

Third Sunday of Easter

JESUS WHOM YOU CRUCIFIED

Acts 2.14a, 36-41

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Analysis by Timothy Hoyer

14But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them,. 36"Therefore let the entire house of Israel know with certainty that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified."

37Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" 38Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him." 40And he testified with many other arguments and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

DIAGNOSIS: Hearts Corrupted with Death

Step 1: Initial Diagnosis (External Problem) : *This Corrupt Generation*

Every generation is crooked, unscrupulous, and dishonest. For every generation is told with laws what they must do—what taxes they must pay, what they must do to dispose of garbage, what

they must do to ensure each item sold is full weight or fully functional, what they must do as parents, what they must do to get married, how they must treat their neighbor, and what they must do with a dead body. The law is given for the lawless (1 Timothy 1:9). The corruption of people needs to be a characteristic of all people so that Jesus can be for all people. That corruption must be of a nature that people cannot save themselves from it, for if they could, they would not need Jesus.

Step 2: Advanced Diagnosis (Internal Problem) : *Cut to the Heart*

The crowd Peter spoke to was “devout Jews from every nation” (Acts 2:5). Even though devout, they were corrupt. Even if they were honest, noble, kind, helpful, and never said a mean thing about anyone, their corruption was that they had no trust in Jesus. Instead, the greedy trusted wealth, the bored trusted entertainment, the intelligent trusted knowledge, the crowds trusted their favorite sports team, their favorite soccer team, football team, baseball team and felt life was good or bad according to whether their team won or lost the night before. The unquestioning trusted laws and counted themselves of worth to God by strict obedience to the laws without realizing law is based on love. The working poor trust surviving each day and getting by. Everyone’s heart relies on something, even if it is the friendly person who says that he will be okay as long as he has friends to help him. The crowd Peter spoke to may have objected to being called corrupt, but that crowd could not deny that they had no trust in Jesus as their Lord and Master, as their God, because they had, just a few weeks ago, shouted to have him crucified.

Step 3: Final Diagnosis (Eternal Problem) : *God Made Him Lord and Messiah*

But now with the sound of the wind, the tongues of flame on the apostles’ heads, and them speaking in the languages of all the

nations, they were convinced that God was working at that moment and testifying that what Peter spoke was true. Thus, they realized they had gone against God by killing God's own son. And as in all generations, when you kill the son, it is the parent who wants justice. That crowd had God against them. They were helpless, convicted; death would separate them from God forever.

PROGNOSIS: Jesus Gains Ownership of Hearts

Step 4: Initial Prognosis (Eternal Solution) : *This Jesus God Raised Up*

The Jesus whom the crowd crucified God had made both Lord and Messiah (savior). As Lord, he owned all people. But an owner can mistreat and punish the people she owns. That is how the system of law works—to reward the good and punish the harmful. That crowd was harmful. Yet Peter invites them to turn away (repent) from their fear of punishment and turn to Jesus crucified to be...get this...forgiven! To be forgiven was to have God not count their crucifying of Jesus against them and not punish them! And as a bonus—get one, get one free—they would be given the Holy Spirit, the very presence of God and God's mercy in them, a Spirit who would tell them only and again and again of Jesus' promise to forgive them and give them eternal life.

Step 5: Advanced Prognosis (External Solution) : *Spirit to the Heart*

The people were "cut to the heart," meaning their hearts realized that all that they had trusted went against Jesus and God, that their hearts were dead, Jesus gave them new hearts. Their new hearts now relied on Jesus for life and for his mercy that managed their new life. Their hearts clung to Jesus to save them from God judging them for killing his son. Their heart relied on Jesus for all goodness in their life. Their heart trusted the promise of forgiveness Peter testified was for them and all generations. To have hearts that rely on Jesus is to

have hearts owned by Jesus, which is what a Lord does, owns the heart instead of the heart being owned by death and greed and power and hate and quarreling and the need to be right all the time.

Step 6: Final Prognosis (External Solution) : *Spirit Straight Hearts*

The crowd was no longer crooked. No longer did they have hearts that grabbed every event for their own advantage while disregarding the need of their neighbor. Now their hearts looked straight at their neighbors and their neighbors' needs. Filled with the Spirit of Jesus—who died and rose and forgave them—they lived guided by Jesus' Spirit (Galatians 5) to die to their own greed and pride and fear, and to live in the love, peace, joy, kindness, gentleness of the Spirit and use those fruits of the Spirit with others. Now every event could be used for the advantage of the neighbor, to make sure they are fed and loved and safe. Now the crowd could live giving Jesus' promise to others so others could also repent and die and rise in Jesus (be baptized), so that Jesus is honored –instead of the sports team, or rich and famous people, or wealth, or popularity, or entertainment.