



Intro

... 'Salvation is to be found through Jesus alone; in all the world there is no one else whom God has given who can save us.'

(Acts 4.12)

This is the season we celebrate our Lord Jesus Christ passing from death to life. Throughout the world Christians celebrate the awesome power of God. As we hear and trust God's word, and as we proclaim all that God has done, we can be confident that we shall share his victory over death and live with him for ever.

**The Lord is Risen!
He is risen indeed, Alleluia!**

The Easter Anthems

Christ our passover
has been sacrificed for us:
so let us celebrate the feast,
not with the old leaven of corruption and
wickedness:
but with the unleavened bread
of sincerity and truth. [1 Corinthians 5.7b, 8](#)

Christ once raised from the dead
dies no more:
death has no more dominion over him.
In dying he died to sin once for all:
in living he lives to God.
See yourselves therefore as dead to sin:
and alive to God
in Jesus Christ our Lord. [Romans 6.9-11](#)

Christ has been raised from the dead:
the first fruits of those who sleep.
For as by man came death:

by man has come also the resurrection of
the dead;
for as in Adam all die:
even so in Christ
shall all be made alive. [1 Corinthians 15.20-22](#)

Collect

Risen Christ,
faithful shepherd of Your Father's sheep:
teach us to hear Your voice
and to follow Your command,
that all Your people may be gathered into
one flock,
to the glory of God the Father. **Amen**

Acts 4.5-12 Peter and John before the Council

The story of the healing on the lame beggar at the gate continues...the whole chapter around the set reading makes it make much more sense.

4.1 Peter and John were still speaking to the people when some priests, the officer in charge of the Temple guards, and some Sadducees arrived. 2 They were annoyed because the two apostles were teaching the people that Jesus had risen from death, which proved that the dead will rise to life. 3 So they arrested them and put them in jail until the next day, since it was already late. 4 But many who heard the message believed; and the number grew to about five thousand.

5 The next day the Jewish leaders, the elders, and the teachers of the Law gathered in Jerusalem. 6 They met with the High Priest Annas and with Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and the others who belonged to

the High Priest's family. 7 They made the apostles stand before them and asked them, "How did you do this? What power do you have or whose name did you use?" 8 Peter, full of the Holy Spirit, answered them,

"Leaders of the people and elders: 9 if we are being questioned today about the good deed done to the lame man and how he was healed, 10 then you should all know, and all the people of Israel should know, that this man stands here before you completely well **through the power of the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth**—whom you crucified and whom God raised from death. 11 Jesus is the one of whom the scripture says,

'The stone that you the builders despised turned out to be the most important of all.'

12 Salvation is to be found through him alone; in all the world there is no one else whom God has given who can save us."

13 The members of the Council were amazed to see how bold Peter and John were and to learn that they were ordinary men of no education. They realized then that they had been companions of Jesus. 14 But there was nothing that they could say, because they saw the man who had been healed standing there with Peter and John.

15 So they told them to leave the Council room, and then they started discussing among themselves. 16 "What shall we do with these men?" they asked. "Everyone in Jerusalem knows that this extraordinary miracle has been performed by them, and we cannot deny it. 17 But to keep this matter from spreading any further among the people, let us warn these men never again to speak to anyone in the name of Jesus."

18 So they called them back in and told them that under no condition were they to speak or to teach in the name of Jesus.

19 But Peter and John answered them, "You yourselves judge which is right in God's sight—to obey you or to obey God. 20 For we cannot stop speaking of what we ourselves have seen and heard." 21 So the Council warned them even more strongly



and then set them free. They saw that it was impossible to punish them, because the people were all praising God for what had happened. 22 The man on whom this miracle of healing had been performed was over forty years old.

The Believers Pray for Boldness

23 As soon as Peter and John were set free, they returned to their group and told them what the chief priests and the elders had said. 24 When the believers heard it, they all joined together in prayer to God: "Master and Creator of heaven, earth, and sea, and all that is in them! 25 By means of the Holy Spirit you spoke through our ancestor David, your servant, when he said,

'Why were the Gentiles furious; why did people make their useless plots? 26 The kings of the earth prepared themselves, and the rulers met together against the Lord and his Messiah.'

27 For indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together in this city with the Gentiles and the people of Israel against Jesus, your holy Servant, whom you made Messiah. 28 They gathered to do everything that you by your power and will had already decided would happen.

29 And now, Lord, take notice of the threats they have made, and allow us, your servants, to speak your message with all boldness. 30 Reach out your hand to heal, and grant that wonders and miracles may be performed through the name of your holy Servant Jesus."

31 When they finished praying, the place where they were meeting was shaken. They



were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim God's message with boldness.

John 10.11-18

11 "I am the good shepherd, who is willing to die for the sheep. 12 When the hired man, who is not a shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees a wolf coming, he leaves the sheep and runs away; so the wolf snatches the sheep and scatters them.

13 The hired man runs away because he is only a hired man and does not care about the sheep. 14-15 I am the good shepherd.

As the Father knows me and I know the Father, in the same way I know my sheep and they know me. And I am willing to die for them. 16 There are other sheep which belong to me that are not in this sheep pen. I must bring them, too; they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock with one shepherd.

17 "The Father loves me because I am willing to give up my life, in order that I may receive it back again. 18 No one takes

my life away from me. I give it up of my own free will. I have the right to give it up, and I have the right to take it back. This is what my Father has commanded me to do."

19 Again there was a division among the people because of these words. 20 Many of them were saying, "He has a demon! He is crazy! Why do you listen to him?"

21 But others were saying, "A man with a demon could not talk like this! How could a demon give sight to blind people?"

Sermon

Jesus said: "I know my sheep and my sheep know me!"

Do you know the shepherd?

- He's the one who remains even when the wolves threaten.
- He's the one who actually gives up his life to take the savage bite intended for a tasty sheep.
- He's the one who was crucified, dying our death.

- He's the one who was raised from death to new life.
- He's the one who still calls to us by name: do you listen for his voice?
- He's the one who sends his spirit to be with us, to empower us, to heal the sick.

At the end of the set reading from Acts, in Peter's speech to the cynical disbelieving religious leaders, he says:

"Salvation is to be found through him alone; in all the world there is no one else whom God has given who can save us."

(12)

In the continuation (which I strongly recommend you look at later), Luke, the narrator, says the leaders, spluttering, say: 'how did you do this?...'

The Leaders realised that Peter and John were companions of Jesus, but they despised them as uneducated (they didn't have degrees in theology!) Yet the man had been healed:

"But there was nothing that they could say, because they saw the man who had been healed standing there with Peter and John."

(14)

Eye-witness evidence again. When there's a miraculously healed man standing in front of you, there isn't much you can say.

Just like when there was a miraculously raised Jesus standing in front of them, the disciples had to believe!

The risen Jesus is still risen: he's alive, and is with us here, by His Spirit, calling us to hear his voice and follow him.

He says, "I know my sheep and my sheep know me."

Do you know him?

Post Communion

Merciful Father,
 you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the
 good shepherd,
 and in his love for us to lay down his life
 and rise again:
 keep us always under his protection,

and give us grace to follow in his steps;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord..

Departure

With the power that raised Jesus from
 the dead at work within us,
 We go in His peace to love and serve
 the Lord.

Alleluia, alleluia.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Alleluia, alleluia.