

GOD'S RADICAL PEOPLE Week 1

These weekly studies are loosely based on the previous Sunday's sermon. If you missed it, you will find a recording on our website (www.knaphillbaptist.org.uk). They are designed for both Home Group discussion and/or personal reflection. Don't necessarily try to cover all the questions and discussion topics in your group at one sitting. You may like to think about them later in your own time.

People of Conviction



Read Acts 2:14-37

This is the first in a new series of studies for the autumn entitled God's Radical People from Acts 2:37-47. God wants us to be a Radical People - getting to root of things... and our roots lie in the New Testament Church! The culture has changed but the Church of Jesus

Christ is bound in its essential doctrines and principles to the 'faith once and for all entrusted to the saints' (Jude 3). It is timeless. In Acts 2:37-47 we read of the extraordinary life and witness of the New Testament Church. In these few verses we find our standard, our pattern. It was evolving, growing, being moulded and transformed by the Holy Spirit. The Church was never meant to be a stuck, fixed, institutionalised section of society but a radical movement of transformation - moving on, changing shape, a dynamic progressive force. The whole point of this series is to hear again God's call **to us** to be that radical alternative to society that the Church is called to be.

Questions and pointers for discussion/reflection

1. What do you think of when you hear the word 'Radical'? How does it make you feel?
2. The quote from Robert Capon included the following sentence, '*I am ready for a Christianity that ruins my life, that captures my heart and makes me uncomfortable.*' Do you agree? How does following Jesus 'ruin your life'? Does Jesus ever make you feel uncomfortable?
3. On the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Disciples in power, Peter stood up and spoke to the 'amazed and perplexed' crowd who heard them 'declaring the wonders of God in their own tongues' (Acts 2:11,12). Read and reflect on his message (2:14-36). What does it tell you about Jesus?
4. Were these people also part of the crowd that Pilate addressed when Jesus was before him (see Matthew 27:19-26)? Peter accused them of crucifying Jesus (v.36). Even if they were or were not in what sense were they responsible for Jesus' death? (see Romans 3:23; 6:23; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21-24).
5. The people who heard this sermon were 'cut to the heart' (v.37). The sense is of very strong emotion. Peter's words affected them deeply. This was the Holy Spirit:-
 - i. convicting them of sin (see John 16:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:5)
 - ii. convincing them of the truth (see John 16:13; 2 Corinthians 5:4; 2 Timothy 1:2)

Have you ever had a similar experience?

6. Their consciences were violently stricken. The conscience is our God given receiving set. The Apostle Paul wrote about weak and strong consciences (read Corinthians 10:23-29; Romans 14:1-4) In the light of this debate, would you consider your conscience to be weak or strong? Are you deeply affected by things?
7. In response to the Word of God through Peter, his hearers felt they had to **do** something – 'Brothers what shall we do?' (v.37). They did not resist the promptings of the Spirit as we shall see in the following verses. Is there a step that the Holy Spirit is putting on your heart to take? Have you done it? If not, why not? (see Galatians 5:24,24; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22; 1 Timothy 4:1,2).

Paul was a man of conviction. He wrote 'I know whom I have believed and am convinced...' (2 Timothy 1:12). Are you?