

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study – April 22, 2021

Prepared & Presented by: Pastor James G. Austin, Jr., PhD, D.Min

Topic: “The Right Kind of Pain”

Scripture Reference: Acts 2:37-38a

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent,”

I. Introduction

A. No one likes pain. Yet pain is very important because it is a signal designed to alert us when something is wrong in our bodies.

B. Our response to pain may be to determine the root of the problem or to simply numb the discomfort with painkillers.

C. The painkillers may work for a while, but when the numbing effect wears off, the pain often reemerges because its source was never identified and corrected.

D. Generally speaking, the way to permanently get rid of pain is to go to the root of the problem. Once the source is identified and the correct treatment is applied, the pain can usually be eliminated.

E. This principle is also true spiritually, especially for people who are unsaved or are out of fellowship with God. For example, a sermon about the coming of Christ that simply excites my heart and fills me with joy, can create pain in the heart of an unsaved person or a Christian who isn't walking with God.

F. When they hear that Jesus will soon return, it scares them

and causes them inner pain and discomfort because they know they are not right with God.

G. That unsettled feeling in the pit of their stomach – that pain - is a signal to let them know that things are not well in their souls. Otherwise, they would be rejoicing.

H. We live in an age when people want to be comforted and told everything is going to be all right. The truth is some things are **NOT** going to be alright unless a change is made.

i. We must love people enough to be graciously honest with them, regardless of how painful it is for them to hear the truth. This is especially true concerning people's salvation. We must speak the truth in love and not be fearful of their response.

J. If we are not forthright with unbelievers regarding their spiritual condition, they could spend an eternity separated from God.

K. Preachers, saints of God, it's good to preach and witness about uplifting things and in fact, this is something we need to do in a world where there is so much hurt, depression, difficulty, and disappointment.

L. We need to be a source of encouragement to fellow believers and others who feel put down by life. However, when unbelievers are in our midst, we are obligated to share with them, when the opportunity exists, that sin separates them from a loving God.

M. It may be painful for them to hear the reality of their situation, but we must not merely toss "painkillers" at them to numb them and keep them ignorant of the truth.

N. We must witness to them, asking the Lord to open their eyes

to the root of the problem in their lives – their spiritual condition.

O. All the motivational and “how to” sermons in the world cannot cure a sinner’s heart! The sin nature cannot be changed by a pat on the back or a hug around the neck. If they are lost, there is only one remedy; repentance and faith in Jesus Christ.

P. It may be difficult at first to hear the truth, but it will be good for them to experience that kind of pain. It will prayerfully make them aware that things are not right between them and God.

II. Exposition [Part I]

A. In Acts 2:37, we see how God used the Apostle Peter to address unbelievers on the Day of Pentecost.

B. With a no nonsense, unapologetic, and direct approach, Peter preached the Gospel with power. He did not attack his listeners, and neither should we attack those we are trying to reach.

C. There is never a reason to attack or to speak disparagingly to our audience. Even if people are dead in sin, they were made in the image of God, and they deserve to be spoken to with dignity and respect. To do otherwise, will turn people away.

D. Peter was respectful, yet he was forthright and honest as he went straight to the root of his listeners problem, preaching a message that made them so extremely uncomfortable and inwardly pained that they cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (They wanted to know how to be saved!)

E. Let us now look at the effect Peter’s message had on his listeners and see what we can learn from this New Testament example.

III. Exposition [Part II]

A. Acts 2:37 tell us, “Now when they [the unsaved crowd] heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?”

B. Please pay particular attention to the part of this verse that

says, "They were pricked in their heart." Let's look at the word "pricked," which is the Greek word ***katanusso***, a compound of the words ***kata*** and ***nusso***.

c. The word ***kata*** means down. However, used in the word for

"pricked," it gives the idea of something that is ***deep*** or something that is ***deep down***.

d. The second part of the word ***katanusso*** is ***nusso***, a Greek word that means ***to prick, to puncture, to stab, to stun, or to pierce***.

e. The only other time the word ***katanusso*** is found in the New

Testament is in John 19:34 where John writes about Jesus: "**But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.**"

f. The word "pierced" in this verse is from the same root word

nusso. It tells how the soldiers with a spear pierced, punctured, stabbed, and sliced open Jesus' side. It was a deep, puncturing of His side that pierced even His lungs.

g. This same root word ***nusso*** that describes such a deep

puncture is used in Acts 2:37, where it is translated "pricked."

h. This alone tells us that the unsaved people in the crowd that

day were deeply affected by Peter's words. In fact, it means that his words had the spiritual effects of puncturing their hearts and that they felt sliced wide open by his message.

i. When the words ***kata*** and ***nusso*** are compounded to become

katanusso, the new word is even more profound, because it describes not just a piercing but an extremely deep piercing that would produce enormous pain and discomfort.

A9. The word ***katanusso*** in Acts 2:37 emphatically means that

Peter's listeners were deeply disturbed when they heard his message.

AA. That message gave them such an intense stab to their hearts

that it penetrated their conscience, sliced open their souls, punctured their hearts, and cut them so deeply on the inside that they cried for help.

AB. The message stung their hearts and minds as they became

aware of their sins. Suddenly their souls felt an ache, and their hearts were filled with anguish.

IV. Exposition [Part III]

- A. When Peter stood before that lost crowd on the Day of Pentecost, he was standing before sinners in dire need of repentance.
- B. The needed truth that would change them, not a painkiller that would make them feel good while failing to remedy their problem. The root of the problem had to be identified so that it could be dealt with and eliminated.
- C. For those unbelievers to have a supernatural change of nature, it will require repentance, so Peter presented the truth boldly, plainly, and with no apologies.
- D. That day, the Holy Spirit reached deep into the hearts of the people and convicted them of their sinful condition.
- E. The crowd wasn't offended by Peter's message and Acts 2:41 tells us that they "gladly received the word." The words "gladly received" are from the Greek word *apodechomai*, which means **to take quickly, to take readily, or to take with a welcoming attitude**.
- F. That day, more than 3000 souls came into the Kingdom of God as a result of the *katanusso* produced in people's hearts by Peter's honest preaching of the Word.
- G. As we present truth to people – especially to unbelievers – we don't need to be ugly or harsh, but neither do we need to water down the truth or act apologetic for what the Bible teaches.
- H. When truth is presented clearly and powerfully, it puts a sharp, double-edged sword into the hands of the Holy Spirit, which He uses to penetrate the hearts of the unsaved.
- I. When the message is watered down, it dulls the edge of the blade and makes it more difficult for the Holy Spirit to slice through demonic strongholds created in people's minds by sinful habits, bondage, and general spiritual darkness.
- A9. We should always allow the Holy Spirit to lead us as we present the truth to someone who does not know the Lord. Then, as we speak, in a spirit of compassion – we also allow the Holy Spirit to convict someone's heart.
- AA. We must never forget that the Gospel is the power of God

that leads to salvation (Romans 1:16). There is never a reason for us to be ashamed of the Gospel or to apologize for the requirements God has set forth for all who would come to Him.

AB. When the unsaved crowd heard Peter speak that day, their

hearts were sliced so wide open by the truth Peter preached that they cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter answered boldly: "Repent."

AC. Think about the way you address unbelievers and ask yourself the following:

- ☒ When I share truth, do I present it compellingly, compassionately, and clearly enough for an unsaved person to understand the real root of their problem?
- ☒ Do I comfort the lost and leave them feeling like they are alright in their sin, or do I help them understand their need for salvation?
- ☒ Have I been tossing "painkillers" at unbelievers instead of lovingly identifying the root of the problem in their lives and thereby leading them to Christ?

It is once again interactive time. Please complete the biblical passages that follow by filling in the blank spaces. As always, each passage has been taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

"For I am not _____ of the _____ of Christ: for it is the _____ of God unto _____ to every one that _____; to the Jew first, and also to the _____."

[Romans 1:16]

"For the _____ of sin is _____; but the _____ of God is _____ through _____ our Lord."

[Romans 6:23]

"For by _____ are ye _____ through _____; and that not of _____: it is the _____ of God: Not of _____, lest any man should _____."

[Ephesians 2:8,9]

"Forasmuch then as we are the _____ of God, we ought not to think that the _____ is like unto _____, or _____, or _____, graven by art and _____ device. And the times of this _____ God _____ at, but now _____ all men every where to _____:"

[Acts 17:29,30]

"For the _____ of God that bringeth _____ hath _____ to all men,"

[Titus 2:11]

“That if thou shalt _____ with thy _____ the Lord Jesus, and shalt _____ in thine heart that _____ hath raised him from the _____, thou shalt be _____. For with the _____ man believeth unto _____; and with the mouth, _____ is made unto _____.”

[Romans 10:9,10]

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

1. Can you think of people that you know who need Jesus Christ?
 - a. Do you love them enough to sit down with them and lovingly tell them the truth, explaining how serious their spiritual condition is according to the Word of God?
2. Can you remember the specific moment in your life when you came to a place of true repentance and asked Jesus to be the Lord of your life? Did someone reach out to you to help you come to that moment when you received Jesus Christ?
3. How long has it been since you reached out to someone who was lost to tell him or her about the Lord Jesus Christ? If it's been a while since that has happened, what is the reason you haven't done it?

Thank you so much for joining in another Bible Study session and my prayer is that you have been blessed and encouraged to share the love of the Lord Jesus Christ with someone who is without Christ in their life.

Jude 3

Pastor Austin