

“God, what would you have me do?”

Acts 2:36-47

I. What do you do when revival breaks out?

- A. On the morning of Pentecost there were 120.
 1. By the end of the day there were over 3,000.
 - (a) These were mostly Jews visiting Jerusalem.
 - (b) Many of them stayed, rather than going home.
 2. Suddenly, you have massive logistical problems.
 - (a) How do you feed everyone?
 - (b) Where do the people stay?
 - (c) Probably they form a camp outside the city.
 3. What about their spiritual needs?
 - (a) Most are familiar with the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament).
 - (b) But now they must be instructed in the ways of Jesus.
 - (c) So, you have 120 disciples and 3,000 baby Christians.
 - (d) This is one BIG nursery.
 4. What do you do in a nursery? You nurture.
 - (a) You nurture with food, socialization, communication.
 - (b) The Apostles establish practices that nurture spiritual life.
- B. They met together daily in the temple courts.
 1. They are “devoted” to four things (Acts 2:42).
 - (a) The apostles’ teaching.
 - (b) The fellowship.
 - (c) The breaking of bread.
 - (d) The prayer.
 2. “Devoted” describes a diligent adherence to these practices which leads to changes in how they think and how they live.
 - (a) KJV says they “continued steadfastly.”
 3. Two Greek words
 - (a) proskartereo: to be earnest, to give yourself to something with constant and careful attention.
 - (b) ēn: to hold, be, have, agree, use.
 4. Together: holding onto and agreeing with these new practices and values to such a degree that it affects their being.
 - (a) They are being changed.
 - (b) They are putting these things to use, practicing them.
 5. This is a reminder of what Jesus said: (Matthew 7:24-25).

II. The apostles’ teaching was their eyewitness testimony of Jesus.

- A. They did not have the New Testament yet.
 1. They were proclaiming Jesus as Lord and Christ.
 2. They were teaching what he taught.
 3. Bearing witness to miracles, and to his character.
- B. The context: There is an atmosphere of reverence and excitement (Acts 2:43, 47). KJV says, “...fear came upon every soul.”
 1. The fear of the Lord: reverence that leads to obedience.

- (a) An atmosphere of humble submission, joy, excitement.
- C. The new believers’ devotion to teaching is hunger and teachability.
 1. Spiritual hunger is a desire for more.
 - (a) You’ve tasted of God’s goodness and you want more of it!
 2. Teachable: a heart that is open and submissive to God.
 3. This is a devotion that is not just aimed at gaining knowledge.
 - (a) It is a devotion that seeks to put knowledge into practice.
 - (b) “In light of this, how should we live, as followers of Christ?”
 - (c) What attitudes need to change? What practices?
 4. This devotion leads these new believers to formation (Galatians 4:19).
 - (a) As we grow, the character of Christ is formed in us.
 - (b) The change that comes about is transformation.
 - (c) The end result, and God’s goal, is conformation (Rom. 8:29).
 - (d) God’s goal is for you and me to reflect the glory of his Son.
 - (e) His glory is his character. God’s goal is transformation.
- D. What about the mission? Yes, God wants the mission accomplished.
 1. God knows, the mission is best accomplished by transformed people.
 - (a) So last week we spoke of formation for mission.

III. The most important role of the church: character change!

- A. That’s what disciple making is!
 1. As God gives us life (zoe), he changes our lives!
- B. Continuing to form Christ in us needs to be the focus of all we do.
 1. This happens best in community (Acts 2 community).
 2. Forming Christ in us is the purpose of small groups.
- C. We are encouraging our Life Groups to be sermon-based.
 1. This is not because we want to emphasize my sermons.
 - (a) We do want to emphasize what God is teaching us!
 2. Sermon-based because it will bring transformation most effectively if we go deeper with a little than if we only have head knowledge of a lot.
- D. Remember, Jesus said the one who practices his teaching will be strong.
 1. There is too much going on in hearing a sermon to apply it well.
 - (a) So, when do you ask, “God, what do you want me to do?”
 - (b) Unless you are very intentional, that may seldom be asked.
 2. Life Groups will have facilitated, “what do we do?” discussions.
 - (a) Begin with a brief review of the meaning of the passage.
 - (b) Then, discussion that takes it from theoretical to practical.
 3. Life Groups are family. We need trust and safety to share.
 4. If you engage and put it into practice, you will grow!
 - (a) How do we know that? Because Jesus tells us that when we put his word into practice, we build our house on the Rock.
 5. LifeWay Research (Ed Stetzer) has found that this type of transformation happens best in community.