

Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 15th October 2023 10 am

Baptism

Welcome to all.

Opening Scripture and prayer

Hymn MP 631 Tell out my soul

Scripture Psalm 103 (page 605)

Prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Hymn MP 1086 Light of the world you stepped down into darkness

Children's talk Colours and fit for heaven hole in board

Hymn MP 31 Amazing Grace

Notices Do stay on for refreshments, no Bible study this week but do stay on get to know each other better.

Cameo Lunch Wed, Tudor House Thursday

BCM Meeting on Sat 21st - Invitations/ reminders on the table

Prayer and share time

Reading Psalm 32 (page 560)

Acts 2:14a, 22-41.... (page 1093)

Hymn MP 632 Thank you for the cross

Sermon: Changed for good

Aaron Drakeley testimony

Baptism

Hymn MP 367 Jesus is Lord

Closing Prayer

Aaron Drakeley, upon your repentance towards God - and profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ - I now baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer and Exordium

In a little while Aaron will go through the waters of baptism. I wonder if you have seen a baptism? If this is your first time maybe you are thinking "what is it?" Well you will soon see. Or if you have seen someone baptized before are you still asking "what is it?, what is it really about? And why be baptised? And what kind of person is 'baptised?' and what difference will it make? - And should I be baptized?

Maybe you've been baptized yourself in the past – but you still have doubts about where you stand with God - and wonder if it was the right things to do.

To help us answer these questions we are going to look at an event in the Bible that speaks of baptism – it is in Acts chapter 2 that was read earlier.

Jesus had died on the cross, he had risen again on the third day as promised, he then showed himself alive again over 40 days before ascending to heaven.

Ten short days later at the harvest festival in Jerusalem many have gathered from all the nations around. Jesus's disciples, numbering about 120 are in a room together when there is suddenly the outpouring of God's Spirit. These Jews start speaking in the languages of the nations around, crowds gather in amazement as they hear the wonders of God being declared in their own tongue.

At this point the Apostle Peter stands up and says to them that what they are seeing is exactly what was promised through the prophet Joel centuries before.

Then, from the point we read v22 onwards - he preaches to the crowd.

So here this morning is a sermon - on a sermon.

He ends his sermon with the words 36 **"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."**

This word 'Christ' is where we will start. To make it easy to follow we have four 'C's, Christ, Conviction, Change, Confession. x2

Christ

'Christ' is not Jesus' second name, it is a title, like King Charles, so the Bible speaks of Christ Jesus. Christ is the Greek word for Messiah, which is the anointed One, the One promised, the One that all the prophets speaking through the millenia had said was none other than God Himself coming into His world. He would, however, come as a servant, - a suffering servant.

This he did, born in Bethlehem he lived obediently and perfectly and spoke about the kingdom of God. His reason for coming into the world was to speak

the truth of God – so that you and I may know - and then make a way for the unworthy to be able to enter the Kingdom of God.

The shock was that it was God the Son who suffered and bore away my sin on the cross. It is the most tumultuous and dramatic event in history. Yet it ended in a great victory over death. Something all who follow him can now share in.

We have heard much in the news about terrorists and murderers. So then there was a notorious terrorist murderer called Barabbas due to die that day for his crimes. But he was freed – Jesus, treated like a criminal, died instead. Jesus the **mighty God** of the Old Testament, the One who spoke this world into existence, the One who put the stars in the sky and named them. This is the One who gives life and breath to all, your every breath comes from Him. He sustains all things, and all things are for Him. We are right to be shocked.

He is called **Lord**. For the Jew there has always been only one Lord, the Lord Almighty, the One who is God. In fact ‘Lord’ and ‘God’ occurs together over 1300 times in the Bible. As in **the name of the LORD, the Eternal God** Ge 21:33.

This is the one who suffered so terribly at the hands of wicked men on Calvary’s hill.

✚ When there is a shooting or murder hitting the headlines today the truth is that for most it is quickly forgotten. So then many there would have ‘shaken off’ the events of that dark Day. Best forgotten.

Peter would have none of it - 36 **"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."**

Conviction

In those hearing there is conviction

Peter is preaching and as he comes to say this he is interrupted, “**what shall we do?**” they cry out. What he has been saying has been getting to them and at this point it all explodes.

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart x2

So what got to them? Peter is saying God has made Jesus the Lord of all the world, **both Lord and Christ.**” – and you put him to death! ‘**you**’ did he point?

✚ **Italians tend to wave their arms around when they speak, I don’t know about Galilean fishermen, maybe.**

Did Peter say **"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God [^] has made this Jesus, < whom you > crucified, both Lord and Christ."**

Let me tell you something about preaching, to be true preaching there has to be a ‘you’ in it – it is not just ‘us’, not just ‘we’, not just information, it must not only stir the heart but confront the will – challenge the will - it is personal, it has to be personal.

✚ I was talking to someone on Thursday about what Jesus did for people like her and when I saw her later she said “I felt really convicted that I was a sinner when you spoke” I told her to confess it all to Him.

✚ I have listened to sermons when there has been real conviction going on in my heart. I have cried, I have changed things in my life, I have been bothered, I have been convicted – I even sold my car after a sermon, I shouldn’t be driving that as a Christian.

⇒ **A preacher’s work is to bring God to the hearer. x2**

✚ When there have been times of revival in Britain people have shouted out in the middle of the sermon – not words of abuse as a heckler would, but cries of deep conviction “Oh Lord save me, O Lord have mercy” And afterward they has gone home and done business with God

Peter used the ‘you’ earlier in v23 **This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, x2 with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.** In other words God gave Him to you, handed him over to you like a tender lamb, the lamb of God. But instead of recognising Him, instead of realizing that before them was the Eternal Son of God, instead of falling down in worship which would have been the right thing to do, - as the wise men did when they brought their gifts to that infant in the manger the one who had infinite power over the whole universe - no x2 - they put him to death.

⇒ **This is not a crime against humanity – it is a crime of the highest proportions, infinite proportions because it is against the Lord God Almighty**

In the next chapter we read Ac 3:13-15 **“God has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead.”**

Peter says the same thing to another crowd a little later in Chapter 4, to those who had seen the cripple healed outside the temple. Peter was then dragged before the rulers and leaders, he says: **“know this, ..it is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.”** Ac 4:10

Maybe you don't like a preacher doing that, no doubt Peter was not "invited back" as we say. Maybe you will shield your ears as some have done, but this is preaching. And it's Peter's preaching here that brings more to saving faith than any other moment in the last 2000 years. We need more preaching like that.

Yes these people, along with the leaders, along with the Romans had put Jesus to death. They had shouted "**crucify him, crucify him**" and saw him off to the cross. Yes they were guilty.

But the people we heard of earlier were visitors to Jerusalem. They had come from all points of the compass for the harvest festival. They were visitors - *as some of you are visitors this morning*. They had not been there when Jesus was crucified. "*We weren't there, we didn't do it*" they could have said, "*Peter you've got the wrong people, we are innocent*" they could have said, "*if we had been there we would never have done it, we would never have put Jesus to death*. Oh really? Would some here this morning say that "*I wouldn't ever do that!, not me*".

But who is innocent? I'm not innocent, are you innocent? When I hold up the perfect life of Jesus can you say you have lived like he did? No, not me

Why were they cut to the heart? Why was there a conviction going on within them? Why were they bothered about what Peter said?

It is because in every human being there is a conscience. And that conscience speaks – and it declares you and I guilty before God. Yes 'I', but yes 'you' too – and you know it.

Rejecting and condemning God's Holy Son was not just done by those there present at Calvary who saw him crucified. No, whenever anyone disregards and breaks God's law it is the same as killing the law giver. Jesus is that lawgiver. It is saying that although I know God's law, and His way, I will not obey it. I will do what I want to do.

⇒ *This is to assert the Lordship of yourself - over the Lordship of Christ, and that is a very serious thing. Aaron has come to realise that. To refuse to have Jesus Christ as your Lord is the same as hammering in the nails.*

That is what happened in the garden of Eden, God had said one thing, and the response was 'no, I will do another'. So it is today.

⇒ *Every act of disobedience is essentially shaking the fist at God.*

Sin is making myself the arbiter of right and wrong not Him. Sin is confronting the God who made you and therefore has authority over you. Ask yourself "Am I doing this or that for Him? or for me? For His honour or for my honour?"

Jesus Christ is Lord of all and the centre of God the Father's purposes for you and I in His world. Will you bow down and give him due worship?

Peter in his preaching is like the prophet Nathan years before who points out David's sin and says "you are that man" David suddenly sees it.

✚ *I remember the time when it suddenly came to me that I had missed a meeting I was to take.*

✚ *On holiday I realized I had left my suitcase in a Swiss hotel room.*

✚ *I realised I had forgotten to pick up my children from school, only a man could do that, but I only did it once! What kind of excuse is that.*

✚ *There is that moment when it suddenly dawns on me - Slap forehead*

So it is with the things of God. An awareness come on me, a sense breaks through 'I have done wrong'. That word I said, that selfish action, that manipulating of another for my own end. I have foolishly tried to make my own way in this world - and then a sudden awareness comes over me that God has been watching all along – it is serious and I feel convicted.

And that at the same time how loving God is to me – and how patient, and how good he has been – when I, like a child, stamped my foot down.

Oh the kindness of God in being willing to accept me. How it cost him so much to clear away my guilt on the cross of calvary. God the Son rejected by men, spat upon, mocked, hit, beaten half to death and how he endured it all silently - so I could be saved.

The reply of Peter to those distressed in heart was not "Sorry that is it, that's too bad, too late, there's nothing that can change the judgment of God now.

No Peter said "**Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins**. This is the way.

If you have discovered the truth about yourself - and you are bothered – then this is what you are to do. **Repent**. The first of the two words here is repentance

Change

What does it mean? To repent is to have a change of mind. It means to think differently. You don't like the way you are and want to change. You reconsider what you have done. Repentance is an act of the will, I will no longer have my way, now I will submit to the will of God.

Baptism is not unique to the Christian faith. It was a recognized means of illustrating a change in a person. But today we are not seeing someone who has tried to improve himself, turn over a new leaf, make himself better, no.

The change required is one wrought in the human heart by Christ Himself.

That is why it is repentance **in the Name of Jesus** – for it is only through Him that God can grant the **forgiveness of your sins** and make someone clean and new.

✚ Aaron has considered his ways, and he has responded. He has turned. He has been on his knees and sought forgiveness. And when he got up he was different. The Lord Jesus answered his prayer – as he will answer the prayer of anyone who will turn to Him.

Those who come to Jesus as a sinner – come away as a **forgiven** sinner.

⇒ Those who look to Jesus to change then – will be changed.

⇒ Those who seek holiness - will be made Holy

The last word we mentioned is 'Confession' the last 'C'

Having changed, repented, now there is the public profession. So really the word should be 'profession' not 'confession'.

"**Repent and be baptized**, the second word is 'be baptized' **every one of you**,

⇒ If there has been a change then show it, declare it.

If you are serving a new master, going in a new direction, have found a great treasure, have become a new person - then let others know – not that I did it – but that Jesus did it. Let it be known that Jesus is the life changer.

And if Christ made the change – then He must receive the Glory. Baptism is an act of obedience towards the Lord and for His honour - **but also for Aaron's good**. A landmark in his new life.

"**Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins**. And if your sins are forgiven then in the sight of God you are now a vessel made clean and fit for His presence - so we read **38 And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**. The gift of forgiveness, the gift of the His Spirit His presence with you always – even beyond the grave. *Hallelujah!*

We serve a new master, for that man or woman there is a change of ownership – we are 'Under new management'

⇒ The end of me under – the start of the new with Him up again

4a

So in answer to the question “what is it?”

1. It is a public profession that Jesus has changed me. I am showing I have Jesus, who lives in me by His Spirit.
2. I am showing I have been forgiven – for no-one can receive the Spirit without first being forgiven and made clean.
3. I am saying I have repented of my sins and sin no more - for no-one can be forgiven of their sins unless they have repented of them. I have turned away from them – for good.

So ‘why be baptised?’ And what kind of person is ‘baptised?’ It is the person in which all the above is true.

And “should I be baptized?”

1. Have you turned away from your sins?
2. Have you the gift of the Holy Spirit?

Sadly many have been baptized because others have, or a church has nudged them into it. No wonder they become deluded. No wonder their life never matches up to their bold profession. No wonder others become confused or cynical. Nothing has happened inside them. There's been a splash, a happy day of expectation - but no change. They're still the same.

You have heard the truth this morning – what will you do with it?

Peter said to them ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

and for all who are far off – that is you and I today – have you heard His call?

40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

Why continue away from God? why not live with him, serving the most loving and gracious master, being assured in hope, a life filled with direction and purpose. A life in which the Joy of the Lord shines through. It's the best choice ever. The message of salvation is for **every one of you**, so.....

⇒ How about you? How about you? will this be the day??

✚ We have sung - you have sung - "thank you for the cross", - will this be the day you can sing from your heart "O I love you Lord, really love you Lord"

41 Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.” – there have been countless thousands since.

Now let us hear Aaron speak.

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4b