

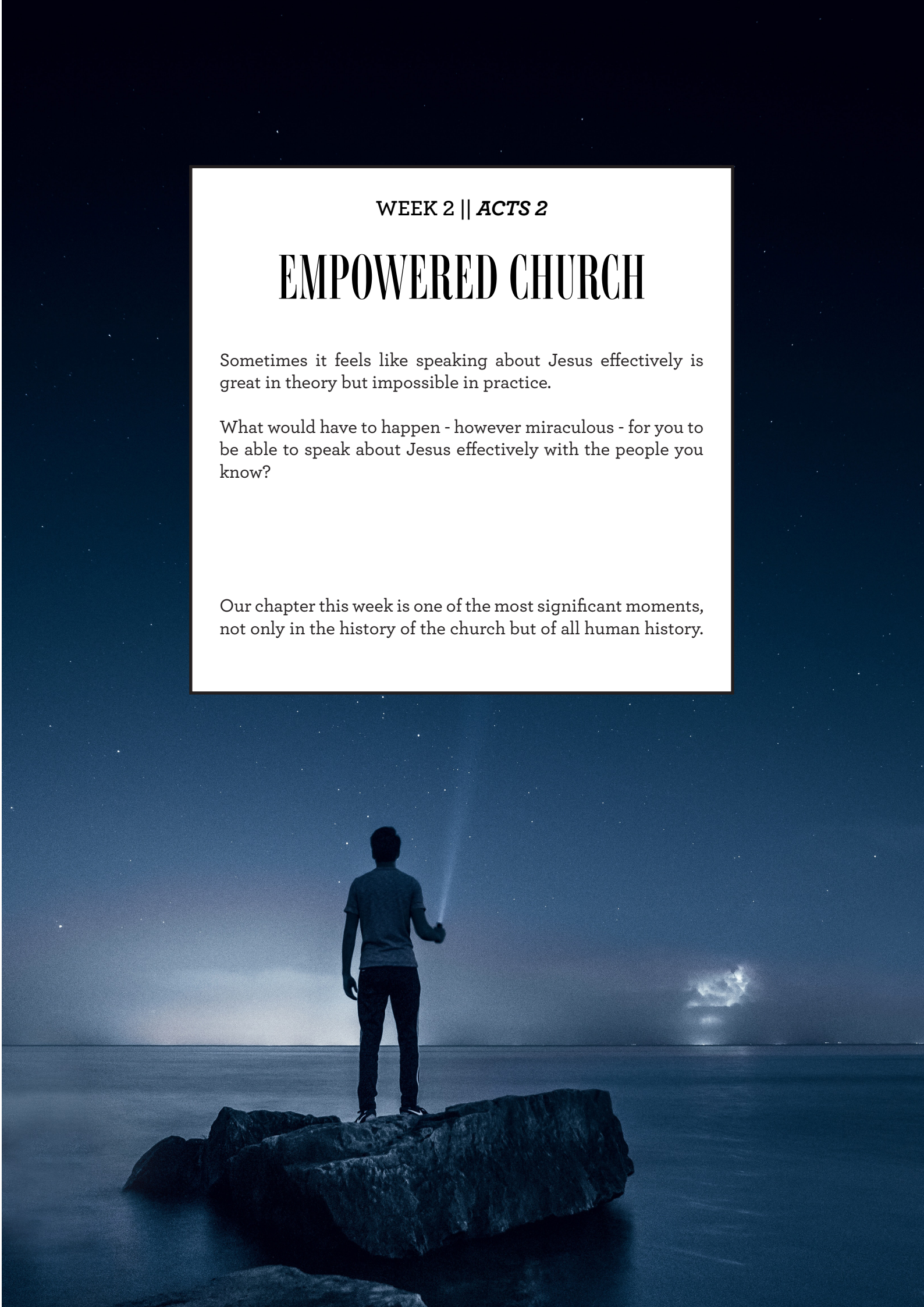
WEEK 2 || *ACTS 2*

EMPOWERED CHURCH

Sometimes it feels like speaking about Jesus effectively is great in theory but impossible in practice.

What would have to happen - however miraculous - for you to be able to speak about Jesus effectively with the people you know?

Our chapter this week is one of the most significant moments, not only in the history of the church but of all human history.



THE PROMISED SPIRIT

Read Acts 2:1-13

1. The Old Testament tells the story of the way Israel was smashed and the people scattered around the Mediterranean world. A group of pilgrims from those places have gathered for a Jewish festival in Jerusalem. What do they see and hear instead? (v1-5)

The Promised Spirit

When God was about to place his Old Testament people in the land of Israel, he recognised that their hard hearts were going to stop them from being the loving community he'd always wanted. (You can read about it in Deuteronomy 30:1-6). One day, he was going to change that.

Generations of failure later, God told the prophet Ezekiel his plan: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you" (Ezekiel 36:26-27)

Generations later again, pentecost is the day. The day that King Jesus finally pours out God's Spirit and changes hearts. The goal of the whole bible has finally arrived!

2. What does the amazing work of the Spirit (v4) make possible here? (v8&11)

Read Acts 2:14-36

Unusual events indeed! Amid the confusion, Peter steps up to help everyone understand what's going on. With the aid of the Old Testament, he explains.

3. For each Old Testament quote, identify what *events* Peter is explaining, and what he says *they mean*.

Event

What it means

Verses 14-21

Verses 22-32

Verses 33-36

4. What has the Spirit's empowering produced so far in the story?

Read Acts 2:37-47. Peter starts by trying to convince some laughing onlookers that he and his friends are sober... and finishes by sharing the good news that the one who died for sin is King

5. How would you describe the response of those who were initially sceptical to Peter's Spirit-empowered words?

6. What kind of community did this gospel, now freshly powered by the Holy Spirit, produce? (What sort of things did they do?)

Which of these elements do you most long for in our church?

Which are already evident?

7. What were the results of this transformed community? How did it help their mission?



These disciples are an attractive and effective group. As a result, by Acts 2:41 we find that **three thousand people were added to their number on a single day!** The character of the church and mission of the church work together (see diagram below).



GOSPEL VISION

8. A pillar of our MPC vision is *“together, we’ll show the love of Jesus to our neighbourhoods, our city and our world”* (see page 1).

How could you contribute to the generosity, unity and joy of your church, and your growth group?

What would have to change in your heart, mind and lifestyle to respond to the gospel and Spirit combination in the same way the original hearers did?

Pray that the Holy Spirit will (a) give us boldness to talk about King Jesus and (b) bring about in us the same generosity, unity and joy that we see here in those first days of the church.