

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

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KEEP JESUS WEIRD: The Book of Acts and the birth of non-religious Christianity

Session 3 – Cornerstone

DAY 1

Introduction:

The Coliseum, Taj Mahal, and the Sydney Opera House are included in the impressive structures throughout the world. Humans have used their creativity and ingenuity to build an array of amazing structures.

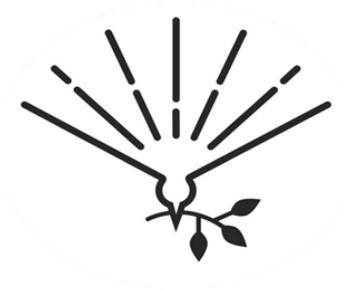
This week we are going to learn about another ‘structure’, the Church, built by the Master Architect. In biblical times, a cornerstone was the foundation of the building, and required the rest of the structure to adhere to its shape, size and angles. If the cornerstone were to be removed the remainder of the building would come crashing down. The cornerstone is the pure representation of the grade of stone presented in all the other stones, and we will read in Acts 4:11 that Jesus is, “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone”. What does this mean for us today? Paul explains to early believers in Ephesians 2:19-22:

“...you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

Paul’s words hold true when they were first written, and still hold true today.

Questions:

1. What or who is your cornerstone? How is this visible throughout your ‘structure’?
2. In Him, we are “being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.” What steps do you need to take to allow Him to do this work in yourself and the community?



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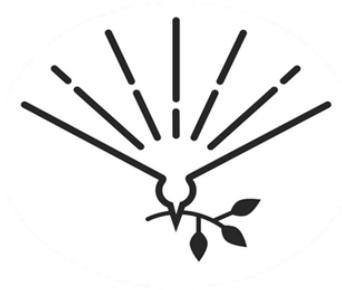
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DAY 2

Read Acts 3:1-11

1. Why was the beggar at the temple gate? What specifically did he ask for?
2. How do Peter and John react to the beggar? What do they do? Based on their reaction, how should we treat people on the fringes of society today?
3. In verse 6, what does Peter instruct the lame beggar to do and how is that different than what he asked for?
4. How did the onlookers respond? Who does Peter say is *not* responsible for this healing?
5. Discussion Question: The onlookers were used to seeing this man sit and beg for money, and now he is “walking and jumping and praising God” (vs.9). Have you seen an astonishing change in someone else’s life after putting their faith in Christ? How would you describe this change?



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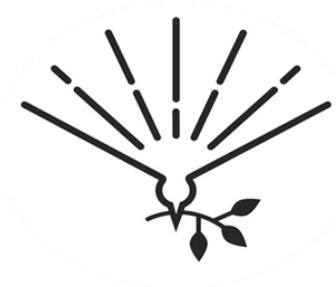
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DAY 3

Read Acts 3: 12- 26

1. What do we know about Peter during Jesus' earthly ministry? (See Matthew 14:28-31) How does verse 12 differ from his previous reputation?
2. The Israelites acted in ignorance regarding the crucifixion of Jesus. What did this accomplish and why? Is ignorance an acceptable excuse?
3. In verse 16, Peter states the cause of this man's complete healing. What is it? What are ways that we are healed by faith?
4. Verse 13 reminds the onlookers that this is the same God as the fathers of our faith. What is the promise mentioned in Genesis 12:3? It is echoed throughout Scripture. Read Galatians 3:16. Who does this promise come through?
5. What are "times of refreshing" and when do they come? Do you have those times in your life?
6. What do covenants look like today? What covenants have you entered into? Why



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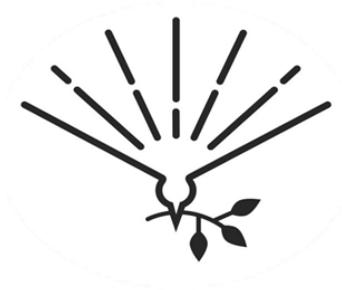
are they important to God?

7. Discussion Question: Peter reminds the Israelites in verse 25 that they are heirs of the prophets and the covenant. What does this mean? Who are God's people now? What are the characteristics of His people?

DAY 4

Read Acts 4:1-21

1. Why were Peter and John seized? What were they commanded to do by the ruler and elders?
2. Those with authority and power were disturbed. Why does the Gospel disturb people in positions of authority and power?
3. Despite the authority's best attempts to dampen the spread of the gospel, their numbers grew (verse 4). How would you explain this?
4. Discussion Question: How do you see the relationship between the Gospel and authority and power today? What has changed, what has stayed the same?



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DAY 5

1. Peter quotes Psalm 118:22, and calls Jesus, “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.” Why is this significant?
2. Read Luke 20:17. Who is rejecting the “cornerstone?”
3. How is verse 12 exclusive? How is this faith inclusive? See Acts 10:43.
4. Discussion Question: In Acts 3:11 the onlookers were “astonished” and run to learn more about Christ. Then in Acts 4:13, the religious leaders were “astonished” (same Greek word *ekpliktoi*) and instructed Peter and John not to speak of the name of Jesus. Why is there such a stark contrast in the responses? What steps can we take so that our response is to run toward Christ and not away?

DAY 6

Review Acts 3 and 4: 1-21

What did you learn about God this week?

What steps can you take to increase your faith this week?