

Reflection Questions: Acts 2:22-36

For the message, "We Were Eyewitnesses" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on April 9, 2023

These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages.

INTRODUCTION

Pray. Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

Read the Scripture text: Acts 2:22-36

22 [Peter speaking in Jerusalem, 50 days after the crucifixion of Jesus]: "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— 23 this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. 24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. 25 For David says concerning him,

"I saw the Lord always before me,
for he is at my right hand that I may not be shaken;
26 therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;
my flesh also will dwell in hope.
27 For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,
or let your Holy One see corruption.
28 You have made known to me the paths of life;
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.'

29 "Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. 30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, 31 he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. 32 **This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.** 33 Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing. 34 For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says,

"The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit at my right hand,
35 until I make your enemies your footstool.'"

36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified."

Let's get started...

- How important do you think it is to know not only WHAT you believe, but WHY you believe it?

QUESTIONS

1. In this text, we have Peter standing up at the Feast of Pentecost in Jerusalem, the place where Jesus was crucified, and says essentially two things: (1) You all are responsible for the death of Jesus, and (2) we have seen Jesus alive again: God raised him up. Reflect on why this would have been such an extraordinary and powerful message to proclaim.
2. Some of the eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Jesus include: (1) Peter, who had denied even knowing Jesus when Jesus was on trial; (2) James, the unbelieving brother of Jesus; (3) Thomas, the skeptical disciple of Jesus who would not believe that Jesus had risen from the dead unless Jesus appeared to him and Thomas could touch his crucifixion wounds; and (4) Saul (Paul), who was the sworn adversary of Jesus and his early followers, even presiding over the arrest, imprisonment, and execution of at least one of Jesus' followers. Which of these eyewitnesses to the resurrection of Jesus do you find most interesting?
3. Someone says, "Hey, if believing in the resurrection of Jesus helps you make it through the day, good for you!" Why is believing in the resurrection of Jesus more than just a coping mechanism, or an individual preference, like preferring chocolate ice cream over vanilla?
4. It is obvious from the book of Acts and the early Christian writings that what these followers emphasized was the bodily resurrection of Jesus as part of the Gospel—the Good News of Jesus. Do you find that this is emphasized in modern Christianity at least as much as his crucifixion? What have you noticed?
5. In Sunday's message, the pastor mentioned that there are three facts that historians both ancient and modern agree upon: There was (1) an execution, (2) an empty tomb, and (3) eyewitnesses. Explain why you think it is important for everyone—Christian or not—to grapple with these three facts of history.
6. The resurrection of Jesus is a foretaste of not only our own resurrection ("By his power God raise the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also" 1 Cor. 6:14), but also of "the renewal all things" (Matthew 19:28).

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

- _____
- _____