



From the Pastor

“This Jesus is the one God has raised up. We are all witnesses of that. 33 So, after he was exalted to the right hand of God and after he received the promised Holy Spirit from the Father, he poured out what you are now seeing and hearing... 36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Acts 2:32- 33, 36 EHV)

I suspect that most, if not all of us are familiar with the context of these words. These were spoken by Peter on the Day of Pentecost when the special gift of the Holy Spirit was given to the newly appointed apostles. These are words spoken in defense of actions – speaking in different languages - and in confession of events that were still fresh on their minds. These are words spoken to a people that were both ignorant, they didn’t know any better, and curious of what they saw what was happening.

They were curious as to why they had heard the sound of rushing wind. There are certain sounds that you know exactly what they are because you have heard them time and time again.

My oldest son in the 4th grade could identify certain military aircraft by the sound of their engines. He didn’t need to rush to a window or doorway to know what it was like his classmates would. However, if it was one he didn’t know, he would investigate.

The Holy Spirit gave the people in Jerusalem, 10 days after Jesus had ascended into heaven, something new to investigate. The sound of rushing wind with no obvious storm in the sky, no obvious blowing dust in the air, no obvious source causing it, needed to be checked out. This was different.

In using this wind, the Holy Spirit gave Peter the opportunity to deal with their ignorance.

They didn’t have the full knowledge of salvation. They didn’t have the full knowledge of their eternal condition. They didn’t have the full knowledge of Jesus’ work. They didn’t have the

full knowledge of their roll in this. They didn’t know they were complicit, they were guilty, they were responsible for Jesus being crucified. They hadn’t swung the hammer that drove the nails through flesh into the cross. They hadn’t participated in illegal trials that led to his guilty verdict.

They might not have stood in the crowd shouting “Crucify, Crucify.” They may not have mocked Jesus while he hung on the cross. Yet Peter says they crucified Jesus. Their sins did this!

Peter also pointed them to what God did for their salvation. He pointed them to people that could testify to these truths. He showed them how God delivered on his promises by raising Jesus up from the dead and giving him the place reserved for the one who took care of man’s sin and God’s judgment against sin. Now God was keeping Jesus’ promise to the apostles with the gift of the Holy Spirit. God keeping his promise to the crowd through these “gifted” men.

Here we are 2,000 + years later and those words still speak about us and to us. They remind us how guilty we are of crucifying Jesus. We could use all the excuses I mentioned earlier, yet we crucified him. We could try to add the plea of the generational gap between us and that time and say “I’m not responsible for Jesus’ death.” That does not change the truth: We crucified Jesus.

Those words Peter spoke deal with our guilt. Our God has accepted full payment for our sins. Our God has, for our benefit, raised to life his son. Our God has given us the testimony of the eyewitnesses to read and study so we can be certain of this comfort. Our God has placed at his right hand our Lord and Christ who lives and rules for us.

Have you heard these words enough? Are you tired of them? How about we hear them again. This month we have the celebration of the Ascension of the Lord in a special service on Thursday, May 9 at 7 PM. We also will be celebrating Pentecost 10 days later. These are opportunities to respond to what God has done for us. They are opportunities to invite others to come and hear the importance of and the impact