Harvester Christian Church

Life Groups | **PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY**

ACTS | SPIRIT POWERED MESSAGE

**WEEK 2 – CHAPTER 2:1-41**

Pray that God gives you understanding as you open His Word, and then read **Acts 2:1-41.**

**Pentecost**

The major feasts the Jews were required to keep were Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles (see Exodus 23:14-17). These were all “pilgrimage festivals”, meaning those living outside of Jerusalem would travel there for the observance of the feast. Pentecost was the occasion of the events recorded in Acts 2:1-41. Try going to **StudyLight.Org** to do some research. Click on “Bible Study Tools” then “Dictionaries”. Look up “Pentecost”(or “Feasts”) in a couple of different dictionaries, then answer the following:

* What does Pentecost mean in Greek? Why was that name appropriate for this festival?
* What are some other names for this same festival?
* Pentecost was timed to coincide with what agricultural event?
* What are some things that would happen at Pentecost?
* Why do you think God used an occasion like Pentecost to send His Spirit in such a way?

**The Holy Spirit**

Luke wrote about the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus in Luke 3:21-23.

* What was the occasion?
* What did the voice from Heaven say?
* According to verse 23, this took place just prior to what?
* What parallels, if any, do you see between this passage and our story in Acts 2?

**Speaking in Tongues**

Speaking in tongues is a matter of controversy in many churches today. It’s important for us to understand the difference between what is commonly understood by this term and what it meant on the Day of Pentecost. Try going back to **StudyLight.Org** and reading the entry on “Tongues” in the **Bridgeway Bible Dictionary**. After doing so, answer the following:

* What did “tongues” mean in our story from Acts 2?
* Why would it matter that each person could hear the good news in their own native language?
* What does it teach us about the heart of God that He wanted each person to hear the message in his/her own language?

**Peter’s Sermon** can be broken down into three parts:

* A Defense (14-21)
* A Proclamation (22-36)
* A Call to Repentance (37-41)

Here are a few questions related to Peter’s message that day.

1. More than once Peter tells his listeners that they were responsible for the death of Jesus. Why do you think he was so hard on them? Why was it important that they be confronted with their own sin and wrongdoing?
2. Peter quoted from the prophet Joel and also King David in explaining to the crowd what they were witnessing and what they needed to know about Jesus. What was the point of connecting Jesus and the appearance of the Holy Spirit to Old Testament prophecies? Why was that important for this particular crowd?
3. Peter’s instructions to those who felt convicted that day included both repentance and baptism. What does repentance mean?
4. Peter made promises not only to those listening that day but to those who were “far off.” What were the promises? Who do you think he meant by those “far off?”

**Discussion Questions**

* Peter’s sermon on the Day of Pentecost called attention to the sin of the people who were listening. If you grew up in a church, how would you describe the way sin was discussed? Do you think we talk about sin enough today? What are the consequences when a church over-emphasizes sin and guilt? What are the consequences when a church talks only about grace and acceptance?
* At the end of Peter’s sermon he noted that the generation in which they lived was “corrupt”. Why is it important for us to recognize the corruption around us? If a Christ-follower is making a real effort to live a godly life, do you think he/she would feel like they are “going with the flow” or “swimming upstream”? Can you identify an area of your life in which you have been going along with the norms of our culture rather than taking a stand and living differently?
* Along with the forgiveness of sins, those putting their faith in Jesus are promised the “gift” of the Holy Spirit. To what extent do you see the Holy Spirit as a gift in your life?
* On the day of Pentecost, thousands of people said “yes” to Jesus and were baptized that day. Do you believe that God still moves in such powerful ways today? Why or why not? What big things can we be praying for God to do in our church?