



### What's coming up in middle school @NCC:

- **Vertical Edge • Tuesday, November 26 • Advent #1**  
Join us as we enter in to the season of Advent. How do we as followers of Jesus keep our focus on the Reason for the Season in all of the craziness of December? We will have seasonal snacks, crafts, games, plus a rich time of worship through song. Bring a friend & some change for checkers! 7:00-9:00pm in West Court.



## november 23/24 lesson

**Series:** What's Church All About?

**Lesson:** The Beginning, con't

**Scripture:** Acts 2:14-41

**Key Concept:** This lesson continues to look at the formation of the church through Peter's speech in Acts 2



### Chew Time

- Read Luke 7:11-35



## Stepping Up:

A) We talked about the Day of Pentecost (50 days after the crucifixion) last week. In fact, it was the beginning of the church. It was the beginning of a new era of God's plan. As a result, quite a lot of new things were happening. It was vital that the truth of the sin of mankind and the saving power of Jesus Christ be clearly revealed to everyone present on that day. Peter's sermon in Acts provided that information for them.

✠ **Acts 2:14-41 (NLT)** <sup>14</sup> Then Peter stepped forward with the eleven other apostles and shouted to the crowd, "Listen carefully, all of you, fellow Jews and residents of Jerusalem! Make no mistake about this. <sup>15</sup> These people are not drunk, as some of you are assuming. Nine o'clock in the morning is much too early for that. <sup>16</sup> No, what you see was predicted long ago by the prophet Joel:

<sup>17</sup> 'In the last days,' God says,  
    'I will pour out my Spirit upon all people.  
    Your sons and daughters will prophesy.  
    Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

<sup>18</sup> In those days I will pour out my Spirit  
    even on my servants—men and women alike—  
    and they will prophesy.

<sup>19</sup> And I will cause wonders in the heavens above  
    and signs on the earth below—  
    blood and fire and clouds of smoke.

<sup>20</sup> The sun will become dark,  
    and the moon will turn blood red  
    before that great and glorious day of the Lord arrives.

<sup>21</sup> But everyone who calls on the name of the Lord  
    will be saved.'

<sup>22</sup> "People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know. <sup>23</sup> But God knew what would happen, and his prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed him to a cross and killed him. <sup>24</sup> But God released him from the horrors of death and raised him back to life, for death could not keep him in its grip. <sup>25</sup> King David said this about him:

    'I see that the Lord is always with me.  
    I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me.

<sup>26</sup> No wonder my heart is glad,  
    and my tongue shouts his praises!  
    My body rests in hope.

<sup>27</sup> For you will not leave my soul among the dead  
    or allow your Holy One to rot in the grave.

<sup>28</sup> You have shown me the way of life,  
    and you will fill me with the joy of your presence.'

<sup>29</sup> "Dear brothers, think about this! You can be sure that the patriarch David wasn't referring to himself, for he died and was buried, and his tomb is still here among us. <sup>30</sup> But he was a prophet, and he knew God had promised with an oath that one of David's own descendants would sit on his throne. <sup>31</sup> David was looking into the future and speaking of the Messiah's resurrection. He was saying that God would not leave him among the dead or allow his body to rot in the grave.

<sup>32</sup> "God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this. <sup>33</sup> Now he is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, at God's right hand. And the Father, as he had promised, gave him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today. <sup>34</sup> For David himself never ascended into heaven, yet he said,

*'The Lord said to my Lord,  
"Sit in the place of honor at my right hand  
35 until I humble your enemies,  
making them a footstool under your feet.'"*[e]

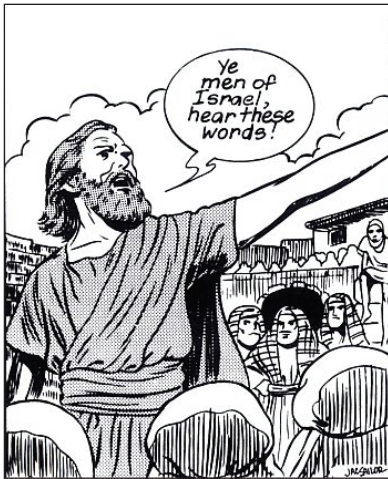
*36 "So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!"*

*37 Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"*

*38 Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 This promise is to you, and to your children, and even to the Gentiles[f]—all who have been called by the Lord our God." 40 Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation!"*

*41 Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.*

## B) Just the Peter Facts



### Acts and Apologetics

*So how did a relatively uneducated, backwoods, backwater fisherman become the first "big name" in Christian apologetics?*

It's quite a story! Think about it. A scant 3 years earlier, this Peter, originally known as Simon, was minding his own business, probably mending his fishing nets for the seemingly millionth time when his brother runs up to him and tells him that Messiah has finally come and Peter needs to meet him. He literally drops what he's doing and follows Andrew...and the rest is History.

Now Peter just didn't become this fabulous speaker. We read of many times in the Bible where he just plain failed: He spoke when he shouldn't have, he didn't speak when he should have. At times pride got in the way or his foot got in his mouth. Peter is a normal mortal man. Sounds like most of us!

The good news is that GOD still chose to use Peter. God, in the Person of Jesus Christ, patiently and personally worked with him day after day, week after week, month after month. And then at some point, GOD knew that Peter was ready. Peter may not have thought so, but God knew. And God knows you and me too.

We have to remember that it is God who is in charge of our lives, not us. He is the one running things. He knows exactly what will or won't work. Our job is to simply be obedient and available. That's it. If we have done those two things, God will work miracles in our lives in the furthering of His Kingdom.

### Peter's 5 Facts

As we look at this great sermon and life-changing event in Acts 2:14-41, for thousands of people in Jerusalem almost 2000 years ago, let's look at what are 5 Facts that Peter employed (he probably didn't realize it at the time, he was just being obedient) in modeling a good apologetic or defense of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- 1) **The first Fact we notice is in verse 14: Peter stands up** with his brothers in Christ. When we stand up with our brothers and sisters in Christ we stand strong. There is strength in numbers. Now granted, as Christians, we are never alone. Christ lives in us, but as we begin to speak to others, especially in larger groups, it's "easier" to have someone back us up. We can be more bold and this boldness is more than just a shared experience. Those who stand with us are also empowered and encouraged.
- 2) **This brings us to the second Fact: Peter's knowledge and use of God's Word.** Recall that Peter's "background" is a Galilean fisherman. He wasn't a scribe. He wasn't a rabbi. He wasn't a "learned" man. He was simply an ordinary man, set aside by God, who was willing to be used by God. He was a man that acknowledged being forgiven and changed by Jesus for a purpose not his own. Peter is not very different from you or me.

How did Peter know all of this stuff? Like any good Jewish boy, he attended services every Sabbath in the local synagogue. He had heard a good amount of the Law and the Prophets growing up. But in the last 3 years, God Himself taught him. Sitting at Jesus' feet day after day taught him something of God and His Word. More importantly, at this crucial moment, the Holy Spirit "took control" of Peter and his tongue and reminded him of everything he needed to say. There were no wasted words or ideas. It was exact. The sermon was to the point. God is always succinct; He is never verbose.

Years later, the apostle Paul would pen the words of **2 Timothy 3:16 and 17**: "*all Scripture is God breathed and useful in Teaching, Rebuking, Correcting and Training in righteousness so that the man [or woman] of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*" Are we diving into God's Word on a regular daily basis in order to know God better and to be "thoroughly equipped"? We should ask ourselves that question all the time.

- 3) The third Fact is acknowledging God.** Throughout this entire passage of Acts chapter 2, God is acknowledged. Remember that as we "defend the faith", God Himself is the very center of that defense. God, as Creator and Sovereign of the Universe must be acknowledged for who He is and what He has done and what He is doing. The Apostle knew his audience. The Holy Spirit directed his speech as he spoke of God's Sovereignty in the affairs of men. He also acknowledged God's words spoken by His prophets through the ages. He acknowledges God's fulfillment of prophesy. Peter weaves this acknowledgment of God throughout his speech; as should we in our speech.

God wants us to talk about Him all the time. At home, at work, at school. Talking about the Words and Works of God is not something to be saved for Sundays. God is active in our lives 24 hours a day and 7 days a week, every week of the year, without any kind of break. We need to let Him overflow into our lives and speech.

- 4) Peter employs the fourth Fact: Peter acknowledges Jesus Christ.** In verses 22 to 36, Peter looks at Jesus' life, His works, His atoning death, and most importantly, His Resurrection. Peter recalls what Jesus did in the very midst of the people. Peter recalls how Jesus was referred to by the Old Testament psalms and prophets. The Jews of that time would have heard these readings and texts.

The fact of the time was that Jesus of Nazareth did indeed live, work and walk among the people. He ministered openly for all to see. Jesus **proved His deity** through His works. For these few, short years, men and women were actually able to look into the eyes of God Himself. Think about that for just a minute. That's simply astonishing!

Jesus bodily died, not by Jewish stoning (as would have been required for the sin of blasphemy, as charged by the Jewish leaders), but by Roman crucifixion for all to see. And then to everyone's amazement, but to many denials, Jesus bodily rose from the dead. Remember this: because the resurrected Jesus had appeared to hundreds of people prior to His bodily ascension to heaven - after 40 days - anyone could have gone and asked any of these witnesses. Later on, these same people were willing to die for what they KNEW to be true.

But back to Peter. Peter now had the crowd's attention and this caused them to ask the question, "brothers, what shall we do?" As we speak to friends, neighbors, relatives and anyone God brings into our lives about Christ and His Hope, that should be the question they ask us, "what shall we do?"

1. How did the people feel after hearing Peter's message? (*The people were ashamed of their sinful condition. The Greek word for "cut to the heart" in Acts 2:37 is Kataanusso and is best translated pierced.*)

- 5) And so finally, there is the fifth Fact: acknowledging our need for a Savior.** We need to acknowledge our need for Christ.

And so like Peter, we must direct others to the Savior Jesus Christ. Peter takes the people by the hand and tells them exactly what they must do to be saved: repent from sin (which includes confession) and receive the gift of forgiveness. Their baptism would demonstrate to the world their inner transformation.

God calls us to be a good and proper witness to the world around us and to those individuals in our sphere of influence. Who will God have you witness to today?