

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 07.19.2020

POWER AND PURITY! – ACTS 1:12-2:4

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.



IT IS TIME TO PRAY AS NEVER BEFORE! Its time to pray literally about Everything! Prayer played a significant role in the story of the early Church as recorded in the book of Acts. They prayed for guidance in making decisions, for courage to witness for Christ. In fact, prayer was a part of the daily life of the Church... Acts 2:42 *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.* Stephen prayed for those who were stoning him. Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans, and Paul prayed after his

conversion. Cornelius prayed that God would show him how to be saved, and Peter was on the housetop praying when God spoke to him about Cornelius. The Church fasted and prayed before sending out Barnabas and Paul. It was at a prayer meeting in Philippi that God opened Lydia's heart, and another prayer meeting in Philippi opened the Prison Doors! In almost every chapter of the book of Acts you will find a reference to Prayer, and it is very clear that Prayer releases the Power of God! The direction of God! and The fire of God! Let's get into our study...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What stood out or spoke to you most from Pastor Ray's message this weekend?
2. Who is one person you would likely ask for advice if you had a big decision to make? Why that person?
3. Do you consider yourself to be pretty decisive or do you like to make decisions more slowly? Has your speed of decision-making (either fast or slow) ever frustrated someone close to you? When?

We make decisions of all shapes and sizes every single day. From moving to a new city to choosing what to have for lunch, our hours are made up of a string of considered and made decisions. The question, though, is how the sovereignty of God fits into all those decisions we make. God's sovereignty does not negate our responsibility in making decisions; in fact, it frees us to make wise decisions in faith.

Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 1:12-14 (PRAY FOR EVERYTHING!)

1. What sticks out to you the most about this season in the life of the early disciples? What do you think it was like when they met together?
2. Why is it important to notice that they were continually united in prayer (v. 14)?
3. Have you ever felt like you were in a holding pattern—waiting for God to act in some situation in life? Why is that a difficult thing to do?
4. Why it is helpful to have other people around you during that time?

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When we feel like we are waiting on God, we might be tempted to be frustrated at His timing or even lose hope that He will act at all. During those times, we begin to see the gift of community around us. We can, as we live, hope, and pray together, faithfully remind each other of God's promises. We can also encourage each other to make sure we are waiting in an active rather than passive fashion.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 1:15-26 - (WAIT ON THE LORD FOR EVERY DECISION!)

1. What's the difference between waiting actively and waiting passively?
2. How do you see the church being active while they were waiting for God to move?

While the church could have simply waited, they chose to take an active stance. They had lost one of the early disciples in a terrible fashion. They resolved, during this period of waiting, to replace him with someone else.

3. What was the criteria the group used to choose the man to replace Judas?
4. Read Proverbs 16:33. How does this verse echo what you see in this passage?

God, in His grace, has given us wisdom to help us make decisions. Through prayer and through the collective wisdom of the group, the early church was able to make decisions. But in the end, they realized that the ultimate decision was left to the Lord. The same thing is true for us. **In your opinion, who do you think God really chose to replace Judas? Why?**

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ ACTS 2:1-4 (THE DAY OF PENTECOST)

1. What is most powerful sound you've ever heard? How does Luke describe the supernatural sound the believers heard on the Day of Pentecost?
2. What is the most amazing sight you have ever seen? How does Luke describe the supernatural sight in verse 3?
3. What do you think was the purpose of the sound of a violent rushing wind? What do you think was the purpose of the flames of fire resting on each other?
4. How can you learn to rely on the fullness of the Spirit for everything?

As the disciples waited as Jesus commanded, suddenly there came a supernatural sight and sound. The sound was of a violent wind, likely deafening, and filled the whole house. The sight was flames of fire that separated and rested on each person there. Both the sound of the wind and the flames of fire are common biblical representations of God's presence. That the disciples waited for God's presence to come upon them before carrying out Christ's commands demonstrates the essential nature of the Holy Spirit in the lives of all believers.

Applying God's Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

50 days after the Resurrection led to the Feast Day of Pentecost. In a way, the Holy Spirit repeated the phenomenon of Mt. Sinai (where the law was given) and then, 1550 years later in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. However instead of God's people being kept away, like at Sinai, God's Glory was represented by tongues of fire that came to each individual! In a sense this is the second Giving of the Torah of God, only this time on the hearts of man not on tablets of stone! In Acts 2:2 "Suddenly" He came with a Mighty Sound from heaven. This was God, not natural causes upon the earth. The Sound was like the rushing of a mighty wind. It was Not Wind, but a sound like the deafening roar or blast of a strong wind (hurricane, tornado) Why? Because the Jewish people needed to be startled and alarmed, attracted to gather from all over Jerusalem, seeking to

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know what had happened. I believe the City heard the great noise! In other words, an audience needed to be gathered for the 1st Preaching of the Good News of the Jewish Messiah! They were all gathered together in one place, in the House, the Temple, which explains why so many thousands could gather so quickly to hear Peter's message and explain what had just happened!

1. What "Whoa!" do you want to see and experience in your life by the Holy Spirit's power this week? From the example of the early believers in Acts 1-2, what is your responsibility in that?
2. If every believer has the Holy Spirit living inside them, then should every believer be sharing the gospel? If the Holy Spirit is so powerful, then what holds us back?
3. Can you ever exhaust the power of the Holy Spirit in your life? Is anything too big for Him to do or accomplish through you? Does that encourage, challenge, or scare you? Explain.

PRAYER - Thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit, whose power raises the dead to life. Invite Him to show you more of that power in your own life each day this week as you look for opportunities to serve Him and share the gospel with the world around you.

"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:2-4)