

Introduction

- A minister, arriving as a visiting speaker to a neighbouring church, decided to take a very informal approach with the children. Word had reached him of the strict and pious atmosphere of the Sunday School, and he decided he would introduce a refreshing change of approach. Sitting on the edge of a desk, wearing an open-neck shirt, he leaned forward confidently towards the children:
 - "Can anyone tell me," he asked them, "what is small, grey, eats nuts and has a large bushy tail?"
 - There was a long silence, then one small boy put up his hand and said, "I know the answer should be Jesus, but sounds like a squirrel to me!"
- *(We'll come back to that in a little while!)*
- If you were an on-looker in Jerusalem, I guess you'd be asking exactly the same question the crowd did:
 - "What does this mean?" (v.12)
- What's got into these people? Why are they behaving like this?
 - the passage before us is essentially Peter's response to that question, his guiding of the crowd to grapple with that question!
 - let's follow his "answer" through - it comes in four parts

God is at Work

- First, Peter points to that fact that God is at work
 - the crowd had been drawn because "we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues"
 - not just a common commotion; saw something of God at work
 - yet some saw only drunkenness, saw only disorder!
- Peter points them to Joel's prophecy of the Spirit's coming
 - says, in effect, "you say we are drunk; isn't a more plausible explanation of what you see that God is at work, as he has promised in his Word?"
 - normal people, Galilean fishermen, will have God's Spirit living in them - not just for the very special prophets, but on all my servants!

The answer is Jesus!

- Second, he directs the people's attention to Jesus:
 - for he **is** the answer, even if that wasn't quite the question they were asking to start with!
- No indication these people were particularly wondering about who Jesus was:
 - sure, they probably did round the time he rode into Jerusalem, cleared the Temple;
 - almost certainly caught up in the gossip as he was crucified...
 - but he was dead now, had been for weeks... fading from thought?
- But Peter says:
 - what you see of God at work now is linked with Jesus;
 - he summarises Jesus' **life** (v.22, man, miracles), his **death** (v.23, handed over, God's purpose, crucified), his **resurrection** (v.24ff, including OT Scriptural backing) and his **exaltation** (v.33)
- It is in him and through him that God is at work, no other way!
 - if you see God at work, then you need to trust that it is through Jesus!

You crucified him!

- Next step is the horrendous jump to realising that they were responsible for Jesus' death:
 - God is at work... through this Jesus... who **you crucified!**

- As did we through our sin!

So repent!

- Turn from sin, accept Jesus as Saviour
- What is repentance?

- Pleaded with them to turn, to change, to save themselves!

Conclusion

- Do people look at us and see God at work?
- Do we explain ourselves - those whose Lord is Jesus?
- Do we confront their sin (or accomodate it)?
- Do we challenge to repentance?

- All in the Spirit's power!