



“Now When They Heard This...”

Acts 2:36-41, 7:51-58

Acts 2:36-41

- “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ. 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call. 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, Be saved from this perverse generation. 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”

Acts 7:51-58

- “Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, 53 who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it. 54 When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, 56 and said, Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God! 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; 58 and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.”

Why The Difference In Reactions?

- The same gospel was preached.
 - The delivery was essentially the same
 - The preachers were very similar
 - The audiences were essentially the same
 - However, the spirit with which they received the message was different
- So how is one saved and the other lost?
- How does salvation work?

Step One: Conviction

- What does it mean to be convicted?
 - Acts 2:37 - “Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart”
 - “Cut to the heart” - “to be pierced through, to be stabbed, to be greatly agitated or troubled.”
(Strong's)
 - Conviction - “To persuade or convince the mind by evidence. To convince man of error or of truth.”

Step One: Conviction

- What convinced them?
 - Vss. 14-21 - The fulfillment of God's word
 - Vss. 22-36 - The fruitfulness of God's work
 - Vss. 15, 32 - The faithfulness of God's witnesses
 - Vs. 37 - The failure generated by their own wickedness
 - Eph. 2:1-9

Step One: Conviction

- One of the greatest days of your life will be when you believe...
 - that God's word is truth
 - that you can trust the power of God
 - that you are a sinner in need of a Savior
- 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

Step One: Conviction

- Conviction can hurt
 - Acts 2:37 - “Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart...”
 - Acts 7:54 - “When they heard these things they were cut to the heart...”
 - Heb. 4:12-13 - “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. 13 And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”

Step One: Conviction

- Conviction can hurt
 - Zech. 12:10 - “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.”
- How does one go from conviction to salvation?

Step Two: Conversion

- Acts 2:38 - “Then Peter said to them, Repent...”
 - Repentance is “a change of mind that results in a change of action.”
- The audience in Acts 7 didn’t give Stephen a chance to tell them to repent
 - Acts 7:57 - “Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord”

Step Two: Conversion

- Genuine repentance is an essential ingredient in salvation. When we repent of our sins, we forsake our sinful ways
 - 2Cor. 5:17 - “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”
 - “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)

Step Two: Conversion

- Acts 2:38 - “...in the name of Jesus Christ...”
 - Conversion involves confessing the Christ
 - Rom. 10:9-10 - “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Step Two: Conversion

- Acts 2:39-41 - “For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call. 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, Be saved from this perverse generation. 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”
 - Conversion involves claiming the message - They gladly received his word and were baptized.
 - Isa. 45:22 - “Look to Me, and be saved, All you ends of the earth! For I am God, and there is no other.”
- But is conversion enough?

Step Three: Continuation

- Acts 2:42 - “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”
 - After they were saved from their sins, they continued in the new life
 - James 2:18 - “But someone will say, You have faith, and I have works. Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”
 - 1John 2:3 - “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.”

Step Three: Continuation

- Acts 2:44-45 - “Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.”
- They continued in the right associations

Step Three: Continuation

- Acts 2:46 - “So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart”
- They continued in the right appointments
- Heb. 10:25 - “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Step Three: Continuation

- Acts 2:47 - “Praising God and having favor with all the people...”
- They continued in the right adorations
- Heb. 13:15 - “Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.”

Why The Difference In Reactions?

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