

Wot no buildings? Acts 2: 46 & 47



The early followers of Jesus met in the courts of the Temple or in each others' homes. It was some time before the first purpose built Christian places of worship appeared, nobody is quite sure when. The lack of buildings, however, was no hindrance to the spread of the Gospel.

When we were obliged to close our buildings because of Covid-19 precautions it seemed to me like a terrible blow for the work of the Church in this country. Now I'm not so sure. Our work has gone on, often in new and different ways. Churches are still bringing people together for worship, albeit by digital means. Christians are still caring for one another pastorally. And in many places, our own Circuit included, churches are continuing to serve the most vulnerable and needy people in their local communities.

I read an encouraging story from the Bible Society about two teenage girls who have found new ways of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ during the lockdown. This is an extract from their story:

"We had never done a Bible study before. But we had a Bible study app., and as soon as the schools closed we decided to start doing a Bible study together. We read a chapter of the Bible every day and then once a week, we talk about it on Facebook Messenger.

"We've just started the book of Acts, which we haven't read before. With the coronavirus happening, it encourages us to share our faith a lot more. Everyone will know someone who passes away. So, we have an increased urgency to tell people about Jesus.

“With Acts, we saw the disciples being so bold. We have just been so encouraged by their boldness, putting themselves out of their comfort zones. So, we have been on social media more talking about our faith. For people to be aware of our faith, that’s really good. We’re more confident doing that because we’re at home. Also, we’re on Zoom more, and the chance to have chats and share our faith has been good. With what’s going on, you get deep more quickly. It’s a great opportunity to pop up on social media and say, ‘Read the Bible’. People will listen as well. They’ve got time.”

I don’t “do” social media myself, but I thank God for inspirational young people like these two girls who are using social media to share their faith in Jesus Christ with others. In many ways, so different from the first Christians in Jerusalem, but in other ways, so like them.

A prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the witness of young Christians who boldly proclaim their faith to their peers. Guide them by your Spirit, and help them to stand firm in the face of opposition and ridicule. May they be encouraged as they see their work bearing fruit in the lives of others. Bless them in all they do for the sake of your kingdom, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

- Rev. John Barnett