

GOD'S RADICAL PEOPLE

Week 4

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.

SIGNS & WONDERS



Read Acts 2:43

This is the fourth in our 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! It is here that we see the principles by which we learn what sort of church God wants *us* to be. One of the most remarkable features of the New Testament Church was the supernatural signs and wonders that regularly took place within it. By wonders we mean things that are out of the ordinary that make people marvel. Signs are miraculous acts that are tokens of divine authority and point us to Jesus. There is no reason why we should not see such things in the church today. Perhaps there are certain conditions we need to fulfil?

Questions and pointers for discussion/reflection

1. We are told in verse 43 that 'Everyone was filled with awe'. By awe we mean 'a reverential fear of God'. Read Hebrews 10:31. How does this make you feel? Is it right to fear God? Can this be a positive thing? Can we be crippled by a fear of God?
2. Have a look at and reflect on these examples of a 'reverential fear of God' - Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-6); Isaiah in the temple (Isaiah 6:1-8); the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8); Thomas faced with the risen Christ (John 20:24-29). In what ways are these encounters similar yet different?
3. Do we know enough of a sense of awe of God, both individually and in our church services today? If not, why not and what can be done about it?
4. How do we sense the presence of God with us? Can we *know* he is with us? How do we grow closer to God?
5. Read Psalm 139:1-10. How does this passage make you feel? Have you ever wanted to get away from God?
6. Read Acts 5:1-11. This was an episode in the life of the early church that provoked great fear in the city. What is your response to this disturbing story of Ananias and Sapphira? Now read Acts 5:13,14. Instead of putting people off, this dramatic display of the fearful power of God attracted people. Do you think it would have the same effect today?
7. Peter (quoting the prophet Joel 2:30) confirms signs and wonders (Acts 2:19) as characteristic of the last days (by which is meant Pentecost onwards). Jesus promised that his followers would perform miracles as he did (John 14:12; Mark 16:17-20). Have a look at some of these miracles that were performed by the apostles - The healing of the crippled beggar (Acts 3:1-10); the deliverance of the demonised girl (Acts 16:16-18) the salvation of the Cornelius (Acts 10:23-48).
8. Some Christians maintain that miracles ceased with the death of the original apostles. Do you agree or should we pray for and expect such miracles today?
9. Have you ever witnessed, experienced or heard of any miracles. Spend some time sharing together?

It is out of stillness and silence before God that we sense God's presence and signs and wonders happen. Discuss.