



**Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides!** If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions at the end of page 2.

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**SERMON-BASED STUDY GUIDE**  
for the sermon preached on May 30, 2021  
Finding Our Way Forward Week 7 - "The Way of the Gospel" - Acts 3:11-4:12



Week 7 focuses on sharing our faith in Jesus with others. Understandably, many Christians find it challenging or awkward to share their faith. We have concerns that we will come off as pushy or judgmental or that the relationship might be altered. There is fear of rejection or dispute or some form of reprisal for potentially crossing a line. Even the Apostle Peter was not ready at first. All that changed after the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost and today we want to continue to learn more about how the early church found its way forward.

**Group Discussion Questions**

Q - How would you describe your comfort level when sharing your faith with others? Do you feel more comfortable talking about it with those you already have a relationship with or do you actually feel safer sharing your hope with strangers? What aspects make one more challenging than the other?

Q – In Acts 3, we see that after healing the man, Peter and John started sharing the reason for their hope with those who had witnessed the miracle. Let's carefully read Acts 3:12-26 and identify all the features Peter uses to make the case for his listeners to put their faith in Jesus. *(Leader's Note – He tells their shared Jewish history in 3:13-14, 24-26, identifies himself as a witness v. 15, calls out their collective wrong in crucifying Jesus in vs. 14, presents a clear call to*

*action vs. 19, utilizes Hebrew prophecy relevant to his audience vs. 18-23, and reminds them of God's blessing that awaits them in Jesus in vs. 25-26).*

Q – It's important for us to remember that Peter is speaking in a different time, to a different audience, in a different context than any of us would be in today. This is not a speech we can cut and paste and recite to our neighbors or at Dunkin' Donuts. In fact, he is giving a sermon to a crowd and most of the opportunities we have are much more personal, relational and conversational. However, one of the strengths we can observe in Peter's sermon is the benefit of beginning with their shared religious history and presenting a case that Jesus is the Messiah that Israel was waiting for. He is meeting them where they are at. The conversation we want to have together now is what should we acknowledge when we share our faith in Jesus in conversation. Because it's likely we're having a conversation, what questions should we ask the person we are talking to?

*(Leader's Note – Among the great answers you will receive here, also consider the benefit of identifying what the other person already believes about God and how the person and message of Jesus might speak to that. This is a similar approach to what Peter was doing in Acts 3. Asking relevant questions and thoughtfully listening to the answers honors the other person and allows for healthy conversation that is ultimately about meeting Jesus).*

Q – We usually do not have the opportunity to share the gospel of Jesus immediately after a public miracle. However, we know that God is always at work. How can we be attentive to what God is doing and how can we be ready to act?

*(Leader's Note – There is no better way to be alert to what God is doing than to prayerfully be living by the Holy Spirit and allowing ourselves to be shaped by the Scriptures. Further, if we are committed to listening and being genuinely interested in the needs, the joys, and the lives of others, we can be part of the healing, the redemption, and the miracles that God is doing in our midst).*

Q – Pastor Bryan told us a story of a short conversation he had with the appliance repair man. What personal stories come to mind when you've shared the name of Jesus with someone else?

### **Prayer Suggestion**

Let's spend some time asking God to be mindful of the people in our lives who need Jesus. May we also ask God to prepare our hearts so that we will be ready and courageous to share our hope in Jesus with those around us.

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### **How to Use These Study Guides:**

- Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
- Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another.

- You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
- Don't feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with and see how the conversation flows.
- If your group meets over Zoom:
  - You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
  - Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.
- Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

**Group Leader Support:** Please reach out to your Campus Pastor or your Coach if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic. If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor Tim or Pastor Rachel from the Group Life team.