

Newsletter

11th April 2021

Sunday's Reading 1 John 1:1 - 2:2

Ps. Andrew Everson will bring us the word this week.

➤ **Some Prayers of the people**

- Pray for safety on the roads as people travel for the coming school holidays. Pray that teachers, students, and families will have a good time and be refreshed.
- Continue to pray for those effected by the floods and those still recovering from the effects of bushfires.
- For countries continuing to deal with outbreaks of covid19. Give thanks for our safe country and that we are truly blessed where we live.
- Pray for the Barnabas Fund, Open doors, and Compassion as they reach out across the world to help persecuted Christians who suffer in extremely difficult circumstances for their faith.
- There are many who are coping with difficulties and really appreciate the support of the congregation with the "Tithe a tin Pray a packet" outreach, thank you.

Notices

Thank you to those who share the bounty of their garden with us, it is appreciated very much.

Name tags: As our congregation is growing please wear your name tags as this will help people get to know each other and also help with remembering names. Please let Lois or Teresa know if anyone requires a name tag.

End of Month luncheon: Sunday 25th April is the last Sunday of this month, if you are interest in having lunch at "Billy Mac's" please let us know so we can book numbers.

Prayer Chain

The church has a prayer chain for those who need prayer during an emergency or crisis, the Initial contact people are Julie Wylie (87623812) or Julie & Kevin Cooke (87620732, 0428620733).

Please call the contact person and your prayer request will be forwarded on. We encourage you to share any answer to prayer that you feel you can to the prayer chain as encouragement to them.

Mid-Week Bible reading

In Acts 3 we read about Peter and John healing a man who was crippled and had been begging at the temple gate. The miracle was a sensation. People crowded around to hear the apostles talk about Jesus, the resurrection, repentance, and new life. Peter preached the Gospel.

The miracle of healing that starts this incident off is an act of God. Certainly, God uses Peter and John, but the man is healed in the name of Jesus. This is what Peter said to the crippled man.

Acts 3:6-8

⁶Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." ⁷Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man's feet and ankles became strong. ⁸He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God.

Peter then preaches:

"Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, 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. ¹⁴You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

....¹⁹Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, ²⁰and that he may send the Messiah, who has been appointed for you—even Jesus.

Then follows opposition. The temple authorities had the apostles arrested and, the next day, brought before the governing council, the Sanhedrin. Then follows Acts 4:8-31:

⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! ⁹If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, ¹⁰then know this, you and all the people of Israel: 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. ¹¹Jesus is.

"the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the cornerstone.'

¹²Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

¹³When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished, and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. ¹⁴But since they could see the man who had been healed standing there with them, there was nothing they could say. ¹⁵So they ordered them to withdraw from the Sanhedrin and then conferred together. ¹⁶"What are we going to do with these men?" they asked. "Everyone living in Jerusalem knows they have performed a notable sign, and we cannot deny it. ¹⁷But to stop this thing from spreading any further among the people, we must warn them to speak no longer to anyone in this name."

¹⁸Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. ¹⁹But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! ²⁰As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."

²¹After further threats they let them go. They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened. ²²For the man who was miraculously healed was over forty years old.

The vital point to see is that the whole movement in the proclamation and the resulting growth of the Christian church is an act of God. From start to finish this is God working through the Holy Spirit that he placed in his people.

The astonishing growth of the Christian movement was the result of Spirit filled preaching that pointed to the miracles, particularly the miracle of resurrection, pointing out how these events validated Jesus as God's Son, proved that his message was true, and that God was with this man, indeed **was** this man.

God's enduring word spoken through the prophets validates Jesus Christ, the Messiah. The Holy Spirit inspires, enlivens, teaches, and makes the words of ordinary people convincing and effective in preaching, even uneducated but Spirit filled, preachers like Peter.

Peter calls for a response from the people – acknowledgment that people had wrongly rejected Jesus and had him killed. Peter calls for repentance and a turning to Christ in faith. And this is very successful. Even as the authorities arrest Peter and John, 5000 people were convinced by the message and joined the Christian movement.

There is immediate of course opposition - officially orchestrated and sanctioned opposition. But this opposition is frustrated through the God given clarity and evident truth of the message and the courage of the believers.

And then there is the response of the church:

²³On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. ²⁴When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David. ... ²⁷Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. ²⁹Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus."

³¹After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.

The church's response is a model for us. Prayer. And note, even when threatened by worldly authorities, it is not principally a prayer for safety and protection. It is a prayer that acknowledges God's work in all this, thanks him for this, and calls for more. It calls for more signs from God and for continued courage and commitment from Christians and power to proclaim the message.

And the result was immediate. The sign was given, the room was shaken. The help was given – a good dose of the Spirit. And the word was spoken with boldness.

Andrew