

Week 3: Acts 2. 43 – end of 4

Acts 2. 43 – 37

This is very similar to 4.32 – 37. We can look at them together. It describes a pattern of communal Christian living that periodically surfaces in church history.

Right now it seems to be unfashionable – I wonder why?

Was selling their houses and lands a sensible long term strategy? Why did they do it?

Acts 3

In chapter 2 we saw—a miraculous supernatural intervention, followed by a public proclamation of the gospel, followed by multiple conversions.

Here in chapter 3 we see—a miraculous supernatural intervention, followed by a public proclamation of the gospel, followed by multiple conversions.

Is there a pattern here? How do the three components interrelate?

How does this relate to modern day church practice?

Peter's Second Sermon 3. 11 -

Our own understanding of the nature of Christ, his relationship to the Father, etc. are conditioned—perhaps more than we realise—by 2000 years of debate and church practice, based on the ideas of prominent theologians and convocations such as Augustine, Nicaea, Chalcedon etc. The early church of course had none of that, and we should be careful about projecting it back onto them. So, from these passages, let's ask ourselves, **how did they see it then?**

Remember this is a devout Jew preaching to other devout Jews. Their theological and educational background is extraordinarily narrow. They know almost nothing other than what comes from a traditional Jewish understanding (which Jesus went along with most of the time). So,

When it says **GOD** who does that mean?

Are we surprised to see Jesus described as **God's servant?** (13, 27, 28)

When it talks of the **Holy and Righteous one**, and the **Prince of Life** (14 – 15) what might that have meant, either to Peter or to Luke?

And who raised Jesus from the dead? We are accustomed to words like the Nicene Creed's 'on the third day he rose from the dead' as if he had raised himself; but what does it say here?

The climax of the Sermon 3. 19 - 20

The climax of the previous sermon came in 2.38 – 39. Interesting to compare the two. What does this show?

Peter on Deuteronomy 3. 22 - 26

It's worth reading the passage in Deuteronomy in context. It's not entirely clear what Peter is getting at here, whether he sees the 'prophet' in Deuteronomy 18.15 as a Messianic prophecy of Jesus. I think he probably does but it's slightly ambiguous.

If so, do we find Peter's interpretation to be a legitimate one or not? How far is it legitimate to go in taking Old Testament verses out of context and reinterpreting them as messianic prophecies?

Filled with the Spirit in 4. 8, 31

We've had this before in chapter 2. We've also had 'the gift of the Spirit' (2.38) which would seem to be slightly different. Here we find 'filled with the Spirit' again. In this context, what does it mean? What is the difference between the two?