

## **Loving, Learning, Living** **Acts 2:37-47**

How has Christianity had the impact on society that it has had? Acts 2 tells us the beginning of that story. When a group of people is impacted by the gospel it affects how they love, learn and live.

### **How You Love**

We're not talking romantic love, but the kind of single-minded devotion that captures your heart.

Luke tells us this group of disciples *devoted themselves* to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer. To be devoted to something means you give yourself up and away for something, someone, some cause. What you're devoted to is what you love. So for this group of Christians, the gospel had resulted in a love for God and for others. Why? Because the gospel tells us that Jesus gave himself up for us, he devoted himself to us, he set his affections upon us, even when we didn't deserve it. When you understand that it turns you out of yourself, into love for God and care of others.

### **How You Learn**

The wise person knows that they don't know everything – that they need to learn. The question is from where? These disciples gave themselves to learning about Jesus – that was the foundation for their community that turned the world upside down. So it wasn't all mystical and just about experiences – they gave themselves to learning; nor was it dull – their hearts were glad and they gave themselves to praise and worship and prayer; and neither was it a free-for-all: they gave themselves to the apostles' teaching – this was their authority.

### **How You Live**

The gospel affected the way they lived in three ways:

Firstly, they shared deep, rich, vibrant community – both in large meetings (church) and in their homes (home groups). So this wasn't about Christians living in isolation – but about belonging to the body and the family of Christ. Our need for significance is met in God's individual love for us, and the answer to deep loneliness is community.

Secondly they cared practically for one another. They could give away to others, because Jesus had given away everything for them.

Thirdly, they reached out to and welcomed those around them. The Lord added to their number daily. They weren't inward looking or self-absorbed, instead through loving, learning and living, they witnessed to those around them, and they multiplied. May the same happen in our day.