

Formation for Mission

Acts 2:42-47

I. Why does God call his people to gather on the Sabbath?

- A. A related question: What is our priority, transformation or mission?
 1. Both are our priority. They work together.
 2. We gather for spiritual formation that prepares us for mission.
- B. Jesus went through a process of formation (Luke 2:52).
 1. He grew in wisdom and stature, in favor with God and men.
 2. He grew intellectually, physically, socially, and spiritually.
 3. Jesus grew in wisdom.
 - (a) Jesus was God, yet he voluntarily became like us.
 - (b) This verse shows that Jesus didn't operate in omniscience.
 - (c) God does not grow in wisdom, but as a human being, Jesus did.
 4. So, Jesus went through a process of spiritual growth (Isaiah 50:4-6).
 - (a) He was mentored by the Father through the Holy Spirit.
 - (b) Why? It was formation for mission.
 - (c) That's what we are called to, also.
- C. The formation in Acts 2 parallels what it says in Luke 2.
 1. Devotion to teaching (growth in wisdom and stature).
 - (a) Wisdom: more than just intellectual; understanding how God's truth applies to life.
 - (b) Stature: spiritual stature; strength, the ability to stand.
 2. Devotion to koinonia fellowship.
 - (a) This is attaching to the body of Christ in vital relationship.
 - (b) It's learning how to love and be loved (the "one anothers").
 3. Devotion to breaking of bread.
 - (a) This is about being a covenantal community.
 - (b) "Breaking bread" is not just a meal. It is worship.
 - (c) It is covenant renewal.
 - (d) Both vertical (with God) and horizontal (with people).
 - (a) Realizing how I relate to you is the visible expression of how I relate to God.
 2. Devotion to the prayers (Acts 3:1).
 - (a) This is growth in how we relate to God.
 - (b) These particular prayers are corporate.
 - (c) Corporate prayer is about us joining God's mission.
 - (d) It's us having God's heart for those around us.
 3. So, God is forming them spiritually as they gather.
 - (a) He is forming the character of Christ in them.

4. Stephen's life is an example.
 - (a) The character of Christ is displayed in his death (Acts 7:59-60).
- B. This spiritual formation in them is preparation.
 1. They are being prepared for mission.
 2. It would be tempting to get comfortable in such a community.
 - (a) Let's stay and enjoy what we have together.
 3. Persecution breaks out (Acts 8:1-3).
 - (a) God redeems this trial by using it to send them out.
 - (b) Those who had been formed and sent, engaged in mission (Acts 8:4).
 4. This is the same thing God is doing in us.
 - (a) He gathers us (Sunday morning and Life Groups).
 - (b) He forms Christ in us!
 - (c) He sends us out into our world with Jesus and the Gospel!

II. To embrace the call, we must realize we are not our own.

- A. New Morning Mercies: Paul Tripp; October 10th.
- B. What is our motivation?
 1. Religious motivation would be, "I do this to get something from God (salvation, approval, acceptance)."
 2. Gospel motivation is, "We do this because of what we have already received from God (salvation, approval, acceptance)."
 - (a) We give our lives back to the one who gave himself for us.
 - (b) We live for him (2 Corinthians 5:15).
 - (c) Not because we must, but because we love him!
 3. We always get back far more than we give (Matthew 10:39).

III. Conclusion: In Acts 2, God is raising up instruments of his grace!

- A. New Morning Mercies: Paul Tripp; October 11th.
 1. That is what God is doing in Acts 2.
 2. That is what God is doing here at Good News!
 - (a) Be part of Sunday morning.
 - (b) Be part of a Life Group.
 - (c) Embrace the call.
 - (d) Gather to be formed! Go out to represent!
 3. May God be glorified through our lives!