

## **UNSTOPPABLE**

### **Acts 2:36-42 → Faithful**

Good morning RCM. So good to be with you this morning.

#### **PRAY.**

If you were with us last week you know we started a 6 month journey through the book of Acts, in a Series called UNSTOPPABLE looking at the Unstoppable nature of the Gospel, the Spirit of God, the Mission, and the church. And last week, where we left off, was this group of Christians huddled together, hiding, scared → given this incredible promise by Jesus, the promise of the Holy Spirit. He commands them to wait in Jerusalem for a few days until the Holy Spirit would come.

It says they prayed continually – they didn't just scroll through Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram – they prayed. They weren't glued to Sportscenter, they prayed. They prayed continually.

We see in CH1 that Peter's emerging as a leader in the early church – and they need to replace Judas. So they nominate two men that had been with them the whole time, cast lots (almost like rolling dice), and decide on Matthias.

Now, remember last week, I shared a principal we need to keep in mind in the book of Acts that not everything is prescriptive (telling is what we must do) – some things are descriptive. When we called Matt Groom as an elder, we didn't cast lots to call him. Here – we see Luke is simply describing what happened, not prescribing what must happen.

So they called Matthias as a replacement for Judas.

And then, Pentecost!

- Remember, the Old Testament system of worship centered around these Festivals at certain times of year. And Pentecost was one of the Festivals. It was called the Festival of Harvest.
- Took place 50 days after Passover.
- People would come to Jerusalem from all over the world – Acts 2:5 says devout people from every nation were in Jerusalem.

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit comes down – the promise that Jesus gave them when he said they will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on them and they will be His witnesses – the power for the mission that he had called them to was now here.

And they started speaking in different languages – known languages – but the languages of the people that had travelled to Jerusalem. It was a miracle. People from all over had travelled to Jerusalem for the festival of harvest – Pentecost – and God sends the Holy Spirit on the disciples and they start speaking in other languages so the people that had travelled to

Jerusalem could understand them. An incredible miracle. So miraculous that some people mocked them thinking they were drunk.

And it was this mockery – that led Peter to start preaching. Now, if you know much about Peter, he was pretty awesome. Said the things that you and I would have wanted to say. Did the things that you and I would have wanted to do, but probably wouldn't have done. Had major failings – but was restored to ministry by the resurrected Jesus. And we see here in Acts 2, the difference between Peter pre-Holy Spirit, and now Peter with the Holy Spirit. Facing mockery of his people – he stands and starts preaching, and gives what we call the 1<sup>st</sup> Christian sermon.

In Acts 2:17-21 he unpacks for them a prophecy from the book of Joel – ending with this incredible promise that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord **WILL BE SAVED!**

In Acts 2:23 – We see both the sovereignty of God (that God is in control of **ALL** things) and the responsibility of individual sinful people. Scripture teaches both. Two friends that work together – God's sovereignty and our own responsibility.

Peter would continue preaching – pointing them to Psalm 16 – and declaring with incredible faithfulness and boldness that God has indeed raised Jesus from the dead, and exalted him to the right hand of the Father, and has now poured out the Holy Spirit.

And, as we look at this specific scripture today – I want us to see the faithfulness of Peter's witness here – the God provided results of his faithfulness.

If you have a Bible, I invite you to turn with me, or turn on your device, to Acts 2:36-42.

### **READ Acts 2:36-42**

<sup>36</sup> "Therefore let all the house of Israel know with certainty that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah."

#### **Call to Repentance**

<sup>37</sup> When they heard this, they were pierced to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"

<sup>38</sup> Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you and for your children, and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call." <sup>40</sup> With many other words he testified and strongly urged them, saying, "Be saved from this corrupt<sup>[k]</sup> generation!" <sup>41</sup> So those who accepted his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand people were added to them.

#### **A Generous and Growing Church**

<sup>42</sup>They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.

## **PRAY.**

I wonder, now none of us is Peter, but stick with me, what if we see Peter's faithfulness here as a model for us to follow, as we share and show Jesus to people in our community? We have a mission – just like they had a mission. We have the same Holy Spirit that Peter had. If we are going to be faithful, faithful right where God has placed us – we have to be certain.

And then, in the text that I read at the beginning, Acts 2:36, Peter's witness is centered on the certainty of Jesus as Lord and Messiah – as Lord and Savior. So the first thing, from the text of Acts 2:36-42 that I want us to draw out is the certainty of Jesus as Lord and Savior.

### **I. Certainty of Who Jesus is → Lord and Savior**

Your witness, and my witness, is all about Jesus. It's not about you, it's not about your church, it's not about your family. It's about Jesus. The certainty of Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Peter wants them to **KNOW!** Not to guess, but to really know who Jesus is. That he's Lord (ruler of all – sovereign over all) and Savior (the only one who has the power to save).

Peter uses the Scriptures to faithfully point people to the certainty of Jesus. And he sees, and we see, that God was and is at Work.

### **II. God is at Work**

**I think there's** a tendency to not really believe that God is at work in the lives of people around us, or that we don't know enough to faithfully share and show Jesus with people, or that it's up to us and not up to God, or whatever. Hear the words of Scripture this morning

Re-Read V37

When they heard this, they were pierced to the heart and asked them what should we do.

Let me tell you – God is calling people to Himself. The Holy Spirit is at work in people all over our city, state, country and world. Our job, our role – is to point people to the certainty of Jesus as Lord and Savior and trust that God is at work.

A friend of mine, pastors a church in NC says it this way: "The Lord's active work in the hearts of rebellious people gives us hope in evangelism." If God were not to be at work in the lives of people, it would be all up to us and well, let's face it – that's not super encouraging. You and I are not smart enough, slick enough, persuasive enough, thoughtful enough, whatever to win people for the Gospel. But God is. God is at work.

When we recognize that it is God that works to change the hearts of wicked and sinful people, to convince people of the beauty and greatness of King Jesus, then He alone gets the glory.

Jesus is not going to share the glory due His name with you or with me. God chooses to use us, if we let him, if we obey, if we are faithful, but hear me – it is God working to save people, and God alone gets all of the glory.

What if, in every conversation with a family member, friend, neighbor, co-worker or classmate – in every conversation we approached it knowing that God is at work in people all over the world, and that he may be using you right now to point this person to Jesus?

And, when we consider that God really is at work in the lives of countless people all over the world, including people right here in Bradenton – we will be ready to point them to the only acceptable response.

### **III. The Only Acceptable Response**

Re-Read V38-40

Hear me – **there is no salvation apart from repentance**. Now, just to be clear, Peter's not saying that baptism is what saves. It doesn't. The posture of your life before God, a posture of repentance – where we turn from the sin in our lives – we turn from the sin in our lives and turn to Jesus as our only hope. And we experience the forgiveness that is His alone to offer.

And we tell the world, who's we are through the ordinance of baptism. It's a picture of the new life we have in Christ. All throughout the New Testament the picture is believe and then be baptized. Repent and then be baptized. And so we need to see Peter's giving them the only acceptable response to who Jesus is – repent and be baptized. Turn from your sin, turn to Jesus – and tell the world you're on team Jesus by being baptized. Next week, we will baptize 4 people – and hear me – this is a picture of the life they have found in Jesus through repentance and faith.

### **IV. Trust God With The Results**

What an incredible result – first Christian sermon ever preached – about 3,000 people were added to them. By the end the apostles must have had muscles like Mike or Mike. Imagine going to work the next day – they're like "dude have you been working out?" And you answer nope, I just shared the gospel and had to baptize about 3,000 people.

See the beauty of this – The word is boldly and openly shared, trusting that God is at work – and God adds to their number.

See this – The Word of God, the Spirit of God, The Witness about Jesus – and the results that ONLY God can receive the credit for. Oh that we would never try to do what only God can do. We see the faithfulness of Peter here – his faithful witness in spite of being mocked – with the power of the Holy Spirit.

The last thing that I want us to see this morning from Acts 2 is that, as God grows the church, God defines its priorities.

## **V. As God Grows the Church...God alone defines its priorities**

READ V42

4 things are highlighted here:

- Apostles' Teaching – specifically the preaching and teaching of the word of God
  - What may seem unwise to the world, is how God has chosen to grow His church – through the preaching of His unchanging word
- Fellowship – The community experience where we live out the one anothers. Where we love one another, and spur one another on to love and good works as Hebrews 10 says
- Breaking of Bread – specifically here it's the taking of the Lord's Supper – as we remember and rejoice in the work of Christ
- Prayer. Not just as a transitional moment in our service as we move our musicians in and out – but a way of life in the church.

### **CLOSING**

**So...let me ask each of you this morning – will you be faithful where God has placed you. God has put you in a specific place, for a purpose – the share and show Jesus with those you come into contact with. Will you trust that God is at work in many people's lives all around us, and simply share and show Jesus with them?**

**Do you know the certainty of Jesus today?**