

“Now When They Heard This...”

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. Acts 2:36-41
- B. Acts 7:51-58
- C. Why the difference? The same gospel was preached to their audiences.
 - 1. The message was the same
 - 2. The delivery was essentially the same
 - 3. The preachers were very similar
 - 4. The audiences were essentially the same
 - 5. The spirit with which they received the message was different
- D. So how is one saved and the other lost?
 - 1. How does salvation work?

I. STEP ONE: CONVICTION

- A. What does it mean to be convicted? - Acts 2:37
 - 1. “Cut to the heart” - “to be pierced through, to be stabbed, to be greatly agitated or troubled.” (Strong's)
 - 2. Conviction - “To persuade or convince the mind by evidence. To convince man of error or of truth.”
- B. What convinced them?
 - 1. Vss. 14-21 - The fulfillment of God's word; God kept His word as given in prophecy
 - 2. Vss. 22-36 - The fruitfulness of God's work - The resurrection of Jesus was not a secret; there were many witnesses. Note that they did not dispute with Peter about this
 - 3. Vss. 15, 32 - The faithfulness of God's witnesses - They saw the power of the Spirit of God on them and also understood the risk the disciples were taking in proclaiming Jesus Christ.
 - 4. Vs. 37 - The failure generated by their own wickedness - Eph. 2:1-9
- C. The greatest day of your life is when you believe that God's word is truth, that you can trust the power of God, and that you are a sinner in need of a Savior.
 - 1. That is the day your life begins to change for the better. When this becomes conviction, you move on to the next step in salvation
 - 2. Conviction can hurt - Acts 2:37, 7:54; Heb. 4:12-13; Zech. 12:10
 - 3. How does one go from conviction to salvation?

II. STEP TWO: CONVERSION

- A. Vs. 38 - Conversion involves changing the mind - Peter tells them to “repent”.
 - 1. Repentance is “a change of mind that results in a change of action.”
 - 2. The audience in Acts 7 didn't give Stephen a chance to tell them to repent - Acts 7:57
 - 3. Genuine repentance is an essential ingredient in salvation. When we repent of our sins, we will forsake our sinful ways - 2Cor. 5:17.

4. "Repentance means changing one's mind, so that one's views, values, goals, and ways are changed, and one's whole life is lived differently. Mind and judgment, will and affections, behavior and lifestyle, motives and plans: all are involved. Repenting means starting to live a new life." (Geneva Study Bible, p. 1756)
- B. Vs. 38 - Conversion involves confessing the Christ - Peter then instructs the people to be "baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." It acknowledges Jesus' authority as the Christ
 1. Rom. 10:9-10
- C. Vss. 39-41 - Conversion involves claiming the message - They gladly received his word and were baptized.
 1. Isa. 45:22
 2. But is conversion enough?

III. STEP THREE: CONTINUATION

- A. Acts 2:42 - After they were saved from their sins, they continued in the new life
 1. James 2:18; 1John 2:3
- B. Acts 2:44-45 - They continued in the right associations - "fellowship"
- C. Acts 2:46 - They continued in the right appointments - Heb. 10:25
- D. Acts 2:47 - They continued in the right adorations - Heb. 13:15

Conclusion:

- A. Both audiences were cut by the message; both audiences heard and believed enough truth to act on it
- B. But both audiences received the message with different intentions and attitudes, and therefore both audiences reacted differently
- C. People are still the same today