

Monday: Acts 2:22-47. At the heart of Peter's Spirit-guided sermon was verse 32: "This Jesus, God raised up. We are all witnesses to that fact." Convicted, the crowd asked the question we must all ask when we encounter the claims of Jesus: "What should we do?" Peter replied, "Change your hearts and live." Have you allowed Jesus' power to give you a fresh start from your past, and a future decisively changed for the better?

Tuesday: Matthew 8:14 - 9:13, 35 - 38. One key to the early Christians' power was their attitude toward those around them, an attitude they learned from Jesus. How did Matthew express the reason for Jesus' compassion when he saw the crowds? To what extent do you think some of your neighbors, co-workers, maybe even people you see at church are "troubled and helpless... sheep without a shepherd" spiritually? What does Jesus indicate should be our posture, and what actions does it lead to?

Wednesday: Romans 7:14 - 8:17. The Message version of Romans 8:1 is "Those who enter into Christ's being-here-for-us no longer have to live under a continuous, low-lying black cloud." Paul's picture of our inner struggles was not unique. The Roman philosopher Seneca wrote of "our helplessness in necessary things." But Paul's words do not end in despair. When have you experienced Christ's power, not wiping out the struggle, but empowering you to more and more come out on the right side of it?

Thursday: 1 John 1:1 - 2:6, 4: 7 - 12. John's claim is amazing. He said he had heard, seen, and touched "the Word of life" which was "from the beginning": i.e. God, creator and savior! This was no abstract theory. John wrote about someone he'd known. How can John's direct eyewitness testimony give you a firmer basis for your faith? Does that quality of testimony help you trust that Jesus is "the eternal life that was with the Father"? When first-center writers said "We knew Jesus," how seriously should you take the implications of their claim?

Friday: John 3: 1 - 8, 16 - 21. Family/group activity. The Bible teaches us about who Jesus was and all he did to help others. Create a stack of "Jesus scriptures" for your home. Ask each person to write 3 - 4 Bible verses or stories on colorful index cards. Keep the cards on the dining room table. Before each meal, select a card, read the passage and pray to become more like Jesus. Repeat each day, adding to the stack throughout the weeks ahead.

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