

Now Read Acts 2 v. 42 - 47

The church's mission and message created a fellowship. How would you describe that first fellowship of believers?

There were larger worship gatherings at the temple and smaller gatherings in the homes (v. 46). Why are both important?

'The Lord added to their number daily' (v. 47). What is our role and what is God's role in the growth of the church?

What are the consequences of losing sight of our role or God's role in adding people to the church?

In what ways could your church or fellowship benefit from the example of the early church described in the chapter?

Something to do NOW

Ask God to give you the motivation to share in the task of spreading the good news of salvation to those who are like you and to those who are different from you.

Something to do LATER

Sharing the good news of Jesus with another in a way that leads to conversion is generally a process that takes place over a period of time rather than a one – time experience.

What was the process by which you came to a saving faith in Jesus Christ?

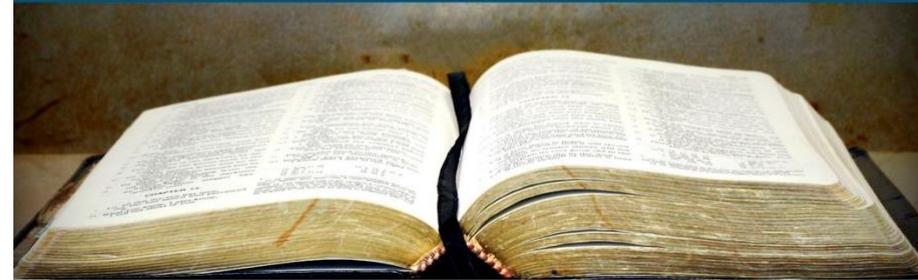
How have you been involved in the process of sharing the faith with someone not yet a Christian?

Now use the opportunity to PRAY

Salendine Nook Baptist Church

Acts 2 v. 1 – 47

Wednesday Bible Study



In our Bible Studies we will be using a booklet from 'A Life Builder Bible Study' series. Our overall theme for these studies is: **CHRISTIAN BELIEFS**. The studies were originally written by Stephen Eyre, but we will be modifying them in order that they become more usable for both home study and Church study.

These studies give us the opportunity to study the Bible in a greater depth and to reflect on what it is saying to us.

If you are unable to be with us in church and have decided that you will be doing the studies from home, it is suggested that you do the study on a Wednesday morning, for an hour, starting at 10.30am. Get yourself a tea or coffee, a Bible, pen and paper (for any notes you want to make) and begin studying.

We do hope that you enjoy the studies that have been produced!

Knowing what we believe is foundational to a healthy relationship with God and others. These studies on Christian Beliefs explore what Christians need to understand about some vital topics: **God, Christ, The Holy Spirit, God's Word, human nature, salvation, the church and the 'last things'**.

Having a good grasp of these beliefs will equip us to make sense of the world we live in, strengthen our assurance of our own identity in Christ and direct us to a life of integrity.

Some Thoughts To Help You While You Study

The purpose of the study is:

To encourage participation in the mission and fellowship of the church.

This study and the next one are all about the church. The church consists of all who call on the name of Jesus Christ. However, Christians throughout the ages have spoken of the **visible** and the **invisible** church. The visible church is the organised church that exists on earth. The invisible church is the church both on earth and in heaven. It is the church as God sees it.

The entire world mission of the church is glimpsed during the coming of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The Spirit is sent by the Son so that the church has a message to proclaim.

In the first evangelistic message of the church, Peter covers the essentials of the Gospel. Peter was not afraid to point out guilt or call for a response. Many in our culture have dismissed the gospel message as unworkable and outdated. But freedom from guilt feelings, loss of purpose and unsatisfied spiritual hunger can only truly be met in the gospel.

This passage in **Acts 2** is the most succinct and comprehensive summary of the ministry of the church. Teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, praying and performing signs before the world are basic in the ministry of the church.

To break bread together in a home was an expression of intimacy. We need regular small gatherings of believers where there can be a shared experience of intimacy. However, meeting together in small, intimate groups needs to be balanced with large corporate worship. Our faith is strengthened, and worship is enhanced when we gather with a larger number of believers in a public place.

God commands us to spread the gospel. But our evangelising is only the instrument, not the cause, of anyone's conversion. True conversation is always a result of the Holy Spirit.

If we believe that conversions are primarily up to us, we will be driven to manipulate people into accepting Jesus. Further, we will feel guilt if we aren't evangelising every moment of the day. On the other hand, if we believe that our role in evangelism is insignificant, then we can become passive and apathetic about seeking opportunities to share the gospel.

A Place To Make Some Short Notes:

STUDY 10 THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Stephen Ayre who wrote these studies on Christian Beliefs said: *'I became disillusioned with the church during my high school years and dropped out. I resisted those from a church near the campus who sought to evangelise me. But even as I resisted, I saw something in that fellowship of believers that attracted me. I was drawn both to the Lord and the church'*.

PERSONAL REFLECTION: *What does your church do to participate in the mission of spreading the good news of salvation? What excites you about this? What motivates you to share your faith with others?*

The church is God's mission base. In addition to saving us by means of justification, sanctification and glorification, God puts us together with others through whom he can continue to both enrich us and share with us the task of proclaiming his saving work to others who don't yet know him.

Read Acts 2 v. 1 – 41

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

Looking over the whole chapter, what is the role of the three persons of the Trinity in the mission of the church?

The events of the day of Pentecost begin to fulfil Jesus' promise in **Acts 1 v. 8** of church growth. What is there about this experience that lays the foundation for the church to be multicultural, multigenerational, and multinational?

In what ways have you experienced the church as multicultural, multigenerational, and multinational?

Peter and the disciples had been in hiding in fear and confusion after Jesus' crucifixion. How would you compare the attitude of Peter and the early church now?

The mission of the church is to proclaim the message **'Jesus, whom you crucified, is both Lord and Christ'**. (v. 36). What reasons does Peter offer for believing that message (**Acts 2 v. 22 – 41**)?

How does that first message about Jesus compare and contrast with the message the church proclaims today?

Thousands responded to Peter's sermon (**Acts 2 v. 22 – 39**). Why do you think his message was so convincing to the people gathered in Jerusalem? How convincing is that message in our culture today?