



BIG IDEA

The foundation of the church is people with pierced hearts!

ICE BREAKER

1. Reflect back on when you first became aware of your personal sin. Describe your story with a friend, your family, or small group.
2. Try to think of a time when you experienced someone relating to you with a “pierced heart”. Perhaps they apologized for a way they hurt you. Perhaps they were in tears over their sin against you. Share with someone what this experience was like for you. Contrast this with someone who steadfastly refused to admit they wronged you and refused to make it right.

NEXT STEP

This week ask a question of yourself. How soft is your heart and who can you talk to about how to move on this in the coming week? A soft heart leads to an open hand.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

In Acts 2 Peter’s crucial point is that we are all implicated in crucifying Jesus. Peter wants us to get this. He’s asking us to look at something inside of us. “They were cut to the heart.” A very important truth the church is: it’s foundation is a people with pierced hearts! If our hearts are not pierced we have nothing. We need to see and own our sin. If we own it then it changes us. We know our heart is pierced if we respond like the people in Acts. They were open to hearing more about themselves. It’s tough to hear the truth about ourselves so we tend not to get feedback. A pierced heart is aware of needing a soft heart and it is humble.

1. Discuss how you have cultivated a soft heart. What are the ingredients necessary? What is God's role and what is our part in it? Reflect on this with a friend or your family or spouse.
2. Matt spoke of how he and his family can engage in a worship service and then within a short time be violating love with one another. His conclusion was that their own hearts were "not pierced". So, how we relate to one another is a crucial diagnostic for our hearts. We love this because none of us can get it "right" unless our hearts are pierced. If our hearts are hard we don't love well and we don't want to hear feedback about it. Take some time this week to get specific feedback from one or two people regarding how you violate love when you relate to people. Then share with someone close to you the feedback you receive. Group leaders: this is a great time to consider praying together as a group as we both seek and resist having our hearts pierced.

NOTES AND QUOTES:

3 focal points emerge in the book of Acts:

- Mission
- Structure
- Power of church

In Acts 1 Jesus gives his disciples their mission and He gives us our mission. The key mission of the church is found in Acts 1:8 when Jesus says: "But you will receive power when the Spirit comes upon you and you; will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The church can make one of two errors. The first error is those in charge to lead can abuse the power that Jesus entrusted. The second error is that we can become discontent and then try to usurp power. Power struggles in churches have done much damage.

The true power of the church is revealed in Jesus' words when He says in Acts 1:8 , "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Part of this power is sharing the gospel but first and foremost it's for us to repent and to see our sin. To love well and to seek restoration when there is discord. This bears witness to the power of Christ.

In Acts 22 Peter's crucial point is that we are all implicated in crucifying Jesus. Peter wants us to get this. He's asking us to look at something inside of us.

Ps 51 is David's prayer after sin with Beethseba and his murder of Uriah.