

## ACTS 2:37-42 (NASB)

<sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" <sup>38</sup> Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." <sup>40</sup> And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" <sup>41</sup> So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. <sup>42</sup> They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

## REVIEW

The world was set ablaze with a new movement in Jerusalem. A gathering of believers, known only as followers of a recently executed rabbi (Jesus), had demonstrated newfound power and conviction. They were ordinary men, and yet they spoke as witnesses of something beyond this world – and somehow also – a part of this world. Peter stood out among them as their most outspoken leader. After he preached (2:22-36) in the city, a *wildfire* spread! Now, thousands were saying "Yes!" and "Amen!" to the message. The CHURCH was born – and *how* it began is just as powerful *today* as it was then.

## STUDY

- What made the people respond to Peter and the apostles with such curiosity and hunger for more? (v.37)
- What was Peter's response? How did Peter know these instructions for people to begin their new life in Christ? (v.38, see also Matt 28:18-20)

- Repentance and baptism were both familiar teachings in Judaism. What makes these actions completely different from their previous understanding? (v.38)
- What is the promise that was made to Israel? How does this promise become fulfilled for the hearers and their children? And for those who are "far off"?
- When Peter urges the audience to "be saved from this perverse generation," what or who is he referring to?
- About three thousand people were added to the faith that day. That is a lot! Many people were in Jerusalem celebrating Shavuot (Pentecost), which remembered the gift of the Law to Moses. (see Exodus 24:12-18; Deut. 16:9-11)
  - How is the gift of the Law and the gift of the gospel message (through Peter's sermon) similar?
  - How might the large number of new believers symbolize the birth of a new type of people (aka *a new nation*)?
- How did these new believers demonstrate their faith in their first days of conversion? What does this reveal about the early church?

## APPLICATION

- From Peter's example, what might be the purpose of preaching – both then and today?
- When someone asks you how to believe in the gospel of Jesus, what do you say? How does verse 38 help you give clear instructions?
- Why must we repent and be baptized in Jesus' name?
- How do the actions of the earliest converts reflect in our church?
- How are these actions (aka *disciplines*) reflected in your life?