



## Pastor's Page

### **A Divine Discovery**

The name Susan Boyle may not mean anything to you unless you're a fan of 'Britain's Got Talent' which started its' third series last week. Susan Boyle was the star of the show on the opening night singing "I Dreamed a Dream" from *Les Miserables*. At the end of the number she received a standing ovation as the 2,000 strong audience cheered and applauded for all they were worth. The 47 year-old unemployed single woman from West Lothian near Edinburgh had looked awkward and a little out of place as she stepped onto the stage. There were even smirks on the judges' faces when she told them, "I am trying to be a professional singer. I've never been given a chance before but hopefully that will change. The judges certainly changed their opinion as one of them said; "I am so thrilled because I know everyone was against you. We are all so cynical but that was a complete wake up call. It was an absolute privilege listening to you singing, it was brilliant." What made this wonderful performance so remarkable (even provoking a national debate about the importance or otherwise of outward appearances) was the fact that most people had not expected it.

As we reflect on the Easter story we see the truth that most people did not expect the resurrection of Jesus. It took the disciples by surprise and perhaps this is the reason that they initially failed to recognise him when he appeared to them alive again. Yet though they were 'slow to believe', they became bold heralds of the gospel message and faithful witnesses to the risen saviour. But the Jewish people of the day by and large rejected Jesus not recognising him as the Messiah. One of the reasons for this was that he didn't fit their (wrong) expectations of the Christ. As Jesus considered this he wept as he contemplated their loss (Luke 19:41-42)

If we are not to make the same mistake we must firstly **recognise** Jesus for who he is - God in human form – the only name under heaven by which we can be saved. There may be "good things" in other religions but only Jesus has died for our sins, only Jesus can save us – Do we recognise this? Secondly we must be prepared to **repent**. When Peter preached the first Gospel message on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-39) he concluded by saying "Repent and be baptised, 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." Forgiveness is now available for all who repent. The Greek word translated repent means to have a complete change of mind. This is not a popular part of the gospel message but we must both recognise and respond to it. Thirdly we must **receive** the Holy Spirit. He is God's gift to us to enable us to live for God and to be witnesses to Jesus. God doesn't just enhance our lives he inhabits them by his Holy Spirit. Lastly we must **resolve** to live for Jesus. When the Lord reinstated Simon Peter he challenged the fisherman again to 'follow Him' (John 21:19) Becoming a Christian is a battle of wills – my will or God's will? Being a Christian is about living His way not ours.

Susan Boyle may not look like a superstar but she may well turn out to be the eventual winner of 'Britain's Got Talent.' A Galilean preacher dying on a Roman cross may not look like the Saviour of the World but in recognising Jesus as such we make the first step toward discovering 'life in all its fullness' (John 10:10)

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