact it was all part of God's plan.

God had foretold through the Old Testament prophets that the Messiah would be rejected and killed and now what these people have done and witnessed is in fact the fulfilment of God's eternal plan. This did not make the people less guilty but it did offer to them forgiveness for their sin because the reason Jesus entered our world lived died and rose again is so that sinners could receive forgiveness. He died so that sinners could be restored to a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ, which brings us to the application of the sermon.

2. THE APPLICATION OF THE SERMON (vs. 19-26)

Peter's sermon must have left the people with a question. What shall we do? Now Peter is going to apply the sermon by telling them what they ought to do. Peter's sermon is an example of good gospel preaching. Before anyone can understand the good news of salvation through Jesus they must be faced with the bad news of their sin and guilt.

Now Peter like a good preacher is going to call sinners to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ

a) Reasons To Repent (vs. 19-26) - Peter clearly gives a number of reasons why the people should repent from their sins and turn to God.

i) God Will Forgive Sinners (v 19) - Peter calls upon the people to repent in order to receive forgiveness. The literal meaning of the Greek word for "repentance" is to change's one's mind and purpose. Therefore repentance involves much more than a mere decision to follow Jesus, it involves a change of mind that leads to a change of behaviour. To repent means to turn to God and when one turns to God in repentance then the good news is that your sins will be wiped out.

The term "wiped out" pictures the wiping of ink from a document. Unlike modern day ink, in New Testament times ink had no acid content. Consequently it did not bite into the papyrus that was used for documentation. It remained on the surface and was easily wiped out with a damp sponge. This is what God does with the sins of a repentant sinner he wipes them out completely, so that they can never be retrieved again.

Even the sin of rejecting and executing the Messiah could be wiped out if they will repent and turn to God. Imagine all sin; no matter how horrible can be wiped out by God because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He died in our place; he bore our sin therefore all who repent and turn to him can experience total and complete forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

Therefore instead of standing guilty and condemned before God repentant sinners stand righteous and accepted by God. Therefore sinners who are guilty and feel guilty as a consequence can experience freedom from that guilt and that guilt can be replaced with a sense of joy of knowing God through Jesus Christ.

ii) Times of refreshment will be experienced (v 19) - The Greek word for “refreshment” can mean “rest” “relief” “respite” or “refreshment.” It is the positive counterpart to forgiveness, for God does not only wipe out our sins but he adds refreshment to our spirits. Let me illustrate it for you like this.

We have a thing called respite care. When a carer needs a rest, a chance to recharge their batteries, they ask for the person they are caring for to go into a Nursing home for respite care. Well in the same way in our Christian life there are times when we need the Lord to give us respite care.

Many of us go through times when we feel stale as Christians. Christianity has become a routine we come to church every week but it's not as it used to be, we simply feel spiritually stale. We feel spiritually flat. We all go through dry spells spiritually and we need a bit of respite care from the Lord, we need spiritual refreshment. Sometimes this dryness is caused by our employment, which has also become stale, boring and unrewarding. Sometimes it's caused by poor health or stress or sometimes it is caused by our sin. But whatever the cause we are told here that when we repent and receive God's forgiveness then there will be many days when the Lord will refresh us. Has that been your experience?

Have there not been times when Jesus becomes so real to you and the gospel is so vivid that your whole spirit has been revived. You feel like a new person, you regain your excitement for the things of God and you experience freshness in your relationship with God.

You see God not only promises us forgiveness but he promises to be with us and one experience of his presence is to know times of refreshment in the midst of the routine of life.

iii) Future prospect (vs. 20-21) - Not only will our past be dealt with through forgiveness and the present dealt with through periods of refreshment but the prospects for our future is extremely exciting as well. One day God will send Jesus back to our world then He will restore all things as He has promised to do. In other words Jesus is in heaven now and comes to us by his Spirit to refresh us spiritually but there is coming a day when he will leave heaven and return to earth and bring everything back to its intended and original purpose.

Christians have a bright future because we will enjoy God's new heaven and new earth but these present and future blessings are only enjoyed when we repent and receive God's forgiveness through Jesus. Unrepentant sinners only know guilt in this world for them there are no times of spiritual refreshment, but there is also no bright future because they will not receive heaven but hell.

That is why you must repent now, don't leave it any longer turn to God and receive these blessings in Christ. But there are two more reasons why we should repent.

iv) Judgement will be avoided (vs. 22-24) - As an example of a prophet through whom God spoke, Peter quotes Moses, Israel's first and greatest prophet. In Deuteronomy 18:15, which is quoted here by Peter, Moses spoke of the coming Messiah (v 22). The prophet predicted was interpreted by the Jews to mean the coming Messiah (John 1:21, 25 & 6:14). Now Moses warned the people of the consequences of rejecting the Messiah (v 23 cf. Deuteronomy 18:19). Rejection of the Messiah would mean that they would be cut off from God's promised blessings to his people (v 23). That was the condition that Peter's hearers found themselves in by rejecting God's Messiah Jesus Christ.

But not only did Moses warn the people so did all the prophets from Samuel's time onwards. But Peter's audience like their forefathers refused to listen to the prophets. The nation was without

excuse for their failure to accept Jesus as their Messiah. The evidence was clear and undisputed yet the people refused to turn to God therefore “they will be completely cut off from among his people” (v 23).

This is why they should turn to God in repentance and receive his forgiveness and refreshment. By so doing we will receive blessings, both now and in the future, rather than judgement. My dear friends the only way that we are going to escape God’s judgement is to repent and receive God’s gift of forgiveness. We like Peter’s listeners are guilty before God of rejecting Jesus the Saviour.

Therefore repent now otherwise we will be cut of from God and His people for all eternity.

v) Privilege That Belonged to Them (vs. 24-26) - Peter’s audience were Jews they therefore knew the prophets message, God had sent his word to them and had made covenant promises to them as a nation. They knew that through Abraham all the nations of the earth would be blessed (v 25). That blessing of course was ultimately spiritual for all who believe in Jesus Christ are true children of Abraham (Romans 4:11).

The Jews were a very privilege nation indeed therefore they had no excuse for not turning to God even the gospel was preached first to them (v 26). Remember Jesus mandate to His disciples was to begin in Jerusalem before going further afield with the gospel (Acts 1:8). That is what Peter is doing in this sermon therefore what must they do? They must turn from their wicked ways (v 26).

Repentance was the key that unlocked everything. Peter has clearly shown the people that the claims of Jesus were consistent with what was predicted in the Old Testament, therefore the people should respond in repentance and believe in Jesus their Messiah. However sadly most of the Jews who listened to Peter that day never did repent and ultimately they were cut of from God and his people. They ended up in hell. My dear friends that is the destiny for everyone who refuses to repent including you. God offers you forgiveness and salvation. We are all sinners before Him.

Therefore what must we do? Repent and receive his offer of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Amen

INTRODUCTION

Ever since God's covenant with Abraham in which He promised to bless all nations through Abraham's seed (Genesis 12:1 & 7 Galatians 3:16), the Jewish people have longed for Messianic times. They believe that when the Messiah comes all wrongs will be made right and He will lead them to victory over their enemies and free them from the bondage of foreign occupation.

With this context in mind Peter's announcement that the last days, which was clearly a name for the Messianic age had already begun (vs. 16-21) was shocking to the everyday Jew. But this claim by Peter is how Peter introduces his sermon on the Day of Pentecost and the sermon theme is clearly centred upon Christ (Messiah), their Messiah had indeed come and his name is Jesus of Nazareth.

It is difficult for us in our modern world to understand just how disturbing Peter's claim was to the Jews. The Messiah was the central figure in Jewish thinking, so for Peter to proclaim boldly that Jesus is the Messiah would have both shocked and outraged his hearers. After all about six weeks previous they had crucified Jesus for claiming to be the Messiah. Now his followers were making the same claim and to the Jewish mindset there could be no greater expression of blasphemy. So for Peter in this sermon to proclaim that Jesus is Israel's Messiah was to raise the most dynamic powerful forceful issue possible.

But in doing so Peter shows a boldness and courage that he had lacked on previous occasions. Just further evidence of the powerful influence the Spirit has on the life of a Spirit filled believer.

Peter knew that his listeners would not accept his claims unless they are provided with compelling evidence so Peter seeks in this sermon to provide such evidence. Now having explained the miracle of Pentecost in his introduction he now launches into his message, which is Jesus of Nazareth is the divine Messiah.

Peter establishes Jesus' credentials by demonstrating how his life, death, resurrection and exaltation prove that He is the Messiah. So let us look at each one of these areas that Peter covers.

1. THE LIFE OF JESUS THE MESSIAH (v 22)

As Peter did at the beginning of his sermon he once again challenges his hearers to listen to him. Peter wants them to understand that in spite of their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah the salvation that he offers is still available to them. This Jesus did miracles among them, which they witnessed and yet in spite of their rejection this gospel of salvation is still being offered to them.

Peter calls Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth, which was the name in which he was commonly known during his earthly ministry. That name identified him with his hometown of Nazareth and that name reminds Peter's audience that Jesus the Son of God left heaven and entered our world to live in a humble village like Nazareth.

Peter further describes Jesus as a man accredited by God. The word "accredited" has various shades of meaning; it is used in 1 Corinthians 4:9 to speak of displaying something. In Acts 25:7 it conveys the idea of proof. All those meanings are applicable to Jesus, he was displayed as God in human flesh and that display took the form of miracles, wonders and signs, which was convincing proof that Jesus is God in human flesh. Now notice what Peter is saying. These miracles performed by Jesus provide overwhelming evidence that Jesus is who he claims to be, From the

miracle of his virgin birth to the miracle of his resurrection and all the miracles in between proclaim to us loud and clear that Jesus is God. He is the one sent by God to be his Messiah and Saviour.

Nicodemus clearly understood the importance and significance of Jesus' miracles (John 3:2). It should not surprise us that the God who supernaturally created our universe should choose from time to time to supernaturally intervene in it through the performance of miracles. Yet it is the claim of miracles that many in our own time and culture object to in biblical Christianity.

It is for this reason that the miracles have been attacked down through the history of the church. Critics of Christianity know that if the miracles can be proven to be fake then Jesus must have been a fake as well. Remove the miracles from Christianity and in truth there is nothing left. These miracles are wonders and signs. The word for "wonders" describes the amazement that takes place in the mind of the one who witnesses the miracle. The word "signs" tells us the purpose of Jesus miracles; they were signs pointing us to spiritual truth.

It is interesting to note that throughout the book of Acts, wonders and signs always appear together telling us that mere amazement at the miracles of Jesus has no value unless that amazement leads us to place our trust in the God who is performing these miracles. Therefore the purpose of Jesus' miracles was to manifest God's power in order to get people's attention and point them to spiritual truth.

Notice that Jesus did not do his miracles on his own but God performed them through him. In order words the miracles show both his deity and his Father's approval of Him. Peter is driving home the point here that Jesus is the Messiah he is no impostor but that God is working through Him, empowering him in order to proclaim through his miracles that he is the Son of God and he is the promise Messiah who has now come.

Peter continues to remind his audience that they could not claim to be ignorant concerning the miracles, for God did them in their midst (among you), and they knew that to be true (as you yourselves know), so their rejection of Jesus was not based on lack of information but on hatred of Christ and love for sin. They could not deny his miracles but they would not submit to him, or accept him as their Messiah (John 15:24-25). The evidence from Jesus life and works that he was the Messiah was conclusive and undeniable. Yet because people love sin more than anything else they continue to reject Jesus Christ. Is that you?

2. THE DEATH OF JESUS THE MESSIAH (v 23)

Peter use of the term "this man" brings out the stark contrast between his hearers' evaluation of Jesus and God's. The very One whom God honoured as Messiah they had rejected and crucified. Peter is answering an objection that could have been raised by his listeners. If Jesus is the Messiah why was he a victim? Why did he not use his power to avoid the cross?

Peter's response to this unspoken objection was that Jesus was no victim but that he was "handed over" by the "set purpose" and "foreknowledge" of God. The word translated "handed over" appears only here in the New Testament. It describes those who surrendered to their enemies or were betrayed. Therefore God gave his Son to be the Saviour of sinners and that entailed Him handing Jesus over to his enemies. By the set purposes and design of God Jesus was betrayed by Judas into the hands of Jewish leaders who handed him over to the Romans for execution. The word "set purpose" means "to mark out with a boundary" or "to determine." Jesus was marked out to be executed by his enemies because it was God's plan to do so in order to save sinners.

This plan was God's intention from eternity. It was not as if God knew what was going to happen and was resigned to that fact as the word foreknowledge might lead us to believe. The word

“foreknowledge” means much more than knowing before hand but it involves being “fore loved” and being “fore ordained.”

Any idea that God saw in advance that Jesus would be rejected and crucified and then worked out his eternal plan is an implicit denial that God is sovereign and omniscient and such a view must be rejected. Peter’s point is that Jesus was handed over to death by God’s eternal plan, therefore his death did not contradict his claim to be God in human flesh or his claim to be the Messiah.

He did not avoid the cross because it was God’s set purpose that Jesus should die on behalf of sinners. However the fact that Jesus was handed over to death by God’s set purposes does not release those who put Jesus to death of their guilt. Peter goes on to accuse them because they nailed Jesus to a cross and put him to death. They were the instigators of Jesus execution, which with the help of wicked men (the Romans) Jesus was put to death.

God used evil men to accomplish his purpose yet he never violated their will or removed their responsibility by doing so. Peter presents to us the wonder of the sovereignty of God alongside the responsibility of man. That apparent paradoxical truth is affirmed throughout the bible and is perfectly illustrated for us in Luke 22:22.

People are responsible not for God’s plans and set purposes but for their own actions and their own sins. The heinous sin of rejecting Jesus Christ was the blackest moment in Israel’s history. The betrayal was part of God’s plan of redemption for sinners.

We are told in the Old Testament that God’s promised one (Messiah) would have to die (Psalm 22 & Isaiah 53) according to God’s set purposes therefore Jesus death did not deny that he was the Messiah but it was clear evidence that he was that Messiah. The problem was the people rejected Him because He was not the Messiah they wanted or expected. What about you are you going to continue to reject him because he is not the Saviour you want or expect? He will save you from your sin and not your problems. He will take you to heaven and not prosperity he will make you right with God but not necessarily your family.

You see if you want Jesus as your Saviour because of how He might improve your life here on earth then you are rejecting the real Saviour. Jesus wants to save you from sin and hell that is why he died. Will you trust him as Saviour and receive his forgiveness and salvation?

3. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS THE MESSIAH (vs. 24-32)

Now Peter says a lot more about Jesus resurrection than he does about his death. As we have already noted the resurrection of Jesus Christ was not only the central theme of Apostolic preaching but also without question the climax of the redemptive story. The resurrection proves beyond doubt that Jesus is God in human flesh and that He is the promised Messiah.

Jesus resurrection is also a guarantee of our own resurrection and it is the crowning proof that God accepted the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on our behalf (Romans 4:25).

Now notice how Peter presents the resurrection he says that although the Jews rejected and crucified their Messiah, God raised him from the dead (v 24). Peter is forcefully driving home his point, they were guilty of opposing God even though they denied it, but God raised to life the one they opposed and killed. By raising Jesus from the dead, God was freeing him from the agony of death.

The word translated “agony” literally means “birth pangs” so just like a woman in labour whose pain will not last forever so the pain of death for Jesus was temporary and resulted in something

glorious, the resurrection. Jesus was raised to life because it was impossible for him to be held by death.

Death the great enemy of mankind was powerless to hold Jesus because He being God was more powerful than death and the devil. Death was powerless because Jesus predicted and promised that He would rise from the dead (John 2:18-22 & Luke 24:46) because he is the conqueror of death. Death could not hold Jesus because it was God's purpose that his people should be with Jesus for all eternity. Therefore Jesus had to defeat death so that all who are united to Christ through faith would not be defeated by it. Because Jesus lives, His people live forever.

But there is another reason given here for Jesus resurrection. Death could not keep a hold of Jesus because the Scripture had to be fulfilled (vs. 25-28). Peter quotes from Psalm 16:8-11 and although it was written by David it is clearly a Messianic passage. It describes the Messiah's confident trust in God as he looked to the cross and verse 25 is the key to that trust. Jesus kept his focus on God no matter what trials came his way.

He knew that because God was at his right hand he would not be shaken. The right hand is a symbol of protection and because of the Messiah's confidence in God's protection he was able to be glad and rejoice (v 26). Even the prospect of death could not dampen Christ's joy as the writer to the Hebrews puts it in Hebrews 12:2.

Jesus was able to rejoice because he knew that he would not be abandoned to the grave, his body would not be left to decay (v 27), and it would be resurrected. But this is not true of David who wrote that Psalm. He died and was buried (v 29) in fact his tomb provided them with evidence that he was not talking about himself in that Psalm. But David as a prophet knew that God would seat one of his descendants upon his throne (v 30) because David knew God promised that in 2 Samuel 7:11-16. So David looks ahead knowing what God has promised and sees the resurrection of the Christ (Messiah), which he speaks about in this Psalm. Do you understand what Luke is doing here?

He is taking a well-known Psalm and is saying that even in the Old Testament David could see the resurrection of the Messiah. Therefore and here is Peter's conclusion (v 32) God has raised Jesus from the dead and we are witnesses of that fact. That is why death could not keep hold of Jesus that is why the resurrection is clear and conclusive proof that Jesus is the Messiah.

That is why none of us have any excuse for our failure to repent of our sins and turn to this Saviour. His resurrection proves that his death is sufficient to pay for our sins and is acceptable to God. There is no other way to be forgiven or justified before God. Jesus has done all that needs to be done therefore turn to him and be saved.

4. THE EXALTATION OF THE MESSIAH (vs. 33-36)

Now not only did Jesus rise from the dead but also he was also exalted to the right hand of God the place of honour and glory. Having been exalted Jesus has now poured out His Spirit, which is what they have all witnessed on this day of Pentecost. David then affirms his argument by quoting from Psalm 110 to show that this exalted Jesus is indeed the promised Messiah (v 34).

For that Psalm could not be referring to David as many of the Jews believed since it was not David that was seen ascending into heaven. Yet David says (quote v 34). Placing one's enemies under one's feet was a figure of speech denoting their abject submission. David was not exalted to God's right hand but Jesus was and the proof of that truth was the outpouring of the Spirit that the crowd had just witnessed on this Day of Pentecost.

Therefore in conclusion Peter has provided overwhelming evidence from Jesus' life death, resurrection and exaltation that He is indeed the long awaited Messiah. Peter now concludes his sermon with a powerful application (v 36). The word translated "assured" speaks of that which is known without a doubt, that which is certain.

This same Jesus whom God displayed as the Messiah through his life, death resurrection and ascension was the very same Jesus that they had crucified. The verdict was clear, the Jewish people were on the wrong side, and they were guilty of opposing God and rejecting their Messiah. Now they must respond by repenting (v 38). But we will come to that next time. But how are we going to respond today? Which side are we on? Do we need to repent and be baptised?

Are you opposing this Jesus and refusing to believe in spite of all the clear evidence that has been presented to you? If so then you need the Holy Spirit to convict, convince and convert you. I can't do it and no other Christian or church can do it but the Holy Spirit can. He did it with 3000 people on the day of Pentecost.

Therefore Christian let us pray that the Spirit who convinced these 3000 on the Day of Pentecost will continue to convince men and women and boys and girls within our own locality of the truth of Jesus life, death, resurrection and exaltation. Let us pray that we will see many in the Yorkshire Dales coming to repent and believe for the forgiveness of their sins.

Amen