

The Identity of the Lord who Saves

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- [0 : 0 0] I thought I'd start this morning with a bit of a who is this person quiz. And I've even managed to keep these away from my kids to try and incentivise you.
- So I think I've left the clicker down there. Tina, I might get you to do this, sorry. So just on the next slide, the first one. So we'll leave it there for a moment. Who is this person? They're an Australian icon.
- Had a 20-year career playing cricket with an unparalleled batting average. Anyone? Don Bradman. Yeah, on the next slide.
- You ready, Doug? I can't throw. That's why I don't play cricket. All right. This next one's a bit harder. All right. Who's this person?
- Here we go. This one's a cartoon character. Thanks. Who was created by Walt Disney in 1934. He's good friends with Mickey Mouse, but it's really hard to understand him speak.
- [0 : 5 9] Donald Duck. Who is that? That's too far. That's just dangerous. You can come and get one. You can come and get one later. There it is. Donald Duck. All right. All right.
- The last one. So who's this person? They're from the town of Queens in the US. He's known. It's a real person. He's known for making outlandish statements and claims to be making America great again.
- I think the Dean was loud, but it doesn't mean he was first. I think I might just put these on the table out there and have a bung fight. That's all right. Now, we've had three Donalds, right?
- But only this Donald is president. Okay. Only this Donald ran for office and only this Donald was elected as president. Well, today we return to Peter's Pentecost sermon where he tells us who this Lord is.
- And in those days, there are a number of men named Jesus. But Peter will explain it's only this Jesus that they are speaking about on that day who is the Lord who saves.
- [2 : 1 2] So just let me recap part one of his sermon, which we saw last week for those who weren't here. Last week, we saw that the promised Holy Spirit arrived on the day of Pentecost.
- Pentecost was originally a Jewish festival. The Spirit came upon not just the apostles, but all the disciples, men and women, young and old, slave and free. We also saw that while the Spirit secures us as God's children and works through us in our conscience to encourage us and so on, that the primary purpose of the Spirit at Pentecost was to enable the disciples to speak the wonders of God through Jesus.
- So if you're in your Bibles there, have a look at verse 11 from last week. The crowds were hearing the disciples declare the wonders of God in their own language.
- And then in verse 12, they're asking, what does all this mean? And so in verse 14, Peter begins to explain what it all means. But in two parts, both parts begin with a call for the crowd to listen.

So if you have a look in verse 14 at the end, you see how he calls them to listen carefully. This is part one of his explanation, part one of his sermon. And he goes on to explain in part one from last week, verse 17, that what is happening, what they are seeing is what God promised.

[3 : 43] In the last days, he would pour out his Spirit on all people to do what? To prophesy, that is to speak. Why? Well, so that people could hear about the Lord who saves.

Verse 21, just down to the bottom. This is where we ended last week. Verse 21, so that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. And we left it there.

But the question then becomes, well, who is this Lord person? Well, today, Peter again calls the crowd to listen a second time. Verse 22, this is part two.

And now he explains that this Jesus they are hearing declared in their own languages. This Jesus is the Lord who saves.

So we're at point one now and verse 22. He says, fellow Israelites, listen to this. Jesus of Nazareth, this Jesus was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him as you yourselves know.

[4 : 48] Here, Peter begins by building a case that this Jesus of Nazareth is the Lord by firstly pointing to the fact that he's no ordinary person.

He did miracles. And this was God's way of showing that this Jesus was no ordinary person. What's more, they all knew about these miracles.

In fact, some of them had been done amongst them. They knew it. We can know it too because we have historical evidence. So I don't have time to go into it now. But you see, this is Peter's first brick in building his case that this Jesus they are hearing declared on that day is the Lord who saves.

But then this Jesus was crucified. Verse 23 starts with this. Jesus is literally what it says was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge.

And you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to a cross. Here we're told that Jesus' death was according to God's deliberate plan.

[5 : 53] God had always planned to send his son to die for our sins, to take our judgment in our place so that we don't have to. But while this was part of God's deliberate plan, while God brought it all about, God didn't actually commit the crime.

Rather, Peter says, you put him to death. You were there seven weeks ago at the Passover festival yelling out, crucify him. You did it.

Peter doesn't pull any punches, does he? He wouldn't go down too well in politically correct Melbourne, would he? And yet, while they killed this Jesus, verse 24, Why was it impossible for death to keep its hold on Jesus?

Well, because Jesus, as Peter is about to explain, is the Messiah. The Messiah means anointed one. The king from David's line who would rule on David's throne forever.

And if you're going to rule forever, then you can't stay dead, can you? Dead people don't rule well, do they? But on the flip side, if you are raised from the dead, then it proves that you are the Messiah.

[7 : 16] The forever king from David's line. And that's what Peter goes on to explain using Psalm 16 that we heard read as our first reading. So verse 25, it says, David said about him, I saw the Lord always before me because he is at my right hand.

I will not be shaken. Therefore, my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices. My body will rest in hope. And here's the line that Peter really wants us to notice. David was God's chosen king and God promised David that his kingdom would last forever, which meant God would not let the body of his king on David's throne see decay.

God would not let this Messiah's body rot in a tomb. Problem is, however, David's body is rotting in a tomb.

So look at verse 29. Peter says, Fellow Israelites, I can assure you or tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried and his tomb is here to this day.

He's saying, look, you can catch a tour bus, go down the road and visit David's tomb today if you like. His bones are still there. His body is still rotting. And so he cannot be the forever king, the Messiah.

[8 : 39] Rather, he must be speaking about someone else from his line in the future who would rule, who would be the Messiah. So verse 30, Peter says, See what Peter's saying?

The one who is raised from the dead, the one that David actually spoke about. That one is the true Messiah. That one is the true forever king.

And who was raised from the dead? Well, verse 32. God has raised this Jesus to life. And we are all witnesses of it.

I remember my first trip to Melbourne. I was actually to apply for a job here. And back then, the senior minister was a guy called Andrew Reid, who was out here doing a marriage course a little while ago for us.

You might remember him. But the thing is, I'd never met him before. All I had to go on was a picture from one of the books he wrote. And this was the picture I had.

[10 : 04] As you can see, he's changed a bit. And so I asked him over the phone, Look, how will I know it's you when I arrive at the airport? And he said, Look, well, I'm not a tall guy.

I'll be the short man with a backpack. And when I arrived, I looked around. And there was just one short man with a backpack. And I knew it was him. Well, in a similar way, the apostles, when they saw Jesus raised from the dead, knew that he was the Messiah.

This was him. This Jesus is the risen Messiah foretold by David. They saw it. They witnessed it. You see, Peter is building this case that this Jesus of Nazareth is the Lord who saves.

At first, his miracles show he's no ordinary person. They know it. Second, he was crucified according to God's plan, but they did it. Third, he was raised from the dead, proving he is the Messiah.

They saw it. And fourth, he was exalted to God's right hand to pour out the Spirit. And they're seeing it right that day. Verse 33.

[11 : 09] You see, the crowd is seeing that day the effects of Jesus pouring out the Spirit on his people as the disciples were speaking different languages like we heard last week.

But to pour out God's Spirit means you have to have God's authority. You have to be God's right hand man, if you like. In other words, Peter is telling the crowd that this Pentecost, they are seeing the effects of Jesus's kingship ruling from the right hand of God.

And if you're at the right hand of God, then you are the Lord. Verse 34. For David did not ascend to heaven.

And yet he said, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet. Now, verse 34 is a bit confusing because there's two Lords.

So on the slide, what it's saying is that David's saying, and he says, the Lord God said to this other Lord of David's, question mark, sit at my right hand.

[12 : 27] In other words, God is telling this other Lord to sit at God's right hand. And so David has two Lords. The first one is God. And the second one is this other Lord at God's right hand.

But who has been exalted to God's right hand, pouring out God's spirit? This Jesus. You see, his resurrection shows he is the Messiah.

And the pouring out of the spirit shows he is at God's right hand as Lord. And so Peter concludes his argument in verse 36, saying, Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this.

God has made this Jesus whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah. And so here we are on the slide. Who is this Jesus?

Well, first piece of argument was he's not ordinary. His miracles showed it and they know it. Secondly, he was crucified at the cross. They did it.

[13 : 28] But thirdly, he was raised from the dead as Messiah. The apostles saw it. And now he is exalted to the right hand of God to pour out the spirit.

The people are seeing it. And so this Jesus of Nazareth must be the Lord who saves. You see his argument? It's worth pointing out here that true Pentecostal preaching, do you notice, is not about focusing on the spirit, but on Jesus as Lord.

Last week, the spirit enabled them to speak about Jesus. This week, Peter's all about Jesus, isn't he? What's more, it's also worth pointing out that we need Jesus as both Savior and Lord.

And sometimes we focus so much on the Savior bit. You know, he died to save us from our sins and the judgment and so on, that we forget he's also our Lord who ought to direct our lives. But we cannot have Jesus as Savior without Jesus our Lord.

Because this Jesus who saves is the Lord. You know, to try and live with Jesus as just our Savior, but ignore him as Lord. You know, kind of just take some bits we like from his teaching in the Bible and leave the other bits.

[14 : 43] Or try and live our way instead of his way. You know, to just take the Savior bit and ignore the Lord bit. And it's like trying to eat Peking duck without the duck, right?

It's trying to have lamb roast without the lamb or for the veggies, the vegetarian dish without the veggies. It just doesn't work, does it? You just can't do it. And if you try to, then it's no longer that dish or it's no longer this Jesus.

We cannot have Savior without Lord because this Jesus who saves is the Lord. That's Peter's point. So is he your Lord? Is he our Lord? Not just on Sundays, but on every day of the week.

Is he Lord of the way we speak to one another or our families at home? Is he the one who determines our self-worth as his people?

Is he the one who directs what we think despite what our society says? Or are we trying to live with him as just the Savior? If we do that, it's a different Jesus.

[15 : 52] Because this Jesus who saves is Lord. That's Peter's point. And the crowd finally get it. Because they realize they've really put their foot in it.

Have you ever done that, by the way? Ever really put your foot in it? You know, you've said something to someone without really realizing who they are. My wife Michelle was working at a company when a new person started there.

And in the office that day, the Christian radio station, Light FM, you know that one? It was playing in the office. And this person who started kind of walked in and said, Oh, turn this Christian rubbish off.

And then found out Michelle was a Christian. She was mortified. And even more so when she found out Michelle's husband was a minister. And she was very apologetic. Michelle and she still joke about it today.

But can you imagine being the crowd? They finally get this Jesus is Lord. Only to realize they crucified him. No wonder, verse 37, when the people heard this, they were cut to the heart.

[16 : 58] And said to Peter and the other apostles, Brothers, what shall we do? This is always the first step to becoming a Christian, really.

To be convicted that Jesus, who is Lord, is the one we've once ignored. We may not have crucified him, but we have all certainly at some point ignored him.

And if we realize just who it is we've done this to, then it ought to cut us to the heart and lead us to repentance. And for those who are not yet Christians, lead us to conversion.

See verse 38? Peter replied, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off. For all whom the Lord our God will call. Once they're convicted, then they're to be converted by repenting, which means turning around.

[18 : 04] Stop ignoring Jesus and start following Jesus. And then to be baptized in the name of Jesus. When you're baptized, it's a sign of what happens inwardly.

And in those days, you would call on the name of the Lord. Remember verse 21? You would call on the name of the Lord Jesus to save you. And so it's not actually the act of baptism that saves us.

It's the in the name of Jesus that saves us, trusting in him, calling on his name. Baptism is just a public sign of it. But this is what they were to do.

And if they did, then they would receive a pardon for their sins. They would receive presence of God by the Holy Spirit, like we heard in the kids talk.

And they would receive a people to belong to. You see, with many other words, Peter warned them and pleaded with them, save yourselves from this corrupt generation.

[19 : 05] Those who accepted his message were baptized. And about 3000 were not left isolated, but added to the people, to their number that day.

And so for us here this morning, I guess the first big question is, have we repented and turned to Christ? Have we called on his name?

Because he is the Lord who saves to receive pardon and presence and a people to belong to. Have we done that? For most of us, we have already done that.

And so how are we to now live? Well, point three, verse 42, gives us a picture. We are to keep following Jesus as our Lord, as his people.

And how are we to live as his people? Well, verse 42, they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Here are the marks of the authentic Christian church, the authentic people of the Lord Jesus.

[20 : 12] This is what it means to follow Jesus as our Lord, to be devoted to the teaching of his apostles, to the fellowship of his church that he created, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

We have a prayer meeting coming up in a couple of weeks' time. Every month we have a prayer meeting to pray because God often uses our prayers to grow the church.

That's what he's doing in the last verse, it seems, where the Lord added to their number daily those who are being saved. One of the ways God does that is through our prayers.

So can I encourage you to be devoted to prayer at home during the week and coming to our prayer nights if you can? I know not everyone can. And it's not just prayer they were to be devoted to working backwards.

They were to be devoted to the breaking of bread. That sounds like communion, but it's actually just eating together. So verse 46, it repeats the same language. Halfway through verse 46, it says, They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

[21 : 29] It's spending time and eating together, getting to know each other, talking about God together. Next Sunday, we're having what? Chicken and chips.

What is it, the cheapest lunch in Melbourne? I know you've scaled it down, Vijay. Cheapest lunch in Doncaster now. It's still of great value. It's great to come together and eat together, break bread together or chicken bones together or whatever it is.

And as you do, why not talk about God's greatness? That's what it means to praise God. If you praise someone, you talk about how great they are. Why not do that over lunch next Sunday?

It's not just to prayer or to the breaking of bread. We're also to be devoted to the fellowship. That is the church. And we're to do it in two ways. Firstly, caring for one another.

Verse 44 says, All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Now, they didn't sell everything because verse 46 says they're still meeting in their homes.

[22 : 34] But they occasionally sold things in order to help people in need. And can I say I'm encouraged by the way I see that happening here at this church.

I know people who don't necessarily sell property, but they do provide meals for one another when they're sick or new children are born. I know others who provide lifts to people who can't drive.

I know of others who give money, sometimes substantial amounts, to people in need. I still remember one family who gave another family an oven. I also remember when I not long started, I was living next door.

Michelle and I went away for holidays and we came home and someone had renovated our bathroom. I should go away more often. No, I'm joking. I'm joking. It was incredible. And so thank you for the way you care.

You're devoted to the fellowship. Please keep going. But being devoted to the fellowship is not just caring for one another. It's also meeting together. Verse 46. Every day they continue to meet together in the temple courts.

[23 : 37] That is, they had church every day after work. Things are different for us now in our society. But we need to be devoted to the fellowship by turning up to the fellowship to encourage one another, to see each other.

And so thank you for making every effort. Because I know for many of you, particularly with young kids and so on, it's not easy, is it? You know, Sunday morning rolls around and that pillow never felt so good.

Maybe except for Monday morning. So thank you for coming. And yet at the same time, I also know that for some families, I only ever see them once every three or four weeks.

Perhaps there is room for more devotion. This is part of the way we follow Jesus as our Lord, being devoted to the fellowship. And the last one is devoted to the apostles' teaching, which Vijay has highlighted there.

This apostles' teaching was starting off in the early church, which is why in verse 43, it was accompanied by wonders and signs performed by the apostles, just to confirm this teaching is authentic.

[24 : 44] We don't need that today because we have their teaching compiled for us in this, the Bible, don't we? And so we are to be devoted to the Bible, to hearing it read, to reading it, to listening to it being explained.

And I can again say thank you because that's what you're doing right now, isn't it? I think most of you are listening. I don't think I've seen anyone nod off to sleep yet. So thank you for doing that.

But again, it's not always easy. I sometimes get comments where people suggest I should explain it less and just give the highlights. But is that devotion? I mean, would that apply to my marriage?

I mean, imagine my wife, I said to Michelle, look, I'm not really interested in listening to your day. Just give me the highlights. That'll do me. You think that'll go down well? Yes.

Dog house. Even if I'm not always interested, devotion means you make every effort, don't you? Not just to listen, but to understand and hear, to put into practice the apostles' teaching from the Bible.

[25 : 47] We as Bible teachers need to help you do that, which is why I'm going to finish up. But we need to be devoted to these things. This is part of what it means to live with Jesus as our Lord. Well, there are several Donalds in the world, but only one of them is the president.

And much more importantly, there were lots of Jesuses, but only this Jesus is the Lord that saves. So let's pray we might keep living with him as our Lord.

Let's pray. Our gracious Heavenly Father, we do thank you for this reminder this morning that this Jesus is the Lord who saves.

And so we pray, our Heavenly Father, that you would help us to follow him as our Lord in our lives as individuals, but also as a church, being devoted to the teaching of your apostles in your word, being devoted to the fellowship, caring for each other and meeting regularly, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Help us, we pray in these things. In Jesus' name. Amen.