

The Birth of the Church in Jerusalem.

Acts 2: 14-41

Questions

1. Peter was around a fire when he denied Jesus and when Jesus restored him. Then, in Acts 2, we see tongues of fire as the Holy Spirit descends and dwells. What do you think about the various phases of Peter's faith? Do you identify with him? Or is there another disciple with which you more closely align?
2. The disciples were mocked and called drunk, even though they were miraculously speaking in different languages. Have you ever been accused or mocked even when you were doing something good? How did that feel? What can we learn from the way Peter handled this?
3. **Point #1: Jesus Gives the Gift of the Holy Spirit.** Peter begins with a passage from Joel since the Jews would already trust in the Scriptures. He just needed to link it with what was happening, and that Jesus was the true source. What words or phrases in his sermon would have helped convince a skeptical Jewish person?
4. Peter blatantly tells the crowd, "...you crucified and killed [Jesus]." Ouch! Talk about a bombshell! When should we preach publicly with such harsh truths? Is there a time for a more sensitive approach? How do we know the difference?
5. **Point #2: Jesus Defeated Death.** Not everyone in the crowd would have seen the resurrected Jesus, but Peter and the disciples had and could testify to that historic fact. How can Jesus' defeat of death be part of our testimony today, even though we did not witness it firsthand?
6. **Point #3: Jesus is God.** Read the passages from Psalms in verses 25-28 and 34-35. What do you learn from them about the identity of "the Lord"? Peter anticipates that the Jews might say that David himself was "the Lord" or "the holy one." How did Peter point out that it must be Jesus and not David?
7. Peter tells the crowd to "repent and be baptized" in the name of Jesus. Is that the same formula we should use as we share Jesus with those around us? Are there times when an invitation to attend church or to learn more is a better first step?
8. Pray with your group that the power of Peter's sermon will live in our witness as we talk to friends, family, and neighbors about Jesus.