

Acts of the Apostles

Week 4 – Acts 2:42-3:26

All In the Family (Acts 2:42-47)

- Post-Pentecost, we get the first of 8 “summary” statements on the life and growth of the Church. The church was devoted to:
 - Teaching – a desire for teaching shows a genuine conversion, life change
 - Fellowship – there was a unique connection between the new believers and with God
 - Breaking of Bread – we can understand this to be the Lord's Supper (Eucharist) or that of a fellowship meal from the Jewish belief that following the blessing of the meal, “...the table becomes holy and eating is sacred.” (Willimon)
 - Prayer – we can understand this to be the set Jewish times for prayer (as we will see with Peter & John in chapter 3); we also know that Christians were praying as Jesus taught/demonstrated with personal prayers.
- This Post-Pentecost Church's life led to the following results:
 - Awe and wonder
 - Sharing of possessions
 - Temple life
 - Home life
 - Sincerity of heart and mind
 - Worship
 - Favor
 - Growth

There were no “long rangers” in First Church Jerusalem. Church was a family business.

The Good Samaritan in Action (Acts 3:1-10)

- Peter & John are on a mission.
- Note the location of our unnamed paraplegic – “outside the gate.”
- The man gets more than he bargained for – *what stories in the life of Christ does this story remind you of?*
- No magic at work here – new life is on display, it's the Name of Jesus that brings healing and wholeness

“How’d They Do That?” Or “You’ve Got Some ‘Splaining to Do” (Acts 3:11-26)

- Peter’s second sermon in as many chapters.
 - Demonstrates a high Christology
 - Jesus is the “innocent” servant (v.13) – sends one back to **Isaiah 53**, the suffering servant
 - Jesus is the “Holy and Just One” (v. 14) – also referred to this way in **Acts 4:27,30; 7:52; 22:14**)
 - Jesus is the “Prince/Author of Life” (v.15) – it is resurrected life of Christ that initiates life, He has pioneered the way through death and into life. They/you killed, but God has raised up.
 - Deflects glory from himself and John
 - This did not come from a human power
 - The man is not indebted to Peter and John
 - *Whose faith healed here?*
 - Decidedly Jewish testimony
 - Goes back to Exodus – God is working in a spectacular way to rescue and restore His people
 - Law and Prophets are present (v. 21-22) – this is God’s fulfillment of His work started long ago and all His promises to Israel are coming true
 - Double the disciples – a team approach
 - There was a witness for the upcoming trial before the Sanhedrin
 - In **Ecclesiastes 4:9-12**, we find the following advantages to a team approach in ministry:
 - Fruitfulness – “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor.” (4:9)
 - Help in trouble – “If either of them falls, one can help the other up.” (4:10a)
 - Affirmation – “Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm....” (4:11a)
 - Strength – “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.” (4:12a)
 - Luke recorded in his gospel, Jesus sending out the 72 (36 pairs of disciples) to proclaim the gospel. And they return in joy. (Luke 10:1-17)

Starting at the center of Jerusalem, the Gospel message is going out and the world will never be the same again.

Sources

Fernando, Ajith, *The NIV Application Commentary: Acts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998).
Willimon, William, *Interpretation Commentary: Acts* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1988).
Wright, NT, *Acts for Everyone, Part 1* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 2008).