



Week 2

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.



GOING ON WITH GOD

Read Acts 2:37-47

This is the second in a series of studies in the early chapters of *The Acts of the Apostles*, tracing the ongoing story of the New Testament Church following on from the Day of Pentecost when they were all empowered with the Holy Spirit so that they could be effective witnesses taking the good news of the Gospel out from Jerusalem to the rest of the world (Acts 1:8). The Christian Life is an ongoing journey – both individually and corporately – involving growing in our discipleship, worship and witness. Here (Acts 2:37-47) we learn something of the everyday life of the embryonic church in Jerusalem as it grew and developed in its understanding and experience of what it truly meant to be part of 'the body of Christ'. Here we see a number of different facets of what it means to 'be Church'. Billy Graham was once accused of taking the church back to the Victorian era. 'In that case I have failed' he replied, 'I have been trying to take it back to New Testament times!'

Questions and Pointers for Discussion/Reflection

1. Look again at the quote from Billy Graham in the introduction to these notes. In what ways was Billy Graham right, and in what ways was he wrong, in wanting to take the Church back to the New Testament?
2. The response of those who came under conviction (from the Holy Spirit) after Peter's sermon at Pentecost was to ask Peter (and his companions) 'What shall we do?' (v.37). What is good about this response? Do you think we are too negative a lot of the time?
3. In the light of the previous question reflect on the following quote: 'Some men see things as they are and ask *why*. I dream of things that never were and ask *why not*.' ~ Robert Kennedy
4. What did these people who came under conviction by the Holy Spirit actually *do* (vs.38-41)? What were the consequences?
5. Look again at v.42. What does the word 'devoted' mean? What did the members of the early church actually devote themselves too? How can we best encourage similar devotion today: in ourselves, in our fellow Christians?
6. Luke tells us that the early church was filled with 'awe' and many 'wonders and signs' took place among them (v.43). What does it mean to be in awe of God? Is there enough 'awe' in the church today? Are we still seeing 'signs and wonders' in the church today?
7. The New Testament church shared a 'commonality of life' (vs.45,46 see Acts 4:32-37). Was this just a 'passing fad' for these early Christians ... or should we still be practising this kind of thing today? Give some practical suggestions of how this could/should happen.
8. 'Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts' (v.46a). Why did they do this? What did they do when they met together in this way? Why the temple courts? Does this teach us anything about 'worship' (see v.47a)?
9. What does Luke have in mind when he tells us here that these early Christians 'broke bread' together (v.46b). Is he simply thinking of sharing a common meal together ... or something else?
10. What do you make of the phrase 'glad and sincere hearts' (v.46c)? Why is 'authenticity' such a vital ingredient in real Christianity?

Is there a connection between the early church 'finding favour with all the people' and 'the Lord adding daily to their number those who were being saved' (v.47)?