

What Shall We Do?

Acts 2:36-41

MAIN IDEA: *The gospel calls sinners to respond to Jesus Christ with repentance and faith, resulting in forgiveness and new life. The risen Jesus is proclaimed as both Lord and Messiah, and His finished work demands a personal response. As His people, we should lovingly and boldly tell others this same good news, calling them to repent and trust in Christ so they, too, may be forgiven and saved.*

BACKGROUND / CONTEXT: Acts 2 is the birth of the church. The Spirit has come at Pentecost just as Jesus promised in Acts 1:8. Ordinary men are speaking with supernatural power. A crowd gathers. Peter, once fearful, now preaches boldly. He does not offer life advice, motivational encouragement, or words about how to “improve your life.” Peter preaches Christ. He explains the resurrection from Psalm 16 and the exaltation of Christ from Psalm 110. Then he brings it to a conclusion. Verse 36 is the climax of Peter’s sermon, and it demands a response. Verses 37–41 show the response and answer a key question: *What happens when the gospel is faithfully preached, and the Holy Spirit is truly at work?* Not hype, manipulation, or emotionalism, but biblical conviction, repentance, and new life.

1. The **Confronting Truth About Jesus (v. 36)** “*God has made this Jesus...both Lord and Messiah.*”

A. **Jesus is Lord**

- “Know with certainty” - Christianity is not guesswork or speculation.
- *Not just Savior, but Master*
- He has authority over every life (even those who reject Him)
- Peter is not saying, “Here’s one religious option.” He is saying, “This is what God has done — and you must reckon with it.” The gospel is not advice. It is an announcement about salvation for sinners.

B. **Jesus is Messiah (Christ)**

- The promised Savior God foretold in Scripture
- The fulfillment of God’s redemptive plan for humanity

C. **The Hard Truth**

- “You crucified Him” – sin is personal, not abstract (personal responsibility)
- The gospel first confronts and convicts the conscience before it comforts

D. **Application:** *We cannot soften who Jesus is. Evangelism begins with truth, not flattery. People must know who Christ really is before they can respond to Him.*

2. The **Convicting Work of the Spirit (v. 37)** “*They were pierced to the heart.*”

A. **Conviction is God’s Work (it is grace from God)**

- Peter simply preached truth – but the Holy Spirit pierced hearts
- You can explain the gospel, but only God can change a heart (see John 16:8)

B. **Conviction is both emotional and moral**

- Not mere curiosity; not I got caught; not I’m sorry you feel that way
- It is a deep awareness that you are guilty before a Holy God

C. **Conviction leads to urgency**

- “What shall we do?” *not* “I’ll think about it.” Real conviction always seeks a response. If God is stirring your heart, that is mercy, not condemnation.

D. **Application:** Our job in testifying to Christ and His Gospel message is faithfulness, not pressure. Speak clearly and trust the Spirit to convict.

3. The **Commanded Response to the Gospel (v. 38)** “*Repent...be baptized...*”

A. **Repent**

- Turn from Sin; change in direction, not just feelings
- This is not self-improvement or “I’ll try harder”; it is surrender

B. **Believe/Trust Christ (implied in baptism)**

- Public allegiance to Jesus (Baptism is a Gospel picture)
- Not private admiration for Jesus, but open surrender and commitment

C. **The Gospel demands action (a response)**

- Not “consider this.”
- But “respond now.”

D. **Receive the Holy Spirit**

- God doesn’t just pardon; He indwells. His Spirit: convicts, comforts, empowers.

E. **Application:** *We must call people to respond — not just inform them. Evangelism includes invitation and appeal. People are called to: repent, believe, & follow Christ.*

4. The **Gracious Promise of Salvation (v. 39)** “*For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off...*”

A. **Salvation is God’s promise, not our achievement**

- Forgiveness and the Spirit are gifts

B. **Salvation is wide in scope**

- Jews, families, Gentiles (“far off”)
- No one is outside God’s reach

C. **Salvation is linked to the Lord our God’s Call**

- “Everyone the Lord our God calls.”
- God is already at work before we arrive

D. **Application:** Never assume someone is “too far gone.” The promise is bigger than we think. Consider the prodigal son — the Father runs toward sinners.

5. The **Visible Evidence of True Conversion (vv. 40–41)** “*Be saved...those who accepted...were baptized...added...*”

A. **They received the word (genuine belief)**

B. **They were baptized (public identification with Christ)**

C. **They joined the church (discipleship, not isolation); converted → commitment**

D. **They followed the faith (3,000 lives changed); faith → obedience**

E. **Application:** True conversion shows up in obedience and belonging. We don’t just count decisions — we make disciples. Consider how a planted seed grows, and life becomes visible. Truth proclaimed → Hearts pierced → Repent → Promise received → Lives changed → Join a Church → Spiritual Growth → Make Disciples

WHAT TO DO:

- ✓ **Speak plainly about who Jesus really is.** Don’t water Him down to “a good teacher” or “someone who helps me.” Tell people the truth: Jesus is Lord and Savior.
- ✓ **Pray for conviction, not just conversations.**
- ✓ **Call people to respond, not just listen.** Don’t stop at information. Ask loving, direct questions like, “Have you ever trusted Christ?” or “What keeps you from turning to Him?” Peter didn’t just preach — he called them to repent. We should too.
- ✓ **Live a visibly repentant life yourself.**
- ✓ **Help new believers take their next step immediately without delay.** Offer to read the Bible with them. Talk about baptism. Walk with them. Disciple-making starts right away, not “someday.”