

**Kiama Anglican Church**  
**Christ Church Kiama with St. Paul's Minnamurra**



AWAKE-FILLED DEVOTED  
a Great Church is...  
*Evangelistic*  
Generous United  
**Regenerate**

# **Acts 2:37-47**

**Bible Studies : Term 2 : 2011 :**

# **A GREAT CHURCH IS ...**

## **ACTS 2:37-47**

**“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this:  
God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified,  
both Lord and Christ.”**

Acts 2:36

We concluded the gospel of Luke with the Risen Jesus ascending into heaven. Luke's second volume opens with a retelling of the same story. But, for Luke, the story does not end there. The Book of Acts (which some have called the Acts of the Holy Spirit) goes on to record the preaching of the gospel of Jesus throughout the Roman world. From provincial Jerusalem to mighty Rome itself the story of the crucified prophet, of the incarnate God, who died on a criminal's cross is told over and over again along with the call to respond to the salvation from sin that this death offers. And people respond in their thousands.

Acts also, then, records the setting up of the first churches (or gatherings) of Christians. It is to the first of these 'churches' that these studies turn.

In Acts, as we commence, Jesus has ascended, the apostles have waited, the Holy Spirit has come upon them, and Peter has preached on the day of Pentecost that Jesus is both 'Lord and Christ'. The people respond and a group of 3000 plus is formed. The last few verses of Acts 2 that we are going to look at preserve for us something of how they organised themselves and what they did.

The church there in Jerusalem was not perfect, none are, but we can learn from it much that, if we have ears to hear, can make our church a better church or even a 'great' one.

*Greg Holmes - May 2011*

# Acts 2

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

43 Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION

# *Acts*

Some scholars have regarded ACTS as the most important book in the New Testament, or at least as its pivotal book, coming as it does between the Gospels and the letters. It records the origin and growth of the Christian movement, telling us how the first believers lived out Christianity. It describes its message and ministry, and its life—including its triumphs and trials, the passions that drove it, and the source of the power that energized it.

Any Christian wanting to know how to be a disciple of Christ in this world should turn to Acts to know how the first Christians lived. A recent topical study of Acts was therefore appropriately entitled *The Master Plan of Discipleship*.

Furthermore, Acts is a deeply inspiring book. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, who calls it “that most lyrical of books,” writes: “Live in that book, I exhort you: it is a tonic, the greatest tonic I know in the realm of the Spirit.”

Fernando, A., *The NIV Application Commentary : ACTS* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1998) p22.

***THE STUDIES***

Study Date	Topic	Passage	Page No
<b>1</b> Sun 15 May	<b>A Great Church is a Regenerate Church</b>	<b>ACTS 2:37-41</b>	7
<b>2</b> Sun 22 May	<b>A Great Church is a Devoted Church</b>	<b>ACTS 2:42</b>	9
<b>3</b> Sun 29 May	<b>A Great Church is an Awe-Filled Church</b>	<b>ACTS 2:43</b>	11
Sun 5 June	<b>A Great Church is More than Just a Club.</b>	<b>Parish Houseparty: Bishop Hayward.</b>	
<b>4</b> Sun 12 June	<b>A Great Church is a United Church</b>	<b>ACTS 2:44</b>	13
<b>5</b> Sun 19 June	<b>A Great Church is a Generous Church.</b>	<b>ACTS 2:45</b>	15
<b>6</b> Sun 26 June	<b>A Great Church is a Joyously Worshipping Church</b>	<b>ACTS 2:46-47a</b>	17
<b>7</b> Sun 36 July	<b>A Great Church is an Evangelistic Church</b>	<b>ACTS 2:47b</b>	19

References:

Marshall, I.H., ACTS (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (IVP, Leicester, 1980).

Stott, J. The Message of ACTS (The Bible Speaks Today) (Leicester, IVP, 1990)

Peterson, D., Acts : The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Nottingham, Apollos, 2009)

**Study 1: Acts 2:37-41**  
**A Great Church is a Regenerate Church**

Day	Reading	To Think On	To Pray About	Personal Prayer Points
<b>1</b>	Acts 2:37-41	Our response to the Gospel as it is preached	Pray that those who hear the Gospel in our Church will respond to it in Repentance and faith	
<b>2</b>	Hebrews 4:12-16	Jesus as our totally sympathetic High Priest	Thank God that his Word is active in the world	
<b>3</b>	John 3:1-8	The wonder of 'new birth.'	Pray for those in your family who do not know the new birth in Jesus	
<b>4</b>	Psalms 51:8-13	The depth of repentance	Ask God to truly help you repent of the sins that beset you.	
<b>5</b>	Acts 17:22-31	The challenge of the Gospel and the Resurrection.	For a true appreciation of God's grace towards us	

**Study 1: Acts 2:37-41**  
**A Great Church is a Regenerate Church**

**Explore the Basics**

*Read the passage carefully together.*

- 1. Discuss, in general, what it means for a church to be a 'regenerate' church. Now read the passage.**
- 2. What had the people heard? What had cut them to the heart?**
- 3. What does Peter tell them to do?**
- 4. Why should they do this and what will result?**

**Deeper and Wider**

- 1. Scan the first two chapters of Acts up to this point. What main things have happened?**
- 2. Read Psalm 51:1-13. What does this teach us about repentance?**
- 3. Look carefully at v38. What are the individual elements here and how do they relate to one another?**
- 4. Read Mark 1:14-15. How does Jesus message relate to the response Peter calls for?**

**Apply**

- 1. What place has repentance in your life? How do we go about repenting?**
- 2. Is our church a 'regenerate' church? What evidence do you have for your opinion? Where could we improve?**

**For Next Week: Read Acts 2:37-42 .**

**Study 2: Acts 2:42**  
**A Great Church is a Devoted Church**

Day	Reading	To Think On	To Pray About	Personal Prayer Points
<b>1</b>	Acts 2:37-42	Prayer, Teaching, Fellowship, Breaking of Bread	Praise God for calling his people into fellowship with one another.	
<b>2</b>	Hebrews 10:19-25	Spurring one another to love and good deeds.	Ask God for an opportunity to encourage one other Christian today.	
<b>3</b>	Mark 4:13-20	How we receive God's word.	Ask for God's strength to become 'good soil.'	
<b>4</b>	Psalm 119:9-16	Hearing God's word and putting it into practice.	Thank God for his encouraging and challenging Word.	
<b>5</b>	Acts 4:23-31	Standing up for Jesus.	Thank God that his Church grows despite persecution.	

**Study 2: Acts 2:42**  
**A Great Church is a Devoted Church**

**Explore the Basics**

- 1. Discuss, in general, what it means for a church to be a 'devoted' church. Now read the verse.**
- 2. What four elements are mentioned in v42?**
- 3. What does it mean to be 'devoted' to these things?**
- 4. How do these elements relate to one another?**

**Deeper and Wider**

- 1. What does 'apostles teaching' mean to us in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?**
- 2. What is 'fellowship'? How do we practise it?**
- 3. Discuss the meaning of 'the breaking of bread'? How does this relate to our church practices?**
- 4. Prayer is always a challenge. Discuss how we can devote ourselves to it.**

**Apply**

- 1. How do you increase your personal devotion to the apostles teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and prayers? How can we help each other in this?**
- 2. Is our church a 'devoted' church? What evidence do you have for your opinion?**

**Where could we improve?  
For Next Week: Read Acts 2:37-43.**

**Study 3: Acts 2:43**  
**A Great Church is an Awe Filled Church**

Day	Reading	To Think On	To Pray About	Personal Prayer Points
<b>1</b>	Acts 2:37-43	The wonders that God does in our place and time.	Pray for eyes to seek God's wondrous works.	
<b>2</b>	Acts 5:12-16	The power of the Word of God.	Thank God that he is a God who heals and saves	
<b>3</b>	Luke 7:11-17	Jesus.	Thank God for Jesus and his saving power.	
<b>4</b>	Deuteronomy 13:1-4	The ability to discern the signs.	Pray for wisdom to know the false from the truth.	
<b>5</b>	Acts 9:32-43	God's healing power.	Pray for God's healing hand on those you know who are unwell.	

**Study 3: Acts 2:43**  
**A Great Church is an Awe Filled Church**

**Explore the Basics**

- 1. Discuss, in general, what it means for a church to be an 'awe-filled' church. Now read the verse.**
- 2. Who was filled with awe? Why?**
- 3. What does 'filled with awe' mean?**
- 4. What are the things the apostles are doing called?**

**Deeper and Wider**

- 1. Look carefully at v43. What is the relationship between the 'awe' and the 'signs and wonders'?**
- 2. Why call them 'signs and wonders'?**
- 3. What is the place of signs and wonders in our day and age? Can God still do 'signs and wonders'?**
- 4. Read Acts 5:12-16. What does this show us about the sorts of things the disciples were doing?**

**Apply**

- 1. What fills you with awe about what God is doing in our world in 2011?**
  - 2. Is our church an 'awe filled' church? What evidence do you have for your opinion? Where could we improve?**
- For Next Week: Read Acts 2:37-44.**

**Study 4: Acts 2:44**  
**A Great Church is a United Church**

Day	Reading	To Think On	To Pray About	Personal Prayer Points
<b>1</b>	Acts 2:37-44	The nature of our Unity in Christ.	Pray for unity among brothers and sisters in our Church.	
<b>2</b>	Ephesians 4:1-13	The 'unity of the Spirit'	Thank God that in Christ we can have true unity.	
<b>3</b>	John 17:20-26	Being 'in' Jesus.	Pray Jesus' prayer for our Church.	
<b>4</b>	1 Samuel 30:21-35	The nature of being 'united.'	Thank God for the wisdom of his servants.	
<b>5</b>	Acts 6:1-7	The importance of serving one another in unity.	Ask God for insight to see how you can serve to grow unity in our Church.	

**Study 4: Acts 2:44**  
**A Great Church is a United Church**

**Explore the Basics**

- 1. Discuss, in general, what it means for a church to be a 'united' church. Now read the verse.**
- 2. What was it that brought these people together?**
- 3. What is the first thing that is said about these 'believers'?**
- 4. What did they have 'in common'?**

**Deeper and Wider**

- 1. Discuss what it means to have 'all things in common'?**
- 2. Read Ephesians 4:1-13. What is the basis of our unity?**
- 3. Read John 17:20-23. What does Jesus pray for believers?**
- 4. Read 1 Samuel 30:21-25. What does this say about our attitude to our 'neighbour' / fellow believer?**

**Apply**

- 1. What do you do to promote unity in our church? In what situations is it easy? In what situations is it hard?**
- 2. Is our church a 'united' church? What evidence do you have for your opinion? Where could we improve?**

**For Next Week: Read Acts 2:37-45.**

**Study 5: Acts 2:45**  
**A Great Church is a Generous Church**

Day	Reading	To Think On	To Pray About	Personal Prayer Points
<b>1</b>	Acts 2:37-45	Being 'together' as believers.	Thank God for his generosity to us in terms of material things.	
<b>2</b>	2 Corinthians 9:1-9	Sharing generously and enthusiastically.	Pray that in God's grace you will be a cheerful giver.	
<b>3</b>	Luke 12:27-34	Treasure in Heaven	For right priorities.	
<b>4</b>	Isaiah 58:6-11	God's constant concern for the disadvantaged.	Ask God to show you one way you can help a person less fortunate than yourself.	
<b>5</b>	Acts 4:32-5:11	Hypocrisy	For a truly generous spirit.	

**Study 5: Acts 2:45**  
**A Great Church is a Generous Church**

**Explore the Basics**

- 1. Discuss, in general, what it means for a church to be a 'generous' church. Now read the verse.**
- 2. What specifically were these early Christians doing?**
- 3. What did they do to raise money?**
- 4. Where did the money go?**

**Deeper and Wider**

- 1. Read Acts 4:32-5:11. How does this help us understand this verse? What is the main issue here for Ananias and Sapphira?**
- 2. Read Deuteronomy 15:7-11; Isaiah 58:6-11. What does God say to his people about caring for the less fortunate? See also 1 John 3:17**
- 3. Is this a form of communism?**
- 4. What underlying attitude to wealth, possessions and materialism is exemplified in this verse? Read Proverbs 11:24-25 and James 5:1-5.**

**Apply**

- 1. When was the last time you did something you would consider generous? What generous thing could you do in our church this week?**
- 2. Is our church a 'generous' church? What evidence do you have for your opinion?**

**Where could we improve?  
For Next Week: Read Acts 2:37-47.**

**Study 6: Acts 2:46-47a**  
**A Great Church is a Joyously Worshipping Church**

Day	Reading	To Think On	To Pray About	Personal Prayer Points
1	Acts 2:37-47a	The nature of true joy and true worship.	Thank God for being worthy of all worship.	
2	Romans 12:1-13	What it means to be a living sacrifice.	Ask that God will indeed transform your mind.	
3	John 16:17-24	The joy of knowing Jesus will return.	Thank God for Jesus and his words.	
4	Psalms 100:1-5	The nature of Praise.	Praise God in the words of this psalm.	
5	Acts 16:25-34	The joy of coming to Christ.	Pray that the joy of knowing Christ will grow in your heart.	

**Study 6: Acts 2:46-47a**  
**A Great Church is a Joyously Worshipping Church**

**Explore the Basics**

- 1. Discuss, in general, what it means for a church to be a 'joyously worshipping' church. Now read the verses.**
- 2. What specifically were they doing 'day by day'?**
- 3. In what ways are all these things worship?**
- 4. What was the reaction of those outside the group of believers?**

**Deeper and Wider**

- 1. What is worship?**
- 2. Read Romans 12:1-13? What acts of worship are mentioned here?**
- 3. Read Psalm 100:1-5. Read it aloud, with joy, together?**
- 4. Read Revelation 5:6-14? What does this worship tell us about our worship?**

**Apply**

- 1. 'Joy is not an emotion, it is a state of mind.' Discuss.**
  - 2. Is our church a 'joyously worshipping church? What evidence do you have for your opinion? Where could we improve?**
- For Next Week: Read Acts 2:37-47.**

**Study 7: Acts 2:47b**  
**A Great Church is an Evangelistic Church**

Day	Reading	To Think On	To Pray About	Personal Prayer Points
<b>1</b>	Acts 2:37-47	Adding to the numbers who are being saved in our church.	For those in Kiama who do not know Jesus.	
<b>2</b>	1 Peter 3:13-18	The hope we have in Jesus	That God will give you opportunities to speak of the hope there is in Jesus.	
<b>3</b>	Matthew 28:16-20	The Great Commission	Thank God for those throughout the centuries who have taken this command seriously.	
<b>4</b>	Isaiah 49:5-7	God's purpose to save a people for himself.	Thank God for his actions in Jesus to save us.	
<b>5</b>	Acts 1:1-11	The task of taking the Gospel to the 'end of the earth.'	Thank God that 'this same Jesus' is coming back.	

**Study 7: Acts 2:47b**  
**A Great Church is an Evangelistic Church**

**Explore the Basics**

- 1. Discuss, in general, what it means for a church to be an 'evangelistic' church. Now read the verse.**
- 2. Reading from 'having favour in v47', what is the effect this church in Jerusalem is having on its community?**
- 3. Who is ultimately doing this work?**
- 4. In what sort of timeframe is this happening?**

**Deeper and Wider**

- 1. Look at Acts 2:41; 5:13; 5:14; 11:24; 16:5. What is the repeated message here?**
- 2. Read Acts 1:1-11. How is this being fulfilled here in verse 47b?**
- 3. What is God's purpose in the world?**

**Read Isaiah 49:5-7.**

- 4. Looking back at all the studies in this series, where do we, living in Kiama in 2011, fit into the outworkings of this Church from nearly 2000 years ago?**

**Apply**

- 1. Being personally evangelistic is hard. How can we encourage one another in this vital task?**
- 2. Is our church a 'evangelistic' church? What evidence do you have for your opinion? Where could we improve?**

**For Next Week: Read Acts chapters 1  
and 2 again.**

