

The **COMMUNITY** God Wants to Build

Acts 2:37-47





Act 2:37-47

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

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. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

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



Act 2:37-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.





1. Word-centred and Spirit-filled



Word-Centred

They devoted themselves to the **apostles'**
teaching... (2:42, c.f. 6:7, 8:4, 12:24, 13:49,
19:10)

Word-Centred

Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness **and examined the Scriptures every day** to see if what Paul said was true. (17:11)





Spirit-filled

Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. (2:43)

Spirit-filled

It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be **full of the Spirit** and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them... (6:2-3)





Word-Centred and Spirit-filled

After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all **filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God** boldly. (4:31)



2. Inclusive and Exclusive

Inclusive: The Gospel is for All

Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs (2:9-11).

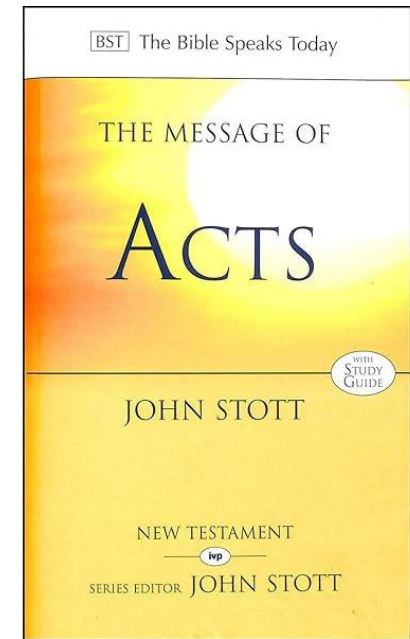
Samaritans and Gentiles (8-11)



Inclusive: The Gospel is for All

*It would be hard to imagine a more disparate group than the businesswoman, the slave girl and the jailer. Racially, socially and psychologically they were worlds apart. Yet all three were changed by the same gospel and were welcomed into the same church... We too, who live in an era of social disintegration, need to exhibit the **unifying power of the gospel**.*

(John Stott on Acts 16:11-40)



Exclusive: The Gospel Produces Holiness

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, **a holy nation**, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you **out of darkness into his wonderful light.**

(1 Peter 2:9)



Exclusive: The Gospel Produces Holiness

Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)

Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8:9-24)





3. Upward-looking and Downward-looking

Upward-Looking: Prayerful

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to **prayer**. (2:42, c.f. 3:1, 4:24, 6:4, 12:12, 16:16, 21:5)



Upward-Looking: Worshipful

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, **to the breaking of bread** and to prayer.

They **broke bread** in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **praising God** and enjoying the favor of all the people.
(2:42, 46-47)



Downward-Looking: Serving

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread **in their homes and ate together** with glad and sincere hearts. (2:46, c.f. 6:3-6, 9:36, 10:2, 11:29, 20:35)



Upward and Downward-Looking

While they were **worshiping the Lord and fasting**, the Holy Spirit said, “**Set apart** for me Barnabas and Saul **for the work** to which I have called them.” So after they had **fasted and prayed**, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. (13:2-3)





4. Inward-looking and Outward-looking

Inward-Looking: Caring

All the believers were together and **had everything in common**. They sold property and possessions to **give to anyone who had need**. (2:44-45, c.f. 4:34-35, 11:29-30, 16:15, 18:26, Gal. 6:1)



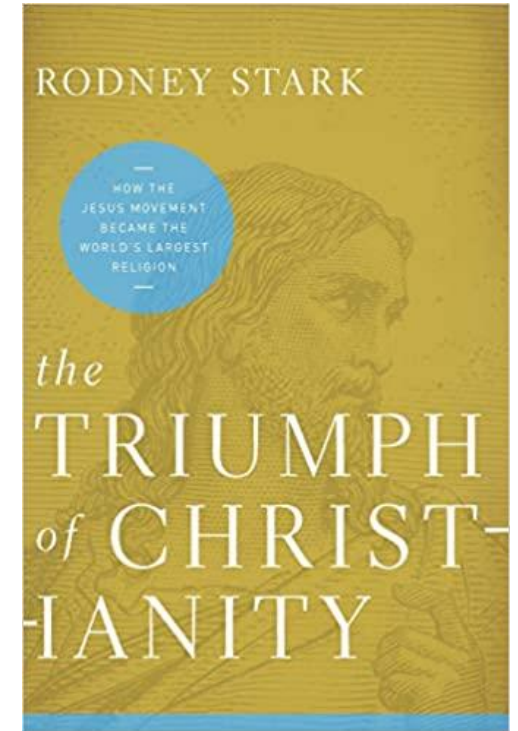
Outward-Looking: Witnessing

...praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And **the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.**
(2:47)





*For the Christians things were different. They believed and were taught that this life is a test for the next. They exhorted one another to not flee, to not fear death and to not abandon loved ones to the plague. **They saved many lives by their care and compassion.** (Rodney Stark)*



1. Do we **believe** God wants to build us to be such a community?





2. What would we have to
stop, **start**, **continue** to be
such a community?

STOP

Focusing on ourselves

(Phil. 2:3-4)



START

Praying (1 Thess. 5:17)



CONTINUE

Encouraging one another
(Heb. 10:24-25)



Lent (14 Feb-30 Mar)

- **Ash Wednesday Bilingual Service (14 Feb)**
- **Daily Devotions (\$4 per copy)**
- **Community Guided Journal**
- **Retreat Centre at Jubilee**
- **Good Friday Services (29 Mar)**

Please refer to the E-Bulletin for more details.

God wants to build us
into an authentic,
healthy **COMMUNITY.**

