



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

The Early Church Series, Lesson 51

Lesson Title: Birth of the Church

Take Home Point: Holy Spirit, fill me up and send me out.

Warm-Up:

When we say a person is in the doldrums, they seem lifeless, without much spirit. Do you know where the word "doldrums" originates? As sailing ships crossed the oceans, sailors learned that "trade winds" existed north and south of the equator. North of the equator, constant winds pushed the ships steadily westward; south of the equator they were pushed east. In between was an area of calm or baffling light breezes called the "doldrums". Ships could be stuck in the doldrums for days and weeks because nothing filled their sails to power them.

Read: Acts 2:1-41

Observation (What happened?):

What happened when the disciples were gathered on the day of Pentecost?

How did many people respond to the words of Peter according to Acts 2: 37 and 41?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Did the disciples understand what was happening that day? (Read Acts 1:8 along with 2:33 if you need a hint.)

Why do you think Peter used the Scriptures so much in his speech to the people that day?

Insight:

As you read Acts 2:9-11, consider the list of lands from which Peter's audience came. It begins in Parthia, east of the Caspian Sea, and moves westward until it reaches Judea. Then it starts at the north in Asia Minor and works south (Cappadocia, Pontus, etc.). After that, it moves westward into Africa (Egypt and Libya), Crete, and Rome. Then Arabia to the south is included. Was it coincidence that people from all points of the compass were there? Not a chance! This was God's plan to spread his gospel to all people from the very beginning. And we can be sure that not all of the 3000 people saved that day stayed in Jerusalem, but some returned to their faraway lands to share the good news of Jesus. Acts 1:8 is not only being fulfilled by missionary endeavors of the last 2000 years, God started it all at once on the day of Pentecost!

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Where in your life are you not letting the Holy Spirit blow through you and fill you up? Think about what is causing that to happen and pray for God's help to let him in.

What are you doing to know and memorize God's Word as a significant part of your witnessing "toolbox?" If you aren't doing something, choose a plan and start today.