**The Book of Acts: Promises, The Holy Spirit & The Church, Acts 2:25-36**

* Roommates, coworkers and family members often “borrow” our stuff without thinking twice. What one thing is absolutely off limits and cannot be borrowed?
* Let’s say you left an awesome meal or dessert in the fridge either at work or at home, and later went to retrieve it and found it gone. How would you respond?

There are certain things that we don’t mind sharing. There are other things that we consider off limits. In our mind and heart, we declare possession and ownership over these things. The negative side of this takes place when the desire to possess or own “things” set the stage for envy, jealousy, and greed. The desire to claim ownership often limits our ability to surrender our hopes, dreams, and possessions to God.

The positive side is that God can use our hunger for more to challenge our own understanding of the Lordship of Jesus. Things come at a cost – both a cost to us and a constant requirement from us. The same is true of our faith. Salvation came at a huge cost to Christ. If we ask Jesus to be our Savior and Lord, we must accept both requirements. Jesus saves us from our sin and provides many benefits of the gospel. Yet we must also accept the truth that when Jesus becomes the Lord of our lives, He becomes the one with ultimate authority over everything we have.

By focusing on Jesus as only a Savior, the feel of entitlement can take over and lead us to think that all God’s mercy is owed to us. We run to the gifts of salvation and love, but we cannot neglect the truth of Lordship. The question we must ponder is, “What does it mean for my life to declare Him Lord?”

* How do you respond to people who come to you with an expectation of entitlement?
* If a college student were to ask you the difference between Jesus as Savior vs Jesus as Lord, how would you guide them?

 **Teaching:**

When we read scripture, there are two questions that should always be asked: 1) What does it mean to the people who were hearing it at that time? 2)How does this illuminate my understanding of Jesus?

As we read through the material from Sunday, keep those two questions in mind. Read Acts 2:25-36 together.

“25 David said about him: “‘I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart is glad, and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest in hope, 27 because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead, you will not let your holy one see decay. 28 You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence.’

29 “Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. 30 But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. 31 Seeing what was to come, he spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, that he was not abandoned to the realm of the dead, nor did his body see decay. 32 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. 33 Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. 34 For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, “‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”’

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

In this passage, Peter prepares us to hear an important new truth by referencing Old Testament scripture. Peter’s reference to Psalm 16 focuses on the pivotal point of the resurrection. Christ was not abandoned into the realm of the dead. Jesus overcame the grave and rose to life again. By using Psalm 16, Peter points out that the Messiah is set apart because of the resurrection.

This focus on the resurrection is complimented by the ascension which Peter touches on when he references Psalm 110. The Messiah is exalted at the right hand of God. The Messiah is much more than a descendant of David. David is a prophet who saw the Messiah as the son of God with the identifying marks of one who was resurrected from the dead and ascended into heaven.

This was a huge paradigm shift for the hearers. Peter pointed to the Messiah not as being one who would set them free from earthly oppression but instead one who would set them free from the ultimate oppressor, death. Often, we allow our expectations of God to be too small. If we set our expectations in the realm of the power of the resurrection and ascension, these expectations will be God sized dreams.

* What empowers followers of Christ to dream God sized dreams when it comes to revival, healing, baptisms and transformations?
* Where are other points in scripture where God demonstrates power to do “more than we could ask or imagine”?

Peter’s sermon points to the power of scripture and encourages us to fall in love with it. Scripture transforms our perspective focusing us on the work of God. Scripture helps followers to orient their lives around His mighty work. Scripture points followers to the love and desires He has toward His creation. God’s will becomes clear. The Spirit of God becomes a friend who we know well and guides us in daily life.

How do we do that?

1. Read his word – How consistently do you read His word?
2. Meditate on it – What does it mean? What does it mean to us? Ask questions, talk about it, discuss it.
3. Apply it – How would scripture guide this decision? How does God speak into this time in my life?

**Application:**

Peter was bold in telling others about Christ. Yet what does it look like for us to tell of the mighty power of God? It is always relational. The spirit points toward proclamation of His power and the resurrection – not merely about being kind. God calls us to explain the hope of Jesus Christ. God allows us to walk with them as they grow spiritually. Spiritual growth and revelation are the desires of our heart.

* How do you pair kindness with proclaiming the power and love of Jesus?
* When you are listening to a friend/co-worker/family member share about a rough day, how do you offer to pray for them? What do you do to make this a natural transition?
* If someone were to ask you for advice on intentionally building friendships with the goal of sharing Christ, how would you counsel them?

The final thought from Peter says... therefore he is Lord and Messiah. This message leads to confidence and hope. We are faced with conviction because we recognize that we are the one for whom Jesus was crucified. This leads to our confession and guilt. Conviction allows us to more clearly see our role in Jesus’ death.... and more clearly understand the power of the resurrection and the work done in and through the cross.

* What does it look like to make Jesus the Lord of your life?
* What is it costing you to follow Jesus?
* Into whose life is Jesus leading you and how can we encourage you in that relationship?