

READ: Acts 2:1-41

“‘Being saved’ doesn’t just mean, as it does for many today, ‘going to heaven when they die’. It means ‘knowing God’s rescuing power, the power revealed in Jesus, which anticipates, in the present, God’s final great act of deliverance’. Peter will now go on to encourage his hearers to ‘call on the Lord’s name’, and so to know that ‘salvation’, that rescue, as a present reality as well as a future hope. If there really are ‘the last days’, then ‘salvation’ has already begun. Anyone who knows they need rescuing, whatever from, can ‘call on the Lord’ and discover how it can happen.”

--Tom Wright, Acts for Everyone



ACTION: Spending time in a busy place--imagine things that make up the life stories of people.

SHARE: How did this cause you to view people differently? How are you compassionate? Self-Righteous? How do people cover up hurt? What would it be like to go through life without the hope of the Gospel?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**I. the POURING OUT ::** Read Acts 2:1-13

"As a body without breath is a corpse, so the church without the Spirit is dead."

--John Stott, The Message of Acts

1. Why is important that the followers of Jesus “were all together” (2:1), that the Spirit came “from heaven” (2:2), and that they were “filled” or empowered by the Holy Spirit (2:4) to carry out God’s mission?¹

2. What did the followers of Jesus speak of after being empowered by the Holy Spirit (2:11) and how did the people respond (2:6-8, 12-13)? What is the significance of some being amazed and others mocking?

3. This same Spirit is at work in the church today: How can you communicate “the mighty works of God” to those around you in a language they understand? What might result? What is challenging about that?

II. the PROCLAMATION :: Read Acts 2:14-36

“The speech thus shows how God’s activity through Jesus stands at the core of the Christian message. Jesus’s resurrection means far more than merely that there is life after death. It is a vindication of Jesus’s life and mission, a demonstration that Jesus lives and still rules, and a reflection that Jesus is a unique person, sharing the precious presence and glory of God in a unique way. Christ’s death led to Christ’s victory and rule. The reality of the resurrection transformed the apostles from those who were timid to those who were bold to share Jesus with others.”--Darrell Bock, ACTS (BECNT)

1. What can we learn from Peter addressing the people and their questions and unbelief (2:14-15)? How did he answer them (2:17-21)? What questions are people in your culture asking about life?

¹ Read Exodus 19 and 20 and seek to find similarities with this passage and Moses receiving God’s law

2. How does Jesus birth (22); death (23) and resurrection (24-36)---or manger/cross/crown---impact you? Do you grasp the part you played in Jesus coming to die?²

3. What are situations that God has placed in where you can speak the Gospel into? Who needs to see and hear this (33)? (you, the church, community etc.)

III. the PLEADING & the PROMISE :: Read Acts 2:37-41

“Peter tells them that if they repent/believe — they will receive two promises. They will receive “forgiveness of sins” and “the gift of the Holy Spirit”. This is a great summary of what it means to become a Christian. When we become a Christian, there is something legal that happens outside of us — we are accepted as sinless and perfect, our record being pardoned and covered. Secondly, there is something that happens within us — we get the new life, a new power and Spirit directly from God that then grows in us.”

--Evangelism: Studies in the book of Acts, Redeemer Presbyterian Church (New York)

1. How do the people react to their understanding that it was Jesus-the Lord and Christ-whom they crucified and how does Peter call them to respond (38)? How does this apply to us?

2. Why is it important to believe the Gospel message once (quote above) and continually (everyday)? Why is challenging about it?

3. What is the result of Peter’s Gospel message (41)? What means does God use today to spread his message and how can you use those means to spread the Gospel?

CONNECTING QUESTIONS

1. How has the Gospel just been INFORMATION that you “know”? What steps can you take to implement the Gospel daily into your life so that it leads to TRANSFORMATION?

2. What role do you see yourself playing in God's mission and how can the group pray for you?

Next weeks action to share:

Take time this week and learn more about one person (could be a neighbor, friend, family member, co-worker, classmate) EXAMPLES: Where do they spend time/money/free time? What do they fear and dream about? Where do they shop? What cultural experiences do they value? What are painful experiences they have had? What music, movies and shows are they in to? What do they find funny? In what ways are they self-righteous? What is their spirituality? Whom do they trust--why? What do they think about the gospel?³

² Read Romans 5:1-11 to understand more fully what happened and the implications of the Gospel

³ Adapted from The Radical Reformation (p. 132-33) by Mark Driscoll. We encourage you to read for further study