

## **Repent and Be Baptised & You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit      Acts 2:29-41**

Gathered together as a group we could be considered in this building at least a small crowd because we fill it this morning. Crowds often make the news because they can be fickle. Donald Trump speaks at his rallies and the people cheer, he goes, and then out on the street in New Mexico crowds begin to protest and then fight with others. This is no different to the Bible and the crowds that gathered.

Let us remember Jesus. During his three years of teaching the Jews about the kingdom of God with many displays of miraculous power, like when he feed a hungry crowd of 500 people for instance. Everybody is cheering for him but the very next day on the other side of the lake the Jewish crowd deserts him because his teaching on eternal life and the Spirit who gives life, and the fact that they had to receive and believe in him as the Son of God, the Messiah, was too hard for them to take. Then there was the Palm Sunday triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey's colt with the great crowd shouting,

“Hosanna, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed is the king of Israel.” **John 12:12-15**

Six day's later the crowd shouts out “Take him away! Crucify him! We have no king but Caesar.”

Then on Pentecost, fifty Days later, after Jesus Rises from the dead, ten days after he has ascended in front of his disciples to go back to his Father in heaven, during which time the disciples have been spending their time together praying “Come Holy Spirit”. Who should turn up on the Day of Pentecost? Which is the Festival of Weeks or First Fruits when the crowds have gathered once again in Jerusalem to worship at the Temple... None other than the Holy Spirit! And yet again another crowd forms.... at the sound of the rushing and blowing of wind, like we've heard during our storms this last week, which was the Holy Spirit, the promised gift of the Holy Spirit which came to rest on the disciples as tongues of fire and they begin to speak in languages that they'd never spoken in before because the Holy Spirit had entered them and had complete control over each of their spirit's. And Jews who had come from near and far around throughout the Roman Empire,

from many nations heard the wonders of God declared in their own language.

In the crowd some were amazed, some were perplexed and asked what does this mean? And yet some just made fun of them saying “They’ve had too much wine. They’re drunk”

The chief apostle Peter stands up and begins to address the crowd. In your Bible we’ll pick this up at **Acts 2:29** where he explains...**[Read Act 2:29-41]**

Wow! 3000 individuals from what was probably a much larger crowd who had been cut to the heart and actually did something about it. This phrase, ‘Cut to the heart’, means that they realised just how bad they have been, in one instant shouting out to Jesus, “Hosanna, blessed is the king of Israel” and in the next instance, “Crucify him”.

They had made an enormous error, each committing a huge sin in calling for the death of their very own Messiah- the Son of God. That is why they all felt so guilty and cried out with one voice, “What shall we do?”

To which Peter replies, **V38** “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Peter was telling the people that they should be very sorry for what they did to Jesus, the way they treated him, especially as he was the Son of God...

Good news though, he can still be your Messiah, your king again, once and for all. All you have to do is just change your thinking, change your mind for the better, with a real and sincere heartfelt desire to turn around completely, moving away from, and leaving behind you all your disgusting past sinful naughty ways. Do this and you will be forgiven for your sins. Something which baptism only symbolises because you don’t receive forgiveness through baptism- that comes through the sacrificial blood of Jesus, his death on the cross in our place for us and instead of us! Baptism symbolises dying with Christ and our sins, being buried as you go down in the waters and they close over you.

The water symbolises your spiritual inner cleansing, and then as you come up out of the water it's like you have been raised with Christ to a new and blessed life together. You're alive and one with Christ!

So, Repent, check! I can do that as a Jew Peter, but hold it, you want me to be baptised too? Now, maybe this is the reason that not everyone in the crowd repented, was baptised and received the gift of the Holy Spirit. For a Jew to be baptised was a traumatic thing. They generally looked on baptism as a rite for Gentile converts or for notorious sinners, not for "good" Jews.

Knowing this was the case Peter preached boldly anyway, and his message in a nutshell was:

*Since God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ who will judge the world, sinners must repent.*

God worked inwardly, and the church as we know it was launched, 3,000 plus strong! Not everyone in the crowd that day joined, but 3,000 more did. Today I know there is one person who has repented and will be baptised to join Christ's Church Universal which is Church with a big 'C', but I wonder if there are more here whom the Lord Jesus Christ is calling...

To Repent and be baptised!

Do this and you will receive two gifts:

Firstly, there is the gift of the forgiveness of your sins, and, Secondly, You receive the promise of God's Holy Spirit coming to live in you. A gift that's given to all Christians!

Young or Old, tall or small, beneficiary or billionaire is it your desire and are you ready to receive these gifts today?