

Sunday, May 20th, 2018
Sermon Summary
Pastor John Stephenson

There are many experiences in life that, unless someone invites you to try, you are very unlikely to have. It takes an invitation.

The story we read in Acts 2 is amazing. It's the story of Pentecost. There are people in Jerusalem from all over the known world, or at least from all the places where Jewish people lived, that came to Jerusalem for the harvest festival that occurs 50 days after Passover. We learn that on this day, the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to speak in dialects different from their own. People hear their own native dialect being spoken by these Galilean disciples and gather around to hear it. They are amazed and perplexed. Verse 12 says, "All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, "What does this mean?"

"What does this mean?" is a great question. What it meant was that God was up to something new. And, pretty soon, there would be *a great invitation* to be part of that new thing. It would be an invitation meant for all people. One of the disciples, Peter, stood up and spoke. He says in verse 17, "In the last days it will be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh". Peter was essentially saying the last days had come. This event of people being empowered by the Holy Spirit to speak in other dialects inaugurated a new era in history. God had poured out His Spirit on all flesh.

Peter ends his quote of Joel saying, "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." That's the invitation. This Jesus, the one they crucified, has been raised to life. He's been freed from death. Call on Him.

The people then ask another great question in verse 37, "What should we do?" Peter's response was "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Peter gave the invitation and the people responded. That very day, three thousand persons were baptized and became believers of Jesus.

Now, having received the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are equipped to invite others into relationship with God. And there are many, many people in the world all around us who have not yet received this invitation. We know these folks. We work with them and work out with them, we are in parent teacher organizations with them. So, what would it look like to invite them into relationship with God?

Here is one practical suggestion. Ask people you know this simple question, "Do you have a church home?". People may say yes. They may say no. It is the Holy Spirit's job to bring that person into relationship with God. Our job is simply to invite them into it.

The Holy Spirit is seeking to change people's lives. God's desire is for every one of his children to be saved. Would you open yourself to be moved by the Spirit to invite someone into this new life? It is God's desire to transform the world. He asks us to participate in His rescue mission by extending invitations. Will you do that?