

Acts2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.2:39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

2:40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."

2:41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

2:43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.

2:44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,

2:45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

2:46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

2:47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

[From today's sermon]

As Joel prophesied, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the people, which was proof that Jesus was the righteous one, and that He was the one whom David called "my Lord," "He will not be abandoned to the grave, nor will His flesh see decay." This is none other than Jesus, and Peter boldly testified, "This Jesus whom you crucified, God has made both Lord and Christ." The people were deeply moved and asked, "What shall we do?"

What could save us from the terrifying sin of pride toward God and the act of crucifying Jesus, our Lord? But that salvation was the cross of Jesus. Since the price of redemption has been paid, we are saved simply by repenting. And we can even receive the Holy Spirit as a gift. Hearing this good news, three thousand people were baptized and became fellow believers, encouraged by the call to be saved from this crooked generation and the powerful message. They devoted themselves to the teaching, observed the Lord's Commandments, shared in fellowship, and spent their time in prayer. From the depths of their hearts, a sense of awe and reverence for God was born, and those who shared this feeling naturally became united in heart, sharing their possessions and maintaining close relationships with one another. Therefore, they were well-liked, and the flock continued to grow.

Good morning, everyone.

I was surprised to hear that the rainy season has already ended. According to the Japan Meteorological Agency, this is the first time since records began in 1951 that the rainy season has ended in June in the Chugoku region. There is also a term called “return of the rainy season,” but what will the weather, temperatures, and typhoons be like during the long summer ahead?

In the Tokara Islands of Kagoshima Prefecture, there have been over 500 earthquakes with a magnitude of 1 or higher since the 21st. I imagine the residents are living in a state of tension. The prophecy of a major disaster on July 5th is casting an ominous shadow. The person who made the prediction apparently commented that people should be cautious not only on July 5th but throughout the entire month of July, possibly to avoid panic. However, I believe it is important to maintain disaster awareness and prepare in advance.

In Higashijo, a murder occurred, leading to the temporary closure of elementary and middle schools for the day, and parents have been asked to pick up and drop off their children as much as possible, spreading anxiety in the normally peaceful town.

With various events unfolding, the first half of the year will come to an end by the end of this month, marking the start of the second half.

In Hiroshima Prefecture, heatstroke alerts have been issued daily. Please ensure you stay hydrated, keep your rooms cool, and take care of your health.

Now, we are reading Peter's powerful sermon from the Bible.

As Joel prophesied, the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the people, which was proof that Jesus was the righteous one, and that He was the one whom David called his Lord, “He will not be abandoned to Hades, nor will His flesh see decay.” Peter boldly testified that this was none other than Jesus, and that “this Jesus whom you crucified, God has made both Lord and Christ.” The people were deeply moved and asked, “What shall we do?”

What could save us from the terrifying sin of pride toward God and the act of crucifying Jesus, our Lord? But that salvation was Jesus' cross. Since the price of redemption has been paid, we are saved simply by repenting. And we can even receive the Holy Spirit as a gift. Many people listened intently to Peter's sermon.

2:37 When they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

2:38 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.

2:39 This promise is for all of us who have been called by our Lord God—for you and your children and for all who are far away.”

“This promise is for all who are called by our Lord God, that is, for you and your children and all who are far away.” What a wonderful thing it is that the repentance and salvation of one person is God's calling, and that for those who are called by God, the promise of salvation extends even to their children and to distant relatives in other regions.

2:40 Peter continued with many other words, exhorting them and saying, “Be saved from this crooked generation.”

“This crooked generation.” Crooked, twisted, perverted, unreasonable, deviating from the right path, evil, unyielding, stubborn—this is the generation we live in. A time when crimes like robbery, fraud, and murder, along with hatred, bullying, and war, run rampant. A way of life where people live without even asking themselves, “What should we do?” while placing their hands over their hearts, fearing no one, and trampling others underfoot to satisfy their own desires. A way of life where people act without a sense of guilt, choosing any means necessary, believing that as long as they accumulate wealth, they are winners, even if they establish fraud bases overseas and escape while leaving the lower-ranking members to be arrested. This is what I believe can be called a twisted era. The world has always been twisted. However, people must be saved from this twisted era. This cunning wisdom that deceives people will eventually come back to haunt them.

“Be saved from this twisted era,” he urged. Peter continued to speak words of encouragement. “Be saved from this twisted era,” “Be saved from this twisted era,” “Be saved from this twisted era.” He continued to speak as if begging.

2 Corinthians 3:2 Our recommendation is you yourselves, written in our hearts, known to God and read by all.

3:3 You yourselves are proof that we are Christ's messengers, not written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

5:18 But all these things are from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

5:20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making its appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

5:21 God made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

New Revised Standard Version 5:19 God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

5:20 So we are Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his case through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Those who heard him recognized that there was a crooked path in their own hearts and desired to repent. They earnestly desired to put an end to their own crooked hearts, which had been focused solely on themselves, without fearing God or man. Those who accepted Peter's earnest plea and were baptized set sail on a new life, numbering three thousand in all. And those who were saved devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. They poured out their hearts and sought these things earnestly and with all their hearts. This was their love for the apostles' teaching, their fellowship, their sharing in the Lord's Supper, and their continued prayer. They were fully committed to these things and spent their time with joy.

2:43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many miracles and signs were performed by the apostles.

Those who had not previously felt fear now felt a sense of awe toward God. Those who had not feared others, who had thought themselves to be important, now felt fear toward others. From the depths of their hearts and souls, they were transformed and united with God, and God sent His power to them, and many miracles and signs were performed by the apostles, one after another. This was not something that happened only two thousand years ago. Even today, God reveals His power to those who fear and honor Him.

2 Chronicles 16:9 The Lord looks down from heaven and sees all the children of men; his eyes are on those who are faithful to him. (New International Version)

2:44 All the believers were together and had everything in common.

2:45 They sold their possessions and goods and distributed the proceeds to all, as any had need.

2:46 They were of one heart and one mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common.

2:47 With one heart and one mouth they were of such great fear of all that they saw, and of all who believed with them, that even the government was amazed. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Through the Holy Spirit, the gift of repentance, and the fear of the Lord, and by sharing in His wonderful works, those who were saved lived in unity, and God granted them the favor of the people, and added to their number daily those who were being saved. (The phrase “with one heart” in verse 46 and the phrase “with one accord” in verse 42 are the same Greek words. Both mean to devote oneself to something continuously, or to maintain a close, intimate relationship.)

The phrase “with sincerity” in verse 46 is also a beautiful phrase. It means simple, plain, straightforward, modest, humble, innocent, and humble. This is the exact opposite of the crooked, twisted, perverse, unreasonable, unprincipled, evil, stubborn, and obstinate nature of this crooked age. However, it is within this sincerity that extraordinary joy lies. The “joy” mentioned in verse 46 refers to such extraordinary joy.

The thoughts of “Why should I lose out when we share together?” or “Why must I give up my share?” or “Why must I sacrifice for that person?” or “Why is that person getting more than others?” all vanished as their hearts became one. There was a love relationship filled with the joy of serving one another as brothers and sisters, as a true family, without ever thinking of loss. This was the state that represented the exact opposite of the “crooked age.” In this fresh and appealing atmosphere, people were moved by their reverence for God and wanted to be part of this beautiful relationship.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another: as I have loved

you, that ye also love one another.

13:35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

In the love of the Lord, we can realize our glorious lives in a wonderful fellowship of love, simply as children, loving and practicing God's teachings.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for today's worship. You laid your hands on Jesus, whom you had appointed as Lord, and killed him. We humans had no choice but to cry out in despair, "What shall we do?" But it was because Jesus took the cross upon himself and paid the price for us that we were saved simply by repenting. We also thank you for the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Please guide us along the path of this teaching with gratitude and reverence. May this reverence unite our hearts and lead us forward together. Please lead all those who are suffering into God's salvation and peace. Bless our families and our neighbors. Use us. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.