

Background

- 1] Holy Spirit came at Pentecost (2:1ff)
- 2] Church grew 3000 (Acts 2:41); 5000 men (4:4); ++ the Word spread... (6:7)
- 3] Still in Jerusalem (cf Acts 1:8??)
- 4] Death of Stephen
 - a) the one who waited on tables (6:2)
 - b) for accusing them of killing 'The Righteous one', Jesus (7:52)

Intro

What do people need to believe in Jesus? – right message, right situation to consider.
How do we encourage people today to consider Jesus? (May take years!!)

KV “Those scattered, preached the Word wherever they went” (4)

MP God uses all means to ensure the message of Jesus spreads

‘Those who had been scattered.....’ (1-3)

- 1] Persecution (1)
 - a) Scattered all - except the Apostles? (Cf Mt 28:19)
 - b) Back home – ‘go’ --- Apostles to Jerusalem, (hard calling? - Acts 12:2) c) Church ‘to ends of the earth’.
- 2] Mourning (2)
 - a) Godly men – men full of Holy Spirit (6:10; 7:55)
 - b) Mourned deeply – no contradiction (7:56)

nb painful BUT.....??????

- 3] Destruction (3)
 - a) Comprehensive – house to house
 - b) All inclusive – (men and women?)
 - c) In prison – or worse (9:1)

? Where was God in it all?

Nb pray for those who persecute you (Matt 5:11)

‘... preached the Word...’ (4,5)

- 1] Who – the waiters at the table ++ (6:2)

Nb no training, teaching etc!!!

? Not able, can't, don't know enough, haven't believed long enough etc etc!?

- 2] What – preaching the Word / Christ (4,5)

ie 'Good news' the Word, 'announced' the Christ

cf read a Gospel with another

nb generally very welcome (2:47) though not by those in power(4:21;5:17ff)

‘.....where ever they went.’

1] Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, ends of the earth. (1:8)

2] Philip to Samaria (5)

Nb Philip means ‘horse lover’ in Greek – a Greek speaking Jew?

3] He proclaimed the Messiah

nb the heart of evangelism is ‘Jesus’

Conclusion

1] It took severe persecution to change the church from inward / Jerusalem to outward / the world facing.

2] How do we change today from maintaining institution to sustaining evangelism?

3] Needs: Conviction, Courage, Commitment **AND** right strategy

Internet Bible Study

Text ‘Nicodemus ...came to Jesus by night’ (John 3:2)

Aim to provide a contemporary unthreatening opportunity for people to consider the Word of God.

Objectives

- 1) To encourage people to read the Bible for themselves
- 2) To offer an opportunity for ‘low pressure’ interaction with others.
- 3) To create a scenario where questions about the Bible are encouraged
- 4) To provide a backdrop of teaching on the Bible
- 5) To give a structure of a time frame for participating in reading the Bible.

A proposal

- a) Create a closed group on the internet, into which those interested may be invited.
- b) Use a simple bible study (HtW) online.
- c) **Mon/ Tues** – Share ALL questions on passage (whether one knows ‘the answer’ or not).
 - Wed** - Offer answers to all the questions.
 - Thurs** - Suggest a Key verse & main point
 - Fri / Sat** - Give applications: What we
 - 1) *Have learned about God*
 - 2) *Might do*
- d) Aim to grow the group by inviting others
- e) When the groups reaches 7, split to allow for growth.