

Sermon Notes – September 8, 2024

Context

- ⇒ The book called “The Acts of the Apostles” tells the story of the early church from its very beginning through most of the account of the Apostle Paul’s life & ministry. It is full of drama, geography, history, and historical names, all intended to be taken as serious history.
- ⇒ Acts should be read largely through a “descriptive” lens instead of the “prescriptive” approach. The writer is primarily telling us what happened, not “how you should do it.” At the same time, we can learn much as we evaluate the priorities, passion, and teaching of the early followers of Jesus.

Today’s Primary Text: Acts 2:37-47

In today’s text we sense the *nearness* of the events involved in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus (less than two months prior!), and we can sense the *excitement* of seeing people come to faith and become new followers of Jesus.

The Early Church Was In A Unique Chapter (Like We Are!)

- ⇒ The events of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ are still in the news. At one point, the Apostles are accused of having “_____ Jerusalem with your teaching” (5:28). Paul will later say to King Agrippa, “this has not been done in a corner.”
- ⇒ At Pentecost, Jerusalem is filled with visitors from “every nation under heaven” – READ **Acts 2:5-11**. This is similar wording to **Matthew 24:14 & 28:19** – “all the _____.” This is indeed a unique and never-to-be-repeated moment in history!
- ⇒ *Unusual times bring unusual opportunities and call for unusual sacrifice (44-45)*. What is described in the text is not a long-term plan for church benevolence or a suggested _____ for communities or nations to follow (Cf. **II Thess 3:10**). Helping is not always a simple matter of _____.
- ⇒ OUR unique moment also comes with unusual opportunities. Let’s think together about where we are at Sunset Bible Church...

Acts 2:37-47

Pastor Jay Mosser

The Church In The World: It Was The Best Of Times

The Early Church Held Onto Strategic Priorities (Like We Must!)

- ⇒ Preaching the _____ of Jesus is the backdrop to this text (**Acts 2:14-36**) and is clearly taught as a foundational practice throughout the New Testament (**Acts 3:12-26; I Cor. 1:17-18; II Tim. 4:2**).
- ⇒ At least four other practices appear in this text that are taught elsewhere in the New Testament as normative for the Church, the “_____ of Christ”:
 - Worship (“the breaking of bread”; “praising God”)
 - Instruction
 - Fellowship
 - Extension (Evangelism)
- ⇒ Of course, when we talk about normative practices for the Church, we must distinguish between form and function.
 - Function = the essential practice itself
 - Function = the _____ that practice is carried out in a local setting at a specific moment in history that fits the local context, culture, and language group.
- ⇒ Also making an appearance here are baptism for all new believers (“all who received his word”) (**41**) and a special role for the Apostles and their close associates (“many wonders and signs were being done through the Apostles”) (**43; cf. 5:12; 6:8; 14:3**).
- ⇒ What’s the point? **Acts 2:42** identifies the strategic priorities of the early church in Jerusalem, priorities that are repeatedly taught throughout the New Testament as normative for local churches.

Responding In Faith & Obedience

- ⇒ Like the church in Acts 2, Sunset Bible Church is in a unique cultural moment. We must recognize the unique opportunities that are ours and, with God’s enablement, live fully into this moment.
- ⇒ The church must never stop “being the church,” both internally (the “one another” commands) and externally (“The Church in the World”). That means that even in seasons of change, we keep on teaching, reaching, worshipping, praying, giving, growing.
- ⇒ What is your role at Sunset Bible Church in this unique moment?

Worship Next Sunday: September 15, 2024

“The Church In The World: It Was The Worst Of Times”

(Acts 8:1-4) Pastor Jay Mosser