

*“Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act [or bring it to pass]”*

The readings for today for your perusal are Acts 2: 26-41, Psalm 116: 1-4 & 12-19, 1 Peter 1: 17-23 and Luke 24: 13-35.

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY - EASTER 3

*“All the people of Israel, then, are to know for sure that this Jesus, whom you crucified, is the one that God has made Lord and Messiah! When the people heard this, they were deeply troubled...”* Yes the Jewish people who heard Peter’s announcement were gutted for want of a better word or as the King James Version of the Bible puts it *“they were pricked in their heart”* now this reflects both belief in Jesus and regret over his former rejection. They wanted redemption, they needed redemption for their terrible mistake and so they asked Peter what to do. Peter heard their pleas and he gave them hope for he told them: *“Each one of you must turn away from his sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins will be forgiven; and you will receive God’s gift, the Holy Spirit”* The Bible teaches us that people are never left in despair when it comes to the love of God, because God will always have the last word, and His word will bring resurrection life in and through baptism. *“For God’s promise was made to you and your children, and to all who are far away – all whom the Lord our God calls to himself.”* God is out there for us all, are we listening to His word, to His call, He wants us to listen to come to Him and be saved, so do not despair, you are not alone for God is with you, this is what Peter is telling us about in the book of Acts.

Peter is telling us that repentance was and is important if we are to be resurrected with Christ as born-again Christians. To be resurrected into a new life with Christ we must believe and have faith, for when we have faith and trust in God then we are able to call him Father. Peter tells us: *“You call him Father, when*

*you pray to God, who judges all people by the same standard, according to what each one has done; so then, spend the rest of your lives here on earth in reverence for him.*” This means that we are all called to live up to the standards that God has set for all mankind, we are to live good honest and upright lives as befitting his family standards, after all we are the family of Christ. We were baptised into it as babies and some of us had believers’ baptism as adults. Peter is telling us here all about how God will judge each man, woman, boy and girl by the same standard, there is no deviation from this holy standard by God. Holiness or Christ likeness is urged upon God’s people for two reasons. It is our example to reflect God’s teachings by our living, and it is our goal because we want to be like Christ. We want to emulate our Lord and Saviour, as He redeemed us by His living sacrifice on the Cross of Calvary!

In the Bible, to redeem means to free someone from something bad by paying a penalty, or a ransom. Likewise, in the Greek world slaves could be redeemed by the payment of a price, either by someone else or by the slave himself. Similarly, Jesus redeems believers from the *‘curse of the law and all iniquity’*. The ransom price wasn’t gold or silver but Christ’s blood. His death resulted in the forgiveness of sin for all who believe in Him, it freed us from a false and empty life which has been handed down to us from unbelieving parents or an unbelieving society or world. *“For you know what was paid to set you free from the worthless manner of life handed down by your ancestors...Through him you believe in God, who raised him from death and gave him glory; and so your faith and hope are fixed on God.”*

Yet many people live a good moral life without actually recognising Jesus, these people do not see clearly and we can see an example of this from the Gospel of Luke where we have two of Jesus’ followers walking towards the village of Emmaus; *“As they talked and discussed, Jesus himself drew near and walked along with them; they saw him, but somehow did not*

*recognise him.*” Did God deliberately fog their eyes so that they couldn’t recognise Jesus? Personally I believe that it was done deliberately so that a lesson could be learned, it could be that they were so depressed at having thought they had lost him for good and at the same time as recognising him as a prophet of God, they had respect for him as a man of God but after his death they were reluctant to recognise him for who he really was, the Messiah, God’s own Son, we see that for they told the risen Jesus: *“”This man was a prophet and was considered by God and by all the people to be powerful in everything he said and did.....And we had hoped that he would be the one who was going to set Israel free!”*

They had lost sight of who Jesus really was; maybe that was why they didn’t recognise him. Maybe they needed a revision lesson in faith, and so Jesus taught them afresh. *“How foolish you are, how slow you are to believe everything the prophets said...And Jesus explained to them what was said about himself in all the Scriptures, beginning with the books of Moses and the writings of all the prophets.”* He didn’t give up; He instead strengthened their faith and had the Holy Spirit burn within them. These two travellers had their hopes dashed on Good Friday when Christ was crucified, but Jesus stayed with them when they went to stop for the night. *“He sat down to eat with them, took the bread, and said the blessing; then he broke the bread and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened...”*

In the breaking of bread, the resurrected Christ was clearly seen and recognised and in that recognition they knew in their hearts that it was Jesus who had been with them all that way, they had their faith rekindled in fact they were no longer a burning ember but a fully fledged bonfire, blazing away in all its glory.

A resurrected life is a glorious life, so praise God for his resurrection love, praise God for his resurrection glory and praise God for his everlasting love and come to Him for salvation and a new life of peace. He died so that you and I can

live in peace and be content, this is all the more pertinent in today's lockdown society, for many this is both spiritually and physically true.

### PRAYER

Father we hear in the news about more deaths in our society caused by Covid 19, we hear about people's loss which is even more tragic when they could not be with their loved one at the end and for many they cannot even go to the funeral. We also hear of the worry about loved ones over the lack of PPE for those who are caring for and looking after the vulnerable in our society. We hear and see the pressure that the NHS is under and the government officials as they try to look after us and make the hard decisions, be with them Lord and grant them your wisdom and peace. Strengthen those in our Care homes and our Hospitals, bless them and bring them home safely to their families, just as we pray for their family's health for they themselves will be worried about bringing Covid into their homes. Bless and protect all those key workers who are out there providing food, clothing, heating and lighting for us.

We pray Lord Jesus in your Holy name to heal those who are sick, who are worried grant them your peace, for those who are grieving bring them comfort and surround them with your love. Bless the Ministers, Pastors and Priests and all those in the church wherever they are in the world, give them your guidance so that they can serve You in their towns and villages bringing your love to those in need around them. Help us Lord to pray in your Holy name for our neighbours, friends and family members all around us, and let us pray for the doctors and scientists who are trying to find a cure for this virus, bring it to an end we pray and heal us all body, mind and soul and grant us your peace.

Amen