

The Church that Jesus is Building

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[0 : 00] If you are new to Watermark, my name is Kevin, one of the leaders here. Great to have you with us today. Make yourself at home this morning. Now, we're going to have the scripture reading in a few minutes time, but before, let me just explain where we're going.

We, as a church, are working through the book of Acts. Acts is one of the most exciting books in the Bible, in my opinion. It's a book that shows us what happens when God gets a hold of a group of people.

A very ordinary group of people, but God gets a hold of them, and he turns their lives upside down, and through them he turns the world upside down. But the book of Acts also shows us the connection between Jesus, the ministry of Jesus, and the church, and the interconnectedness between Christ and his church.

I don't know if this has ever happened to you. Probably not, but from time to time, more so in the past, you'll be pleased to know, I've sometimes wondered, Jesus, can I follow you and not need to bother about the church?

Let's be honest. Sometimes church is messy. Sometimes church is awkward. I don't know if you've ever thought that. Can I follow Jesus and not be involved in the church?

[1 : 12] And the book of Acts is going to show us the interconnectedness between the work and ministry of Jesus, and the purpose and the role of the church. And so last week we looked at the first half of Acts chapter 2, which is this amazing passage, the day of Pentecost.

The Holy Spirit is poured out on the church in power and in glory, and it's an amazing, amazing day. It's a day that has impacted the world ever since. And Peter stands up and explains what's happening, and he says, this is because Jesus has died and risen again.

Christ is alive. He's in the heavens. He's pouring out His Spirit. And so he says in verse 36 of our passage, we're going to look at it a little later. He says, Let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him, Jesus, both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

So he tells them, Jesus is alive, and the people, they respond. They believe it. They hear it. They say, count us in. And many of them follow Jesus.

They repent of their sins. They get baptized. And so verse 41 says, Those who received His word were baptized, and they were added that day about 3,000 souls. What an amazing day.

[2 : 22] It's what we looked at last week, right? This day that changed the course of the church forever. But now what? Now you've got 3,000 people that are followers of Jesus.

Okay, that's great. But now what? What should they do? They just hold on? One day hope for heaven? What's going to happen to them? Last Sunday, we heard the testimonies of five people in Watermark that were getting baptized, right?

Ron and Celine and Mac and Marilyn and Damien. And what an amazing day. These five people that have come to faith in Jesus. They've seen the wonder of Jesus.

They've believed in Him. They've repented. They've got baptized. What a celebration last Sunday was. But now what? What do they do now? Maybe you're here this morning.

Maybe you're not a follower of Jesus. Maybe you're a high school student. And you're wondering whether you do want to follow Jesus. Your parents drag you to church. Okay, I'm glad that you're here. But maybe you're wondering, If I were to become a follower of Jesus, what would that mean for me?

[3 : 25] What would that mean for you? In our passage of Scripture we're going to look at today, we're going to see the very first church. And we're going to see the connection between being in Christ, a Christian, and being in the church.

And Acts chapter 2 is going to tell us that the gospel is not just about God saving and forgiving individuals and taking them to heaven one day. It's about God making a new kind of community. A community of people that are transformed by the gospel and changed into sacrificial, loving, and generous people. So on that note, Karen, will you come and read the Scripture to us? Let's listen to Acts chapter 2, verses 36 to 47, and then I'll pick up from there.

Acts chapter 2. Starting with verse 36. Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brothers, what shall we do? And Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ.

[4 : 38] For the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off.

Everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself. And with many other words, he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation.

So those who received his word were baptized. And there were added that day about 3,000 souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

And all came upon every soul. And many wonders and many signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common.

And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people.

[5 : 53] And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. Great. Thank you, Karen. Let me pray for us and then let's look at this passage together.

Father, as we come to your word, we want to hear you speak to us. We want to know what's on your heart. We want to understand what you are saying to us. God, your word, which was written 2,000 years ago, is still so relevant to our lives and our church today.

Help us to hear your words and to know what you want to say to us. Speak to us as a body, as a family, and help us to respond appropriately. In your name we pray. Amen. Amen.

Okay, so this passage, as I said, is going to show us the connection of being in Christ and being in Christ's family. See, the gospel is not just about God saving individuals, but saving a community. So let's look at this passage. And three things I want us just to see this morning. This morning is going to be very simple in some ways. But firstly, a new community. A new community. The passage we're looking at is a very, very famous one.

[6 : 54] It's a very well-known passage. And it's very loved. And it's the kind of passage that has inspired many churches and church leaders over the years. And you can understand why. I mean, it's an amazing passage of Scripture.

Here is one, for one thing, here is a very organic and authentic church community. They all are sharing things. They are coming together.

There's a kind of organic authenticity about this church that is very appealing. There's something raw and real and organic about it. But additionally, I mean, just look at how they treat one another. They are fully devoted to God and to each other. They are selling their possessions and giving to anyone that's in need. They are miraculous signs and wonders. They are sharing everything in common.

There is joy. There is gladness. There is sincerity of heart. I mean, what an amazing church community. Now, of course, we're going to continue to read through the book of Acts. And it's not all like this all the time, right?

[7 : 55] Just a few chapters later, we're going to see there's sometimes sin in the church. There's sometimes conflict. There's sometimes persecution. Some people get their heads taken off. Okay? There's sometimes excommunication.

So it's not all kind of roses and butterflies all the time. But still, here is an amazing, amazing church community. But one of the things that I think Luke wants us to see is that the result of the Holy Spirit coming in power upon his church just a few days before is not just 3,000 individuals putting their faith in Jesus and getting saved, but it's actually a whole new community being formed.

What happened last week is the cause. This is the effect. This is the result of the Spirit coming down. The outpouring of the Spirit doesn't end with the baptisms and then just like, okay, that's it done.

Actually, the outpouring of the Spirit leads to transformed lives, which leads to a community being formed. Listen to how Trevon Wax puts it. I thought this was amazing. He says, the power of Pentecost makes for a fantastic story.

Rushing wind, flaming tongues of fire, a fisherman turned evangelist calling people to turn to Christ. But don't miss how Acts 2 ends. The power of the Spirit that flowed through the apostles' proclamation is the same power that gathers people into a new community.

[9 : 16] The Holy Spirit not only leads us to repentance, gives us power, helps us to proclaim the gospel. He also forms a new people. Okay, do you see that? That's what Luke wants us to see here.

God takes outsiders and he doesn't just dust us off and kind of clean us up a little bit and then put us back on our feet like a collection of toy figurines that stand on the shelf and just hold on for heaven.

Actually, now he takes us individuals as we are and he forms us into a people, into a family, into a community called the church. And as you think about it, think about the pictures that the Bible employs to speak about the church.

What is the church? It's a family. It's bricks in a building. It's a body. It's a flock of sheep. It's a vine and branches. All these pictures that the Bible uses to describe the church.

And what do they all have in common? The sense of plurality, right? Now, okay, if you take any of those images too far, you get yourself in trouble. Okay, so we shouldn't all be sheep that, you know, sing, I don't know, Bob or Black Sheep or something like that in church.

[10 : 23] Okay, don't take the analogy too far. But the point is, all the images that the Bible employs for the church, there's a plurality. God is not just saving individuals.

He's forming us into a community. We're not just the person of God. We're the people of God. And so that's why last week when Oscar was leading the time of baptisms afterwards with Ron and Marilyn and Damien and Mac and Celine, I don't know if you remember, he asked them a question. Hey, do you believe in Jesus? Yes, yes, we do. Have you repented of your sins and trusted him? Yes, we do. And then what did Oscar do? He asked us a question. Remember, he said, Watermark, will you receive these brothers and sisters and love them and support them and care for them? And what did we say? Yes, we will welcome you. Why did he do that? Because baptism is not just the leaders baptizing people. It's us as the church family extending our welcome to these brothers and sisters and saying, We affirm your professional faith.

We, as the church body, affirm what you're saying and we welcome you as part of the body of Christ. Listen to how Tim Chester says this. He says, In becoming a Christian, I belong to God and I belong to my brothers and sisters.

[11 : 39] It's not that I belong to God and then I make a decision to join the church. No, my being in Christ also means being in Christ with others who are also in Christ.

Being in Christ is both my identity, but also our identity. And that's an amazing thing that he's saying. Yes, I belong to Jesus, but I also belong to one another, to you.

And that's what we see here in Acts chapter 2, right? 3,000 people put their faith in Jesus. They repent from their sins. They baptize. They formed into this profound spiritual community called the church.

And we see that that's how they relate to one another. Look at what it says here. Look at verse 44. It says, Friends, the New Testament tells us that the Bible knows nothing about Christian individualism.

Just me and Jesus. Actually, when God, the Holy Spirit, through the gospel, saves people, he saves us into a collective, a community, a family, a community of saints.

[13 : 05] So here we see in Acts, God pours out a spirit. Amazing. Lives are changed. The cities turn upside down. But what's the effect? The effect is a new community. Now, what does that mean for us?

Okay, well, let's think about the applications of this. Let me give us three questions to think about. Firstly, do we come to church as consumers or contributors? Okay?

We live in an age which is profoundly, profoundly individualistic and consumeristic, right? It's kind of the air that we breathe. Everything our world caters for is for an individualistic, consumeristic lifestyle.

I heard a story recently of an individual that had found a date on Tinder. Okay? And so she's in the taxi on the way to meeting her date for the very first time.

And while she's in the taxi, she's on her phone. And what do you think she's doing on her phone? She's on Tinder looking for the next date in case this one doesn't work out. Right? So she's in the taxi on the day to date on the way to the date, busy swiping, looking for the next date.

[14:09] Right? We live in a profoundly consumeristic age. Whether it's dates on Tinder, whether it's a Netflix show, whether it's food on Food Panda, whether it's a job opportunity, we're highly individualistic and consumeristic.

But the church doesn't work that way. The church is actually designed to be highly unsatisfactory and incredibly boring to a consumeristic culture.

I mean, just think about it. You've actually got to arrive in person and engage with real people, not just on a screen. Right? And you've got to actually talk to real people, not just virtual people or avatars or AI, you know, equivalents.

And you actually need to sing songs. Some of which are over 100 years old. I mean, that is very, very uncool. And you've got to listen to people pray prayers and read scripture. And then you've got to listen to this middle-aged white guy give a monologue for who knows how length of time.

Right? The incredibly boring and unsatisfactory culture if church is all about you. But what happens if it's not about you?

[15:19] What if we come to church for what we can give? How we can encourage somebody else? How we can pray with somebody that's going through a hard time? How we can give a listening ear and listen to somebody and weep with those who weep?

And mourn with those who mourn? And rejoice with those who rejoice. I was so pleased just earlier this morning. I got here a little earlier and I saw one individual. I won't name her. Just talking to five or six different people around the hall.

Just praying with them. Weeping with them. Laughing with them. That's church family. The church is a family where we come together. Here's the second question. Do you see God at work in his church despite its numerous shortcomings?

Do you see God at work in his church despite its numerous shortcomings? I think this is one of the most remarkable things about the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul in the New Testament is always writing these letters to these churches.

And some of these churches are not very good churches. Right? But one in particular is the church in Corinth. The church in Corinth is the most dysfunctional, broken church you can imagine.

[16:24] Think of the most messy church you can imagine. That was it. Right? And Paul writes this letter and he starts off his letter like this. He says, I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given to you in Christ Jesus.

That in every way you have been enriched in him. Not lacking in anything. As you await for the revealing of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ who will sustain you to the end.

And make you guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. Friends, if I wrote a letter to Corinthians, I would say, You guys are a mess. Sort yourselves out. I'm coming back to get you and, you know, clean up your act pretty soon.

But Paul looks at this church and somehow with the eyes of grace can see, This is a church where God is at work. It may be very small, but God is at work there. Yes, friends, the church is messy.

Yes, it's an awkward time. But can we see what Christ is doing? The church is Christ's church. And Christ is at work there. Here's the third question for us to think about.

[17:28] Who knows the real you? Now, I appreciate this is a scary question. But one of the things that Luke wants to show us here is that our faith is a community project. And so who knows the real you?

Who knows the real me? It's very easy to come to church and to put on a smiley, happy Christian smile and to pretend that everything's fine and just to play the part.

But actually, deep inside, there can be profound fear, anxiety, concern. Friends, who knows what's really going on inside of me?

Being part of a church means more than just being physically present. And what the rest of the passage shows us is that here is a church that gave themselves to one another. But that also meant some of them receiving the giving of others to them.

I think we've got to be honest that not all 3,000 people of this church were the nicest people. Some of them were probably not that nice. Some of them were probably not that easy to get along with. Friends, is there anybody that's able to stand with you and point you to your heavenly father in the battles that you're facing?

[18 : 35] Is there anybody that's able to help you hold on to Christ in the midst of your fears and your questions and your doubts? Is there anybody that's able to pray with you in the spirit in the midst of your anguish and your questions and your pain and your sorrows?

Are you able to open yourself up to a friend and to pray with you for the real issues that are on your heart? Friends, you'll never know Jesus deeply and never know Jesus' impact in your life until you open yourself up to his people, his body, the church.

So here in Acts we see a new kind of church community. God is saving people and he's plugging them into a new kind of community. Secondly, we see a new community that's empowered by the Spirit.

This church is not just a community, a collection of individuals. It's a community that's empowered by the Spirit. Now, as you look at this passage in Acts chapter 2, as we said earlier, this is a picture of a remarkable, remarkable church.

Now, a confession here. As one of the elders, pastors in this church, I've done this many, many times. Elders and pastors have this great temptation. We sometimes go away on, you know, annual retreats or weekend away or maybe a day retreat, a leadership summit.

[19 : 54] And we all open our Bibles to Acts chapter 2 and we read this passage and we say, that's the kind of church we want, right? Where everybody is devoted to God and to one another. Where everybody is sharing their possessions.

Everybody is giving of themselves. Nobody has any need. How can we be this kind of church? What strategy do we need to employ? Who do we need to hire?

What's our five-year goal and vision statement? And we all plan and organize and strategize and we miss the point entirely. Because one of the things that's remarkable about this passage is not just the power and the love and the community and the generosity, but also the lack of strategic planning.

Nobody here presents a hundred-page slide deck to the board. Nobody here goes away on weekend summits or leadership summits or strategic plans away. Nobody's coming up with a five-year strategic plan.

In fact, if anything, the one strategy that they have, Jesus tells them in chapter 1 is, wait, do nothing, just pray. Here is a church that is the most remarkable church that anybody in the history of the world has ever seen.

[21 : 07] It has almost never been replicated. And yet, they're profoundly devoid of any strategic planning or human engineering. And the reason is because the church is Holy Spirit-empowered, not human-engineered.

Okay, do you see that? What brought about this remarkable community of people? Friends, surely you can put it down to nothing less than the preaching of the gospel and a profound move of the Holy Spirit in the church.

That's the point that Luke wants us to see. Peter preaches the gospel, the Spirit comes, and the effect is this amazing, remarkable community of people that are unlike anything the world has seen. And yet, where does this joy, this vibrancy, this selflessness, this generosity, this love come from? It comes from the preaching of the gospel and a profound move of the Spirit upon God's people.

So look at verse 43 with me. Look at what he says. Luke says, And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

[22 : 14] Awe means to be in the presence of something profoundly bigger and more majestic than yourself. God himself is in their midst. God is with them. God has come upon them.

And look at verse 47. The Lord added to the number day by day those who are being saved. This is the Lord's doing. Christ is building his church through the Spirit. In a few weeks' time, we're going to see in chapter 4, one thing that happens is the apostles and the disciples are in the city, and they are full of the Spirit, and they're preaching the gospel, and they're turning the city upside down.

And one of the accusations that the leaders have is, you are filling this city with your message. I mean, the church is not just contained to himself. It's turning the whole city upside down. But one of the things that's remarkable is the religious leaders, when they look at the leaders of the church, they kind of scratch their heads.

They can't make sense of this. They say, We see you guys. You're pretty ordinary. We see the church, and these two things don't go together. Look at how they say this in Acts chapter 4. It says, When the leaders saw the boldness of Peter and John, they perceived that they were uneducated, common men, and they were astonished. Why?

[23 : 28] Because the church is not something that is on the shoulders of the leaders. It's not humanly engineered. It's not strategically organized. It's a profound work of the Spirit of God through the gospel that's changing people.

And what we see in the book of Acts is that the gospel and the Spirit is what forms the church, and it's the same gospel and the Spirit that sustains the church ongoingly, not least of which is done through prayer.

And that's why we see them here. They're devoted. What are they devoted to? The apostles' teaching, to breaking of bread, to spiritual community, to prayer. Not because that's what the management consultants came up with, but because they understood that this dynamic power, this spiritual power that created the church and sustained the church, is a move of God alone.

A new community. A new community empowered by the Spirit. Now, what does that mean for us? Well, here's a question. Do we see the indispensable need for prayer?

Friends, the church is a spiritual community. You're not a human organization. And that means probably one of the most important things that the church can do is give itself to prayer. Constantly giving itself to prayer.

[24 : 46] There's no greater indicator about your spiritual maturity, your spiritual health, as to ask ourselves the questions, what is our prayer life like? One of the things that's amazing in this passage is that it actually says here, they gave themselves not just to prayer in general, but to the prayers.

That means that they weren't just having their morning devotions, but it means that they were gathering together with other saints regularly for times of prayer. Almost every day they would gather with other Christians in the temple.

They would gather in homes. They would gather together. They would gather in big groups. They would gather in small groups constantly in prayer. And this is why throughout the entire book of Acts, almost every chapter, whatever they do, wherever they go, whatever decisions they make, they're bathed and saturated in prayer.

Friends, can I ask us, what is the measure of your prayer life? Friends, what is the measure of our prayer life as a church? What is our dependence upon God like?

Is monthly prayer meeting a priority? Friends, if you're a CG leader, do you pray for your CG members? If you're a man, are you praying for your wife and your children?

[26 : 01] Friends, the most important thing that you can give your children is not just for them to go to a great university, it's for them to know the power of the living God. Do you pray for your children? Do you pray for your children's future spouse?

Do you pray for your wife to know and love and be saturated by God? Friends, your wife needs God's spirit and power more than she needs your job or your money.

Do we pray for our families? Do we pray for our church? Do we pray for our city? Do we pray for one another? When God pours out his spirit on a group of people, he's not just saving individuals for heaven one day, he's creating a new family.

A family that will one day be in heaven, surrounding the throne of heaven, people from every language and nation and culture and ethnicity, united in one. And he's creating a new community. But this community is not strategically engineered, it's spirit-empowered. And for that we need to be a people of prayer. But that tells us not only that God is creating a new community that's empowered by the spirit, it's also a community that's transformed by the gospel.

[27 : 14] And so that's the final thing we see in our passage today, is a community that's transformed by the gospel. When you read this passage, I find this passage profoundly challenging.

I must confess, sometimes when I read this passage, I kind of just, the eyes of my heart roll, and I kind of just gloss over it really quickly and move on to the next section.

And the reason is, because it's so profoundly challenging, I don't really want to slow down and read it slowly and take it in, right? But let's read it together once again.

Read it slowly. And I want us to think about the remarkable selfless generosity of this church. Listen to what this passage is. Luke says, the spirit comes upon the church, creates a new community, and this is what it looked like.

This church community devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship and to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. And all came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

[28 : 20] And all who believed were together and had all things in common. They were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all as anyone had need.

And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people.

And the Lord added to their number, day by day, those who were being saved. Friends, when we read those words, sometimes it, for me, it feels like listening to a foreign language.

It's like, I know what the individual words mean, but I can't quite see how it all makes sense together. Can you imagine being part of a church like this? Imagine being part of a community like this?

Friends, if what the church is, is a community that's born of the gospel by the Spirit, and one that's sustained by the gospel and the Spirit, what we should expect is that the culture of the community and the relationships of the community will be shaped by the gospel and by the Spirit, transformed by the same gospel and the Spirit.

[29 : 34] And that's, I think, partly what Luke wants us to see. Here is a community that is shaped by the gospel. Friends, here is a community which, just like the God that they love and serve, don't merely think about themselves, but give of themselves for the well-being of one another.

Here is a community just like the Savior that they worship are willing to give up what is rightfully theirs for the sake of those that they've chosen to join themselves and unite themselves to.

Here is a community who generously gave of their belongings because Jesus Christ had generously given of His life, His blood on the cross. Here is a community of saints who, just like the Spirit who dwells within them, are willing to dismantle the social orders and the hierarchies that exist and relate to one another as equals.

Here is a community of believers just like the Christ they've come to trust in who open up not only their homes but their hearts and their lives to let one another in.

Even people who are very different to them and who they wouldn't naturally relate to. Friends, here is a community of saints who just like their Savior and their King are going to have to forgive and welcome and love and receive people that they would never have done so before.

[30 : 52] Here is a community that's not just talking about the Gospel and singing about the Gospel but who's allowing the values and the truth of the Gospel to so transform their hearts that it transforms the way that they relate to one another.

Their interactions their relationships even how they view their possessions. Friends, as we said earlier there's no chance that these people were all nice people.

Can't be that all 3,000 of them were just easy to get along with selfless and didn't rub each other after a long way. No doubt some of those 3,000 people they had to learn how to get along with one another. So how did they do it?

They let the words of the Gospel the truth of the Gospel the welcome that they had received extend the welcome to one another. So listen to how Paul writes this later on in the New Testament.

He says Romans 15 verse 7 Welcome one another just as Christ has welcomed you. Or Ephesians 4 Be kind to one another tender hearted forgiving one another just as God and Christ has forgiven you.

[31 : 56] Friends, here is a group of people so transformed by the good news of Jesus and the work of the Spirit that their Christian faith is not just something they say they believe in it's not just intellectual assent it's actually transformed them their very lives to resemble the Savior that they now worship and trust and adore.

So here is the last question for us. Friends, is the generosity of Christ shaping us shaping Watermark shaping our community? Is the kindness of Jesus Christ to sinners like us making us kind to one another?

Is the forgiveness of Christ to rebels like us helping us to forgive one another? Is the welcome of Jesus to outsiders like us helping us to welcome others?

Friends, is the patience of Jesus with slow-to-get-it people like me helping us to be patient with one another? Is the love of God the Father towards unlovely people like us helping us to be more loving towards one another?

Friends, when I look at Watermark Church I do see this. This is a wonderful, wonderful church. But let's pray that this will happen more and more that the gospel that we proclaim and the gospel that's changed us will transform us and our community to exhibit and live out the gospel to one another.

[33 : 20] So, what a passage. Acts chapter 2. Here's a community that's been transformed by God, saved and changed by the Spirit, transformed by the gospel.

Here's a community that is living out the values of the gospel and turning the city upside down. Here's a community that Christ is building by His Spirit, not human engineering, to resemble Him and to reflect the glory of the gospel.

So, as we come to a close, one last question. Are you part of it? Are you part of it? Are you in? Has Christ saved you, not just for heaven one day, but made you part of His body?

Is your identity not just in Christ, but are you part of Christ's family? Friends, are you in Jesus? Jesus came to say, to live the life that we should have lived. He died the death we should have died.

Jesus rose again and ascended into heaven and now He's in heaven building a community. Are you part of it? Are you saved? Are you forgiven? Do you know the wonder of Jesus and the forgiveness of Jesus and the welcome and the kindness and the patience of Jesus?

[34 : 29] If you don't know, today's the day. Why don't you come to Him, surrender to Him, bow down to Him and let Him change you now and forever. Let's pray to Him and come to Him now as we do that together.

Maybe actually, before I pray, let's take a few minutes just to reflect. Let's think about this community in Acts chapter 2 and what, what has God said to us and how does God want you to respond?

Father God, we confess that when we look at Acts chapter 2, this amazing community that you birthed by your Spirit through the Gospel. God, we are profoundly challenged, both encouraged and challenged.

encouraged because we know this is what you're doing. This wasn't the work of leadership genius, this wasn't organizational genius, this was the work of your Spirit and that means, God, that it's something you can do in us.

God, it's also challenging because we see the disconnect. It's like a mirror to our hearts, God. We see a group of people that were so impacted by the Gospel that it changed their lives.

[35 : 49] Their lives looked radically, radically different. And God, we confess that this is not always true for us.

So God, I want to ask that you do something profound in our lives and in our community. I want to ask God that by the power of your Holy Spirit, the same Spirit that saved us and caused us to be born again, that God, by the power of your Spirit, you will work in our hearts, God.

That you will cause us to be radically generous, others orientated, kind, kind, bold, and courageous. God, by the work of your Spirit, my Lord, may the Gospel not just be in our heads but transform our hearts. Lord, we ask, won't you do something like what you did through the church in the book of Acts?

Do it again in our day in our church, God. do it in us, Lord. Move in our midst, God. Lord, we long for a spiritual awakening.

[37 : 15] We long for revival, Lord. We long for what we saw in Jerusalem to see that in Hong Kong, God. We long, God, for thousands of people to come to the transforming knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In our city, do this, God, but we pray, start with us, Lord. Start with us. Renew us. Revive us. God, for those of us who our faith is dry and apathetic, for those of us, God, who feels like it's been a very long time since the Gospel was real in our hearts, by your Spirit and move in our midst, I pray.

And come and have your way. In your name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.