

Welcome

Last week- how do you even follow up something like that
Confession- wasn't here, online

But I think it is so cool how God has put all this together, because what we are talking about today, you couldn't have planned it better as a follow up from what our church experienced last week.

There are some pretty striking similarities of where we are at in the book of Acts, and what we are experiencing real time right now in our church.

Pouring out of Spirit- Peters call to repentance and baptism

Last week- the Spirit was obviously at work, we literally saw people repent and be baptized.
How much closer do we get here?

So just like these Christians, we are at a crossroad and might be wondering, ok, where do we go from here?

God in His grace to us, He lays out here as clear as day for us, in the next passage of Scripture we will look at today.

Acts 2:42-47

Read passage once, then we will go back and dig into it a bit

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Very well-known passage of Scripture, you may have heard it talked about before. And it's beautiful, even people who want nothing to do with Jesus, would look at what is going on here and say that is pretty cool.

How I had always read this passage was, "Do these things, then God will work." Somewhat true, cyclical in nature, snowballs

But I'm growing more convinced that's looking at this backwards.

It's becoming more and more clear to me that this isn't the story of a bunch of followers of Jesus devoting themselves to a certain set of behaviors, and then because of that, the Holy Spirit shows up.

Instead, what do we see? We see the Spirit pour out on these people, and this is what is produced in the aftermath. I think a helpful way to look at this, is that these are the long-term effects and responses of a Spirit-filled life.

We see the initial response to the spirit- repentance, turning to Jesus, baptism.

And then the next thing we see is what happens over the course of time.

This is so significant for where we are at right now, because it's really easy to get excited about a Sunday like last week, and never take the next step forward.

I have experienced it my whole life -

Camp

What God is doing in us does not allow us to be a flash-in-the-pan church. We cannot be a church that experiences the Holy Spirit in a powerful way then just gets back to normal, because that is not a church that is faithful. That is not a church that is continuously obedient. And it's not a church that is effective for the Kingdom. And it can't be us.

So many of us find ourselves in this place. We are tuning our heart to hear the Spirit, and we are recognizing what He is doing, We are aware, and it is powerful and beautiful. So, what is next?

Luke lays out what was next for these followers of Jesus, and I don't really think it has changed very much.

We see, as a long-term response to the work of the Spirit in their lives, a devotion, an obsession, a life-disrupting commitment to four things.

1. Apostles' teaching v. 43

And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

A succinct way of saying it is that they wrapped their lives around the Word and works of God.

As we continue in our obedience to God, one of our long-term responses is a love, a devotion for God's Word, and what He is doing in this world through people who love Him. Is it on our mind? Do we think about it, study it, make a point to bring it up? This is one of the things the early

Christians made a point of. They would take any chance they could get to grow in their understanding of the character and life of Jesus, and they wanted to see what He did in a person's life.

2. Devoted to the fellowship (terrible word to describe what is going on, it's a Greek word called Koinonia, which is so much more than friendship or acquaintance. It's actually probably just better to let Scripture define what we are talking about, which it does, in vs 44-46:

And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.

We get squirmy about this part of this passage, because it feels an awful lot like communism and we know that's bad, so what do we do with this? It's just one of those moments when we use a human system to try to describe a Kingdom value or movement. We need to knock that off, because it only distracts us from what actually is going on. What do we see here? A deep, deep commitment to each other. A commitment that says whatever the need, we will take care of each other. Out of an abundance or out of whatever we have, we are committed to each other. This long-term response to the work of the spirit was a people who shared who they were, all they had, emotionally, spiritually, their joys and their sorrows, and yes even their material possessions and resources.

People feel threatened and ask ok, am I supposed to do this then? Sell it all, live like hippies in the woods? What is this actually telling me to do?

3. The breaking of bread v. 46

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts,

Most scholars I read all agreed that this is two-fold in nature.

Homes- breaking bread, having meals. Which was such a bigger production, or moment that we often experience. It was actually a commitment to share a meal together, not just a mad dash to get to the next thing. So that act of getting together certainly plays into that real deep fellowship already mentioned, but almost everyone agrees that this also points to a devotion to Communion (the taking of the Lord's Supper) as well. That these people were devoted to remembering what Jesus had done, and looking forward to what he will do. These people understood how incredible sunk they were without what Jesus had done, and so they took every chance to remember it. I don't think it's a coincidence that it's connected to the meals they would share, because it appears as often as they got together to eat, they would stop to remember Who all this was for.

4. The Prayers v. 47

praising God and having favor with all the people.

The way this is written seems to be more of a structured, or corporate expression as opposed to a purely personal one.

Ok so what does this mean for us?

I keep getting this sense that this is what is next.

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47)

Acts 2:38-47

³⁸Peter 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. ³⁹The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." ⁴⁰With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."

⁴¹So then, those who had received his word were baptized, and on that day there were added about three thousand persons.

⁴²They were continually devoting themselves

- A** to **the apostles'** teaching
- B** and to **shared participation (koinonias)**,
- C** to the **breaking of bread**
- D** and to **the prayers**.

A ⁴³A sense of awe was on every person,
many wonders and signs were happening through **the apostles**.

B ⁴⁴And all those who had believed were in the same place,
and they had all things as **shared in common (koinos)**;
⁴⁵and they began selling their property and possessions,
and they were sharing them with all,
as anyone might have need.

C ⁴⁶Day by day continually devoted with one mind in the temple,
and they were **breaking bread** from house to house,
they were receiving meals with gladness and sincerity of heart,

D ⁴⁷**praising God** and having favor with all the people.

And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.