

DAY THIRTEEN:

# CUT TO THE HEART

## INTRODUCTION

Today we move out of the Old Testament and into the New Testament in our biblical study of community revival. We are looking at the Day of Pentecost when as Joel had prophesied, God's Spirit was poured out for the first time on all his people. It was an incredible day. A group of Jesus' closest disciples had been privately celebrating the Feast of Pentecost when the Spirit came on them, accompanied by signs like fire and the sound of a violent wind. They all began speaking loudly in languages they had never learned. This commotion attracted a large crowd that had come to Jerusalem for the Feast from all over the world. Unexpectedly those in the crowd heard these relatively uneducated and untravelled followers of Jesus speak perfectly in their native languages. They were amazed and perplexed. So when Peter got up to speak, they listened intently. Quoting from the Old Testament, he told them about Jesus. Now read on.

## SCRIPTURE: ACTS 2:37-41

*When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"*

*Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."*

*With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

## DEVOTION

Three thousand converts after one sermon – that's revival. I know that Jesus had large crowds following him at one stage, but there were only perhaps 500 disciples left by the time of his ascension. So with 3000 new baptised converts, in one day the fledgling church grew by about 600%. That is clearly more than church growth, that's revival.

Of course, the coming of God's Spirit was a unique and special event. It is doubtful that we will see anything quite like that response in one day in our church. But the powerful, supernatural conviction of God's Spirit seen in this Scripture is typical of revival. I love the phrase "cut to the heart" (2:37). This was not an emotional response to a powerful sermon by Peter. This was a work of God, opening the eyes of many in the crowd to their



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separation from God and their desperate need to be saved by Jesus.

I have seen God do this convicting work many times. I remember a proud and unemotional Scotsman sobbing loudly in my office after church as God's Spirit cut his heart for the first time. I remember a 65-year-old vehement and angry atheist shedding tears of repentance as he realised that Jesus loved him – the Jesus he had ridiculed most of his life. I know God works like this, but in revival it ramps up. Many are drawn to Jesus. Many hear the convicting voice of God's Spirit. Many prodigals come home.

It is not that Peter had no contribution to the work of God's Spirit in revival. He warned and pleaded with the crowd (2:40) to believe in Jesus. He put the pressure on as best he could. He was bold and convincing. But this was the Spirit's work not Peter's work. God's Spirit was opening eyes and cutting open hearts in powerful new ways. The small group of Jesus followers watched in awe and excitement as the revival began.

## PRAYER RESPONSE

Lord I read about the way your Spirit worked 2000 years ago and I long for it to happen again. There are many people I care about who are completely ignorant of you. Some have turned their backs on you and walked away. Others have no idea of who you are. I would love for you to cut them to the heart with the gracious truth of the gospel. Not to leave them broken, but so that you can forgive them and adopt them and fill them and bless them. Please open their eyes Holy Spirit of God.

## PRAYER FOR REVIVAL

Out of all the blessings that revival will bring, the one I long for most is to see many people streaming into your kingdom. The lost coming home. The broken being healed. The rejected being accepted and loved. The proud being humbled. The self-reliant seeking a Saviour. Bring revival please Lord.

