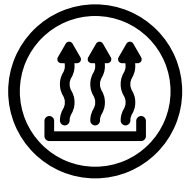




ACTS: THE STORY CONTINUES



WARM-UP

What's the most exciting news you've ever received?
How did you react when you first heard it?

Pray for your time together as a group.

Read out loud as a group

ACTS 2:1-12 (NIV)

1 When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. 2 Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. 4 All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? 9 Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" 12 Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" 13 Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."



What does their reaction say about the people's mindset?

Possible answers: shows a rationalization, a desire for worldly explanations over the possibility of a Spiritual one, and maybe even fear of what they don't understand.



How do you respond when you don't understand spiritual things?

Possible answers: may vary.

ACTS 2:14-35 (NIV)

14 Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. 15 These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! 16 No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

17 "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. 18 Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. 19 I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. 20 The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. 21 And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'

22 "Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23 This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. 25 David said about him:

"I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

26 Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope,

27 because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,

you will not let your holy one see decay. 28 You have made known to me the paths of life;

you will fill me with joy in your presence.' 29 "Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that

the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a

prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his

descendants on his throne. 31 Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the

Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay.

32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33 Exalted to the right hand

of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what

you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

"The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand 35 until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'"

Leaders' Note: In Verses 17-21, Peter quotes the Old Testament (Joel 2:28-29). We recognize that your group might be curious about the apocalyptic language that Joel uses. Here are some references to help you facilitate a discussion about this if it comes up. The sun actually turned to darkness during the crucifixion: Matthew 27:45, Mark 15:33, Luke 23:44-48. The spirit being poured out: Acts 2:4. Dreams: Luke 2:26, Acts 10:9-48, Matthew 27:19.



Peter quotes many Old Testament prophecies in Chapter 2. How do these point to Jesus? List them all out.

Possible Answers: Jesus performed a lot of miracles, which were well known. One His greatest miracles was raising from the dead. Even death couldn't hold Jesus Much like David talked about being at the right hand of God, Jesus was raised to life at the right hand of the Father and has sent His Spirit down among His people. The sun darkened when Jesus was on the cross. "And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Quite radical! Points to the simple fact that Jesus is God and that believing in Jesus is what saves not following the law.



What implications do the "last days" have on your life now?

Possible answers: may vary.

Read out loud as a group

ACTS 2:36-41 (NIV)

36 "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.



How do you tend to react when you are “cut to the heart?”

Possible answers: may vary.



In response to Jesus’ work on the cross, Peter tells the crowd to “repent and be baptized.” Why are these good responses to Christian conviction?

Possible Answers: Repentance is how we turn away from our sinful lives – acknowledging that Jesus is our Lord and accepting His sacrifice as absolution for our sin. Baptism is an outward expression for how we live out our Christian lives – a display to those around us that we have been washed clean. Also a physical declaration that they are in the family.

Optional Activity: Together, skim through Exodus 19, which is when Moses goes up to mount Sinai to meet with the Lord (right before Moses is given the 10 commandments).



Compare and contrast the account of the Pentecost with Mount Sinai (Exodus 19). What's similar? What's different?

Possible answers: Similar: appointed leader, divine presence comes down, great noise from heaven, God descends in fire, the Israelites just had an exodus (physical exodus from Egypt and now a spiritual exodus from sin), there is an establishment of a covenant. Different: people had to make themselves ready to meet with God and here God has made them ready himself. OT they get laws and NT we get God's very Spirit. OT the people quickly rebel and NT they are moved towards repentance.

DISCUSSION FOR ACCOUNTABILITY



- Are you feeling “cut to the heart” about anything right now? How might the Gospel speak peace into that situation?
- How can we encourage each other when we don’t understand spiritual things?