

November 20
Acts 1-2

Today we begin our reading of Acts! So starting off Acts, we read parts of Acts chapters 1, 2, and 3. The full title is "The Acts of the Apostles" but some have suggested that a better title might be the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

Acts was written by Luke, who was a doctor and also a very careful historian. He meticulously researched his material by interviewing eye witnesses and documenting times and places with great clarity. He wanted to ensure that anyone who would read his book in its own generation would have had ample opportunity to check its accuracy and reliability.

Obviously a heavy part of today's reading is Jesus, again, promising to his apostles the Holy Spirit. He tells them "Do not leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak of." And then, we see in the beginning of Acts 2, that a wind came and filled the house where they were sitting. "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

Something to note, because of this verse, some find that speaking in tongues to be a sole evidence of the Holy Spirit's filling. However, we see that this moment is actually a time where tongues are specifically used to bring others to Christ, making it a tool here, rather than true evidence of the Holy Spirit.

Something that is commonly looked over in our reading – probably because of the importance of the Holy Spirit coming into human beings for the first time, is the boldness of Peter. It says in 2:5 that "God-fearing Jews" at this time, were staying in Jerusalem. They heard the sounds of their own language, they came together, it says, in "bewilderment."

I think we also overlook an evidence of the Holy Spirit in Peter here...boldness. These were God-fearing, probably knowledgeable Jews from every nation.

Some of these Jews assumed that all of these people were drunk. Peter, filled with the HS, stands and says "Hey, everyone...it's 9 in the morning...they aren't drunk! He gives this long speech, including quotes from the prophet Joel, and he reminds them that they killed Jesus – a man accredited to them, by God.

I think one of the most significant parts of this passage is after Peter is done boldly speaking to these people, in verse 37; it says they were "cut to the heart."

Peter was sensitive to the Holy Spirit, and he spoke up when these people were curious. He didn't just let it slide by – he seized the moment!

How often are we scared to boldly speak up in situations and be bold? Sometimes a door is opened up for us and we ignore it. Or maybe we choose not to see it.

Peter was sensitive to the Holy Spirit and he chose to go through the door that was opened for him.

In 2:5-13, it lists all the different people that were there. How could he not have been intimidated!? These names intimidate me...but that might just be because I can barely pronounce them.

But we see as a result of Peters' boldness and his sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, the people were "cut to the heart." To the point that they humbled themselves and admitted that they had no idea. So they asked "what shall we do?" They are saying...ok you are right. We are wrong. What should we do!? If someone said that now – you would be blown away. That doesn't happen often. Even with people who you have close relationships with – let alone people you barely know.

This opened the door for Peter to share the complete gospel to them. He told them to "repent and be baptized."

So we see from today's reading that we need to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit called Peter to be bold – and he was, and as a result, 3,000 + people were baptized. Now, it's likely that our door won't look just like this...but there will still be doors. Whether it's a good transition into a conversation about the gospel with a friend...or whether it's a unique way to love someone you work with well. The Holy Spirit is always speaking...

Peters act here reminds me of 1 Peter 3:15,

But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

And so my challenge for today, along with being prepared to give an answer – is to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Pray that God would make you sensitive to the Holy Spirit and that you wouldn't walk away from doors he's opening for you.

- Sensitive to the Holy Spirit
- Be prepared to give an answer for the hope you have
- Be bold!