

# Chapter 28: New Beginnings



## Discussion Questions:

1. Post Resurrection the disciples and Jesus and the beginning of the church – After Jesus' resurrection the Apostles were meeting with Jesus and still had some expectations of what Jesus would do.
  - a. What were the Apostles expecting?
  - b. What did Jesus answer them with?
2. What is Jesus' expectation of these disciples after they receive the Holy Spirit? Has this expectation changed in the intervening centuries?
3. What way did Jesus return to heaven? What was the statement of the angels to the disciples about the way Jesus would return?
4. What is the name of the festival that was celebrated fifty days after Passover? What occurred during the one that happened in the year Jesus was resurrected?
5. How did the presence of the Holy Spirit manifest Himself in the room and in the speech of the Apostles?
  - a. What were the reactions of the people who the Apostles interacted with?
  - b. What does Peter do to answer their inquiries?
  - c. What was the result of this?
6. Peter's message was very Christ centered it was a telling of what happened to Jesus and what those events meant. How did Peter phrase what he desired the people to do once they understood his message?
  - a. Why do you think Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost was so effective?

- b. Have you had the experience where someone responded to the Gospel in such a dramatic way?
    - i. What happened?
    - ii. How did you follow through on that experience?
7. There were many who responded to this gospel message and formed the church in Jerusalem. What were the characteristics of this group that was transformed by the message of the Gospel and the presence of the Holy Spirit?
8. What do you think about the Holy Spirit speaking through the Apostles with different languages?
9. What did Peter and John do that landed them in trouble with the Jewish leaders?
  - a. Have you experienced a situation where you did good in Jesus' name and it was met with rejection or censure?
  - b. How did you respond?
  - c. If you haven't had this experience what kind of plan would you make to ensure you reacted in a God honoring way?
10. The authorities were at a loss (*initially*) with what to do with the apostles.
  - a. What were they astonished about?
  - b. What was their complaint?
  - c. What did they conclude (*Gamaliel's speech*)?
  - d. What did the Disciples do in response to their treatment?
  - e. Is this the goal of any who are persecuted for Christ's sake? Why or Why not?
11. How did the Apostles continue to remain faithful while the Jewish leaders kept trying to silence them?
  - a. Have you experienced any situations where people wanted the gospel quieted and it only made it louder? What happened and what was the result?
12. Peter's statement "We must obey God rather than human beings!" is a bold and correct statement for those who are convinced of Jesus' power and resurrection.
  - a. Did this keep Peter or the other apostles from facing the consequences of such a stand against authority?
  - b. What was the short-term result?
  - c. What about the long-term results?
13. What is Stephen described as being like? Have you ever met someone who was similarly 'on fire' for God and the gospel? What were their similarities and differences?
14. What ultimately got Stephen in trouble?
  - a. How was Stephen's experiences here like what happened to Jesus?
  - b. How did Stephen's words stir up those who heard him?
  - c. What ways was Stephen like Christ when he was being stoned?
  - d. What can we take from what happened to Stephen and apply to our daily experiences? (realizing that while Stephen was the first martyr, he was far from the last)
15. Who was one who took part in the stoning of Stephen and approved of what happened? Do you know of any who look on with glee when the church or Christians in general have a bad report or suffer a defeat?
  - a. What ways do you see their 'approval' in 2019?

- b. What do you believe a Christlike (*Stephen like*) response is for their words and actions? How would you go about doing and showing that?
16. Saul's conversion experience on the road to Damascus was supernatural, dramatic and a great reversal. What happened to Saul?
17. Ananias was called by God to go to Saul and initially to restore his sight.
  - a. Have you ever been called to go and show a kindness to someone who had not shown any kindness to you or your friends before?
  - b. How did that go? What was the response? (*even if it wasn't positive what ways was God glorified?*)
18. There was a (short) time of peace for the church how did the Story describe the way the church at this time?
  - a. What are the ways a church could emulate this in our day?
    - i. What does it look like to 'live in the fear of the Lord'?
    - ii. What does it mean to be 'encouraged by the Holy Spirit'?
19. Who was the first gentile convert to Christianity?
  - a. What was his nationality?
  - b. What was he religiously before converting to Christ?
  - c. How did God go about preparing Him and Peter for this notable event to take place?
  - d. What does it mean for the church today to have people of other nationalities and ethnic backgrounds?
20. What does the phrase "do not call anything impure that God has made clean" mean?
21. What ways does Peter differentiate himself from Jesus in Cornelius' house?
22. What happened while Peter was speaking to Cornelius and his household?
23. James (*the brother of John*) was soon killed and Peter arrested. What was the response of Peter when he was imprisoned?
  - a. How did the church act when Peter was arrested and sentenced to death?
  - b. How did Peter gain release from prison?
  - c. What was the response of those who saw Peter freed from jail?
    - i. Have you had this sort of experience where God answered your prayer and you were so dumbfounded that you thought you were dreaming? What happened and how did the rest of the situation go?
24. How did Herod die? What was his crime/what did he neglect to do?
25. The chapter in The Story ends with "But the word of God continued to spread and flourish" How have you seen this occur in your Christian walk? Has there been fruit you have seen in the local church? In the lives of fellow believers?
  - a. What does a flourishing of the Word of God look like in the year 2019?
  - b. How do we as a church seek this and ensure this?