

Notes for the Ones Called-Out to Meet

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What Am I To Do, Now That I Am Saved?

by Dan Trygg

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know with certainty that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah!” ³⁷ When they heard this, they were pierced to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles: ‘Brothers, what must we do?’ ³⁸ ‘Repent,’ Peter said to them, ‘and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus the Messiah for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”

Acts 2:36-38

“Go and make disciples of all the nations, ... ²⁰ teaching them to obey all that I commanded you...”

Matthew 28:19,20

“They were continually devoting themselves to the doctrine of the apostles, to the sharing, to the breaking of bread (meals) and to the prayers.”

Acts 2:42

“If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.”

Galatians 5:25

Most of us are familiar with Peter’s Pentecostal sermon. The Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the believers gathered in the upper room, on that Sunday morning. There was a noise, as of a mighty rushing wind, and there appeared to be what looked like flames of fire resting upon the heads of those gathered there, ...a clear indication that the “baptism with the Spirit (wind) and fire” had come upon them (Matt. 3:11). **The believers were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in other languages.** They spilled out onto the street, which was filled with pilgrims from all over, who had come to the feast. **When they heard them speaking, they noted that they were hearing them in their own languages, even though these men and women were from Galilee. They asked, “What does this mean?”** Peter explained that this was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit prophesied by the prophet Joel. He went on to talk about how Jesus had been attested by God through miracles, signs and wonders, which God performed through Him. The people had handed Him over to be crucified, but God raised Him from the dead, ...a fact to which Peter and the others were witnesses. And, having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, Jesus poured forth what they could see and hear. **The “punchline” was “Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Messiah – this Jesus whom you crucified.”**

The experience of what they were seeing and hearing, combined with Peter’s explanation was powerful! It pierced them to the heart, and they asked that famous question, **“Brethren, what shall we do?”** Peter charged them to **“Repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ** (Greek equivalent for “Messiah”, the king) toward the forgiveness of their sins, **and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** For the promise is for you, for your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord shall call.” As a result of this challenge, 3,000 people believed and were baptized.

Then, though this next question is not recorded in the text, it is implied, **“What shall we do, now that we are saved?”** We see that **the apostles and early disciples succeeded in getting most of these new believers into small home groups where they followed a regimen for growth and development.** Luke records that “all the believers were being *upon the same thing*”, in the beginning of verse 44, and verse 47 ends with “The Lord was adding the ones being saved daily *upon the same thing*.” This phrase bookends the follow-up program of the early church. **This strategy for helping new believers develop involved four ingredients: continual, persistent devotion to (1.) learning the doctrine of the apostles; (2.) interactive, open-hearted sharing; (3.) taking meals together, which included observing the Lord’s supper; and (4.) praying together.** And, they were doing this *daily*!

Why would it be necessary to get involved in such a vigorous training program?

First of all, there was a lot to learn. The apostles had spent quite some time with Jesus, and they wanted to pass along what they had come to understand as quickly as possible.

Secondly, however, there was some urgency involved, because many of those who came to faith would soon be returning to their homes in other parts of the empire. They needed to be prepared for that.

Thirdly, these intimate, interactive home groups were designed to reproduce what the apostles themselves had experienced with Jesus. They created an environment similar to what Jesus did with them.

Fourth, the kind of training they were trying to implement was intensely practical and emphasized involvement. They were trying to teach the new disciples how to live and operate as people in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt. The training was not just intellectual, it was experiential, relational and “hands on”, ...teaching the new believers that *they* were to “do all that Jesus had commanded them”. *They* were being equipped to help discipline *others*.

Finally, they learned the nuts and bolts of “how to have a meeting”, and kept it simple, practical and attainable. They would be trained to “do church” with anyone, anywhere, anytime, ...**and they did!**

What was the DOCTRINE of the apostles? It was the *content* of what the apostles themselves taught. It focused on four general areas:

(1.) They TOLD THE STORY. They recounted the historical facts of who Jesus was, what He was like, what He did when He was here. Our faith is a historical faith. It is based upon facts, events that happened, along with the explanation of those events. Just think through the gospels in our Bibles. Those facts were presented to these new believers. They recounted Jesus' miraculous, virgin birth, the testimony of John the Baptist, the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Him at His baptism. They reported the nature and message of His preaching and ministry among the people, ...the healings, signs, wonders and the casting out of demons. They cited how He fulfilled many scriptures from the OT, ...how He became the Lamb who took away the sin of the world, at Passover, by dying on the cross, according to the scriptures. He was buried, and rose again from the dead, as the scriptures prophesied, and He was seen over a period of 40 days by His followers, and others to whom He showed Himself. They also saw Him ascend into heaven, where He sits at the Father's right hand, until He returns at the end of the age. He will establish an earthly kingdom over all the world, will imprison and punish Satan, and will judge the living and the dead.

(2.) They DECLARED THE GOOD NEWS OF WHAT IS AVAILABLE IN JESUS. In His name and authority, forgiveness of sins is proclaimed, available to those who call upon Him. The promise of the Father, the Holy Spirit, comes into the lives of those who believe. He causes them to be born from above, ...they have a clean slate and a new identity as children of God. Through Jesus, and the ministry of the Spirit, access to and intimacy with the Father is open to them. The Spirit gives them a new heart and a new empowerment for living in obedience to God. Through identification with Jesus the authority of Satan and the demons is revoked, and their power defeated. Those who believe in Jesus are recipients of a new covenant, written upon the heart. They are free from the bondage of sin, bondage to the Law, and even bondage to their sinful flesh. They are new people, with new power and new purpose. They are called out of this lost world of people alienated from God to be part of His family, His household, and to be a holy community of ones empowered and equipped with spiritual gifts to fortify and build up one another in love.

(3.) They EXPLAINED WHAT WAS EXPECTED OF THOSE WHO COME TO JESUS. They are called out from the evil world-system to be a people dedicated to God, a kingdom of priests to serve Him and declare His excellent greatness. They are called out from the course of this evil age to follow *Him*, ...and do *His* will. Jesus has called His followers to be a community that is opposed to the powers of darkness entrenched in this world. They are to become prepared and ready to *stand against* the enemy in the power and protection of God, ...and *advance against* the powers of darkness as He directs. Jesus expects believers to call Him "Lord", and *do* as He *says*. They have been called to set aside every other agenda, loyalty or commitment in order to make Him first and foremost. They were bought with a price; they are live to honor, obey and glorify God. They are expected to invest their lives toward developing their walk with God and learning to abide in Christ. They are expected to invest in the lives of others by acts of service in order to reveal God's heart and bring Him praise. They have been called out of lives of independence and selfishness to participate in an interdependent community of disciples, to serve and strengthen one another and help each other to mature in Christ. They are to commit themselves to love one another in Christ as He Himself demonstrated His love for them, ...sacrificially. They are to be willing to share of their time and possessions with others, as the Holy Spirit prompts them to. They are to learn to be led by the Holy Spirit, and empowered by Him to do His bidding. They are to testify of their experience and knowledge of God to others who don't know Him, as the Spirit directs them and gives them opportunity.

(4.) They INSTRUCTED THEM TO WORK TOGETHER TO GAIN EXPERIENCE AND SHARE INSIGHTS. The interactive fellowship of believers was the first place to step out to *experiment* and *practice* the skills of sharing from your own experience, and of learning to pray and serve one another. *They shared tested strategies* to develop intimacy with God, or to recognize when the Spirit was at work. They taught one another to notice unusual circumstances, ...indicators of God at work, ...or of interference from the enemy. It is often in our ministry to one another in the Body of Christ that we will first *see and experience the gifts of the Spirit*, ...and also where *we may first experience what are unquestionable encounters with the demonic*, as people are set free through exorcism and deliverance prayer. In these interactive small home groups, *people shared and processed their struggles* and *took initiative to pray with one another*. *They gave counsel* from their own personal walks, *and encouraged and coached one another*. They learned to allow the Holy Spirit to lead the meeting, and to wait upon Him. They also learned to take the risk to speak up and share what God was putting on their hearts. As people responded well to these attempts, those who shared would be encouraged and emboldened to do it again. It was so vital that all things be done to encourage and build up. Also, as people shared the struggles and trials of their lives, often others would be motivated to take steps to minister to those in need. The interactive nature of these meetings built confidence, and sharpened people's awareness of God's activity in their experience. This prepared them to "take it to the streets". Note that Jesus sent His disciples out in groups of two. This was an extension of the small group experience, offering support and backup if needed.

Where are you in this process? Where do you need to advance and deepen your walk, or your experience? Are you putting in the effort to equip yourself? Are you seeing yourself as being trained to do ministry and to train others?