



to the ENDS of the EARTH

Studies in the Book of Acts

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Acts 2.42-47 | September 25, 2016

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I. Introduction

This week we continue our series To the Ends of the Earth, the text is both inspiring and intimidating. What an amazing thing that God did in His early Church and what a high standard that has been set for us today!

II. Connecting with One Another

John Piper writes, "We are coming out of an era in American church life in which it has been possible for evangelical Christians to give a tithe to the church and then devote themselves financially to building the good life and all the while keep a clear conscience." In other words, Jesus wants all that we are and calls us to not only give financially but out of everything he has made us to be!

Take a few minutes this week to ask people from different generations these questions:

What makes people from your generation feel like they are alive and thriving?

What can my generation learn from yours?

How can my generation best support yours?

As a group discussion:

What answers do you think you will get from younger generations? Older?

III. A little Insight

- a. Read Acts 2.42-47.
- b. More than 3000 people became Christians... and more everyday! No wonder they had to sell their possessions so that those who had need could survive! Do we need to financially support God's missions here at Good Shepherd? Yes! Do we need to invest financially in God's mission around the world? You bet!
- c. Economic security was a matter of life and death in the 1st century. What does it mean to be secure today? Do we use the word "comfortable" when describing how secure we want to be? Does our own security ever trump the security of others?

- d. No matter your age or financial statement...you've got something to give! Yourself! How vulnerable are you with your strengths and weaknesses? Who has God placed in your path to teach from your weaknesses and inspire from your strengths?
- e. What are some of your skills or talents that you can teach others?
- f. What have been your most formative life experiences? How can your experiences be used to help someone follow Jesus more closely?

IV. Response

- a. "So...maybe the point isn't what I want?" Getting close.? Maybe it's more about what other's need?" Bingo!
- b. I love a challenge, but when God's Word says that our church (wait a second...isn't this His church?) needs to be more about those who aren't here yet and less about those of us who have been here for a long time...it makes me feel uncomfortable. How does it make you feel?
- c. How did the Acts community respond to the power the Holy Spirit had given them?
- d. Peter has been transformed from the coward who denied Jesus three times to a dynamic leader. What fears hold you back from the life Jesus calls you to?
- e. Describe the social interactions of the community in Acts. How do we compare? As a church? How about your small group/Bible study?
- f. Property for the 1st century Jewish family was more than an economical safety net; it was part of their ancestral heritage and God's promised inheritance. Christians saw themselves as a single family. Families share food, shelter and money. What steps do you need to take to make this a reality? What about Good Shepherd?

V. Pray

- a. Lord, change me. Stretch me. Make me and your community at Good Shepherd a place that seeks what you want...not what I want. Amen

Weekly Reading Schedule

Monday, September 26th	Acts 2.42-47
Tuesday, September 27th	Acts 3.1-10
Wednesday, September 28th	Acts 3.11-16
Thursday, September 29th	Acts 3.17-26
Friday, September 30th	Acts 4.1-4