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**TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
IHOP BIBLE STUDY**

**# 3 Topic: "Peter's ecstatic sermon and the fellowship of believers" – with
commentary**

**Acts 2:14 – 41, "Peter Addresses the Crowd;" Acts 2: 42 – 47, "The Fellowship of
Believers."**

The purpose of the Book of Acts is to record the activity of the Holy Spirit in the Vision and Ministry of Peter and Paul. **Today's study is the 3rd of 20 lessons.**

A contextual statement:

Interestingly, *The Interpreter's Bible* makes the following observation. In the book of Acts, "The Lord is not returned, but in the meantime the word of God is being carried on by the church. The Gentile mission is itself the eschatological action of God." (*The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible*. Nashville: Abingdon Press. 1971. p. 730.)

This I want to affirm as our perspective. **We will study this book from the perspective of the in-breaking of the Holy Spirit.** This puts us out on the cusp of a deep and foreboding spiritual hole that is eternally deep. The Holy Spirit is that intuited presence within us that urges us to "Jump." "Jump!" To take this leap of faith means to surrender ourselves to the eternal deeps. The discovery, to which I can personally testify, is that this deep, dark, mysterious hole is the place where God lives within us. As we lose control of everything— our-selves, our relationships to neighbor and to God— then we can discover that God really does sustain us. But the experience is like falling, and it is not entirely comfortable. But it works.

Now, to work.

Read the assigned scripture.

I. Acts 2: 14 – 41, "Peter Addresses the Crowd."

Vss. 1 – 21: To appreciate Peter's sermon begins with a study of the scripture quotation he uses in the Book of Joel. While the reference Luke uses is **Joel 2: 28 – 32**, it is important to get the bigger picture for context. Your assignment is to use your commentary, or *The Interpreter's Bible Commentary*, or an on-line reference to understand the material with which Joel is working.

WS: Make God happy! (Joel 2: 13) -- This is the substance of Joel's message to "Rend your hearts, not your clothes. Return to God." **Full spiritual awakening** is the reward waiting for those who "make God Happy." In Joel's words (2:28) "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people."

There is one other insight in to this passage that concerns the opening portion in Joel 1:1 ff concerning the invasion of locust. It is important that appreciate that every occasion (including an invasion of locust) provides the opportunity to see God's work. God is not the cause of the invasion, this is the word of The Way Life Is (TWLI). However, God does not abandon us, but can be found in the middle of the invasion working on our behalf. Remember, using Gut Trip Analysis, our situation is never our problem. Our problem is

remembering that we are not victims to the locust, but we can be victors in spite of (and even because of) the locust.

II. **Vs. 14b**, The words "listen carefully" should be taken seriously. Observe Peter gives us a list of these things he holds as important. These are:

Vs. 23: God's set purpose in handing over Jesus to the Jews and other wicked men (NIV: vs. 23). Using Gut Trip Analysis, ground this phrase.

WS: Concerning the "wicked men," the *Interpreter's Bible* noted that this refers not to the Romans but to gentiles because they were without the Law. The more common assumption is that Jesus is turn over to the Jews and to the Roman officials. You decide.

Now, concerning "God's set purpose" in doing this is to use the occasion of Jesus death to demonstrate how we, as Jesus' disciples, are to die to the things of this world. We are to literally die to the influence of anything worldly, in order that we can awaken to the spiritual riches of God's grace. Or, another way to look at this is to say that in the measure of our spiritual awakening we receive the same measure of full humanity.

Vs. 24: God raised him from the dead. (Using Gut Trip Analysis, ground this phrase.)

WS: Someone suggested that if you do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, you should be at Salina Central High School at 2:45 p.m. when school gets out.

In a more serious vein, the IHOP Bible Study asked the question of when and how have we as human beings ever experienced the wonder of resurrection. The answers we struggled to articulate involved our death and resurrection at our baptism and during a spiritual conversion or awakening.

Vss. Acts 25b – 28: Psalm 16:8 – 11 – re-read this psalm out loud, and then speculate on why you believe Luke quoted this material at this time in Peter's sermon.

WS: Luke uses this material from King David to set tone o steadfastness and hope to be based on faith history. It seems important to note that King David recognizes **Christ** as **Lord**. Of course, this points up the significance of the pre-existence of the Christ concept/experience noted in references in Genesis 1.

Some other observations concerning the Psalm. 1) It is David's "heart" that instructs him in **vs. 7**. For us this implies his use of Gut Trip Analysis; 2) In **vs. 8b**, David uses the term "not shaken" which implies his steadfast trust in God; 3) In **vs. 9B**, David reports that his body "rest secure," demonstrated support of the previous verse; 4) In **vs. 11a**, David records his understanding of the "path of life," indicating his understanding of Perfect At-One-Ment as a definition of God; 5) in **vs. 11b**, David claims that his life is filled with "joy," which in Gut Trip Analysis is deep satisfaction; 6) in **vs. 11c**, David testifies to the "eternal pleasures) that represents in Gut Trip Analysis living in God's presence, or discovering our Spiritual Oasis found in the middle of our human desert.

Vss. 29 – 36: Read these verses, including the quotation from Ps. 110: 1, and be able to explain in your own words Luke's purpose.

WS: Luke is establishing the centrality of Christ as demonstrated in the physical present of Jesus in death and resurrection. The resurrection is predicted in Ps. 16: 8-11 and claims the promise of using David's lineage for the Messiah.

Jesus is both **Lord** and **Christ** in **vs. 36**. My own analysis of these dual terms is to point up both the humanity and the divinity of Christ. Another IHOP member pointed out that the term "Lord" could be an emphasis on his Jewish nature, and the word "Christ" would

be the Greek interpretation.

Vss. 36 – 41 Carefully read this section and then outline Peter’s plan of salvation. Be able to share it with the class.

WS: My analysis:

Vs. 37 - Something shakes us up; “cut to the heart.”
Forgiveness of our doing things that are the antithesis of At-One-Ment (sins).

Vs. 39 - Becoming fully awakened, or “receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
The promise of salvation is universal.

Vs. 40 - We are saved from spiritual sleep, or the experience of a “corrupt generation.”

III. Acts 2: 42 – 47, “The Fellowship of Believers.”

A. Read over this little section and share what you learned about how the early church lived as the fellowship of all believers.

WS: My analysis:

Vs. 42 - Committed to learning what the Apostles had to teach;
Committed to being in deep fellowship with each other;
Breaking of bread as a Holy Meal was as common as the blessing of each and every meal;

Vs. 43 - Experienced awe and wonder at their experience together;

Vs. 44 - Shared everything in common. They had both a common ordered life and a common financial model;

Vs. 46 - Met together daily.

Alright folks, talk to me.