

Sermon Discussion Questions

“THE POWER OF PENTECOST II”

Discuss

History is replete with examples of idealistic, utopian communities that ultimately failed. There were the American “Shakers” (official title: The United Society of Believers in Christ’s Second Appearing”), who practiced communal living away from the “World,” especially cities. They achieved their goal of living more simply for a while and made beautiful furniture still admired today, but eventually their communities dwindled to a handful of people (not altogether surprisingly since procreation was banned). Louisa May Alcott’s family (of *Little Women* fame) founded “Fruitlands,” an agrarian community in Massachusetts where everyone held all the property in common. The experiment ended a mere seven months after it began. Their food had run out.

Many of these utopian communities were deliberate attempts to imitate the Holy Spirit-empowered fellowship of believers that is described in the last five verses of the second chapter of Acts. Almost all of the founders of these communities were inspired by the example of the believers “being together” and having “everything in common.” (v. 44) Are we to follow the example of these believers as described here in Acts, and if so, how?

- 1) Let’s begin by taking a look at what characterized the fellowship of these believers. What exactly were they doing, how often were they doing these things, and why were they living this way?
 - Was this a radical way of living for these men and women? Do you think it was quite different from the way they had been living, and if so, how?
 - Was it the same way of life commanded by God in the Old Testament? (See for example, Deut. 15:4-5, Prov. 3:27-28, and 2 Chron. 34:29-32.)
- 2) In last week’s passage, we read that when the people heard Peter’s teaching, they were cut to the heart (v. 37), and in verse 42, we read that these new believers “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching.”
 - How should both our hearts and our heads be involved in worship? In our relationships with other people?
 - How can we have the wisdom to avoid the errors of many utopian thinkers? Is this a matter of the head, the heart, or both?
- 3) The Shakers encapsulated their vision of the perfect society in a little song still known by many people today (you can easily Google it and hear the tune).

‘Tis the gift to be simple,
‘Tis the gift to be free,
‘Tis the gift to come down where we ought to be.

- Does this describe the way of life that we see here in the book of Acts? Explain your answer.
- No need to write your own song, but how would you sum up the way of life described in these verses? Are we living this way?



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH

DATE: September 15, 2019

SPEAKER: Joe

SERIES: Acts

PASSAGE: Acts 2:42-47

Pray

O THOU FOUNT OF EVERY BLESSING,
Fill us with the kind of awe that these early disciples had after Pentecost! May our hearts be full of wonder at what you have done and are doing in this world.

Give us a similar devotion to teaching and to fellowship. Make us eager to immerse ourselves in your Word, hungry to hear it taught and preached, and glad when we can encourage and love and support our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

Make us open-handed instead of close-fisted with our possessions. May we always be ready and willing to share with those in need.

Like those first Christians, we praise and honor you, our Shepherd and King. You are indeed worthy of great praise!

Finally, Lord, we pray that you would continue to bring new followers of Christ into your Church every day until he returns. In his name we pray. Amen.

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Chattanooga Christian School
Scholarship Fund

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Neal and Deb serving in a sensitive area