

The Embassy - Acts 2:42-47 **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

Notes from the Sermon

They sit in the capital city of every major country in the world, a small pocket of the United States. Our embassies are buildings and compounds that represent our country, people, and government literally becoming a small space of US territory within another culture and country. In a way, an embassy becomes the space where the cultures of two kingdoms meet, as it becomes a clear representative of the US in a different culture and context. Those serving inside are from our culture and represent our values and interests in a different culture and kingdom. For US citizens in a culture, the embassy represents a place of safety and comfort should something happen that threatens them.

Acts 2 began with a simple statement, Pentecost had arrived. But the events that day were not at all simple or ordinary. The Spirit fell, they spoke in tongues, Peter preached, and 3,000 people were baptized. This was not simply a religious ritual done to appease God, they had taken the sign and seal of belief in Jesus as the Messiah and had bowed their knee to Christ as Lord. While they were Jewish, they now knew Christ as the true King promised in the Old Testament. So these people became believers in Jesus and therefore citizens of His Kingdom, although they continued to live in Jerusalem among the people there. So Luke, in helping us understand what happened next gives us a quick summary of the community life of the early church, showing us the activity and outcomes of this new embassy of Christ in that city.

Acts 2:42-47 is one of three passages scholars refer to as the summary statements (see also Acts 4:32-35, Acts 5:12-16). Luke gives us quick snapshots to show us what was taking place in the early church, and how their ministry was shaped. These summaries are then revealed in more detail in the following passages and chapters. But the summaries are beautiful pictures of this faith community which was birthed by the Gospel. And what we discover is that they are becoming a Gospel-shaped community. In other words, their rhythms, actions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and even service to others is being shaped by Jesus who gave Himself for us.

My friend Dr. Andy Chambers wrote a book on these passages that has deeply influenced my thinking on these passages. Andy is a theologian and the Provost at Missouri Baptist University. In his book *The Exemplary Life: A Theology of Church Life in Acts* argues that these summary passages are significantly more than three quick looks at an early church in Jerusalem. Rather, they set the tone for the definition of the church in the book of Acts. We see specific things happening here in Jerusalem among this community of faith. A quick reminder here, the church was not a building, it was and is a people, a community of redeemed and baptized people living the implications of the Gospel with each other and for the city. In one way, this summary is giving us a glimpse into the faith life of the Jerusalem church. But it sets the tone for every church in Acts. Jerusalem is the mother church for the entire church planting movement. By the end of Acts the Gospel has spread and churches have been planted in every major city in the Roman Empire. What Luke wants us to see is that the rhythms, attitudes, values, beliefs, and practices of every church are merely a repetition of those found here in this text and the other summaries. The way they go about these things may look a little different, but the essential nature of the church remains the same, at least if the church is to be a faithful Gospel-shaped community.

So, we see that the Jerusalem church is devoted to the Apostles teaching (the Gospel from the Word), fellowship, breaking of bread (Sacraments), and prayer. They

see God's power at work, and they themselves are in deep relationships that are filled with generosity. They gather multiple times each week meeting both in a very public place together (the Temple) and in homes for intimacy and to share meals. They are marked by their love for each other, generosity, common faith in Jesus, and mission to the community. As a result, they gain favor in the city among those who do not yet believe in Jesus, meanwhile the Lord continues to add people to Kingdom through their ministry day by day. This is the embassy of Christ in Jerusalem. But the goal is for every city and community to have an embassy of Christ and His Kingdom. The principles for what this means is true of other churches in Acts, and even churches in Eureka. The methods may look a little different, but the essential nature of the church as a Gospel shaped community does not change if a church truly wants to be Christ's church, His embassy, a representation of His glorious Gospel

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1 Samuel 30	1 Samuel 31	2 Samuel 1	2 Samuel 2	2 Samuel 3	2 Samuel 4	2 Samuel 5

Reading from this past week: Acts 2:42-47

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Acts 3:1-11

Family Worship

Song - *Lovingkindness*

<https://youtu.be/xV-fNmt6ZAo>

Gospel Project

Unit: Into the Land

Story: God Gave the People the Land

Big Picture Question: What is a miracle?

Answer: A miracle is something God does that usually cannot be done so that we can know He is all-powerful.

Scripture: Joshua 7-11

New City Catechism

Question #14: Did God create us unable to keep the Law?

Answer: No, but because of the disobedience of Adam and Eve we are all born in sin and guilt, unable to keep God's law.

Verse: Romans 5:12

Scripture

Acts 2:42-47

- How closely do you believe Genesis church resembles the church in Jerusalem? What are some things we can work toward to be more like this?
- What are the core things this church devotes themselves to and what does this mean for them? For us?
- How does the text tell us this embassy of Christ's Kingdom relates to the community around it? What would give them favor in the city?
- How can we pray and act to see the Lord add to our numbers day by day those who are being saved? One hint, consider inviting your One to Easter.

Prayer

*Pray that Genesis would be a Gospel centered church.

*Pray for Mike Singleton, our Community Groups Coordinator.