

Acts chapter 2 verses 42-47.

Background:

- Author- Luke an acquaintance of the apostle Paul.
  
- Written to - an official named Theophilus.
  
- Past Work - He wrote to Theophilus about Jesus' life, death, resurrection and ascension.
  
- Now In Acts we read of Luke's written account of the early Church:
  - The outpouring of the Holy Spirit has recently occurred on the day of Pentecost.
  
  - Then Peter, full of the Holy Spirit, preached to a large crowd
  
  - And through this God added to the church 3,000 new people to its number.

And so begins the fulfilling of the Great Commission!

Let's read the passage of Acts 2:42-47.

There are Three D's to write down and remember:

- Be Devoted (verse 42 and 43).
- Distribute Sacrificially (verse 44 and 45)
- Delightful Fellowship (verse 46 and 47)

### **Be Devoted**

The new church has over 3,000 people who have devoted themselves to four elements.

Let's call these elements priorities.

The reason I say this is because when people devote themselves to something, they make that thing a priority in their life.

If something is a priority in someone's life they will do it even if it's an inconvenience.

- First priority that the church devoted themselves to- The Apostles Teaching
- Second priority - The Fellowship. While in fellowship, the church had a third and fourth priority.
- The Third priority - The Breaking of Bread
- The Fourth Priority - The prayers

### First priority - The Apostles Teaching

Why does the apostles teaching take such a high priority in the Church?

- First: because the Apostles were men that were chosen and given their role by Jesus the Messiah.

- Second: the Apostles were with Jesus from the beginning of his three year ministry, learning from him everything that the church needs to know.

- Third: as Dave Jones pointed out to me, we can see from verse 43, that many wonders and signs are being done through the apostles. Many Bible scholars believe that the signs and wonders authenticated the apostles' authority to teach and lead the church.

- Now that the apostles' teachings have been recorded, through the providential Hand of God, we now have the New Testament and the Bible is now complete!

- We too should devote ourselves to their teaching. ( verses about the importance of the Bible and the Gospel. Also something about translators saw the importance in God's word so much so that some gave up their lives in order to make it available for people to read in their own language.)

### Second Priority - The Fellowship

David Peterson explains that the words the fellowship were translated from the Greek words - te Koinonia or koinon - which means 'to share with someone in something'.

The people are now born again with God as their Father and therefore they were brothers and sisters in Christ who assembled together sharing in all things as close loving families should.

One of the things that the Church shared with one another was The Breaking of Bread, which leads us to the 3rd Priority!

### Third Priority - The Breaking of Bread

Most scholars believe that the breaking of bread here in verse 42 actually refers to partaking of the Lord's Supper i.e. communion.

As brothers and sisters in the Lord, what a privilege it is to come together to honor and remember the One who calls us His brothers and sisters in Mark 3:34 in the partaking of communion!

The partaking of the Bread which represents His Body that was broken for us, and the Wine which represents His Blood which was shed for us, to pay our ransom (Matthew 20:28) and free us from sin, death and eternal punishment.

To even say this was a high cost is an understatement.

Don't ever take this lightly! (1 Cor.11)

### Fourth Priority - The Prayers

Yes, we are to pray individually, but in this context Bible scholars believe this to mean that the Church shared in corporate praying.

Spiritual brothers and sisters in Christ joining together as one family to pray to our Father in Heaven.

Why Is Corporate Prayer So Important?

1. because when we pray together it promotes unity.
2. When we pray together we can see beyond our own needs and thus come away from being self focused and be encouraged to pray for others and for the Church.
3. Most importantly the Church comes to God In prayer because we love Him.
4. Finally we also come to God in prayer as we can do nothing without God verse ref.
5. Without God Church is pointless!

6. But through Christ we can do all things!

### **2nd D - Distribute Sacrificially**

- Read verses 44 and 45.
- All who believed were together, ie, they were unified through their belief in Jesus.
- They were one body and had all things in common.
- They took care of one another to the point that they sold their possessions and belongings and distributed the proceeds to any that had need!

### **Body Analogy**

Think of the church being one body, it's as if the hands saw the feet wearing worn out shoes with holes in them. And the hand said to one another look, we have five pairs of leather gloves. Let's sell four pairs and give the money for our feet to buy a new pair of shoes. And the feet then said we have four pairs of socks. Do we need all of these? Look? It's coming into winter and the neck has nothing to wear. Let's sell three pairs of socks so that the neck can buy a new scarf.

### Not Mandatory Communalism

- One scholar explains that the early church did not practice a mandatory communalism of property.
- Those who had property were free to retain it or to liquidate them to meet others needs.
- The divine grace that they had received so unified their hearts that they gladly and freely shared with each other as needs arose.
- As you can see, in verse 46, some still kept their homes, but at the same time used them to benefit the church as a means of hospitality.
- Others such as Barnabas, as mentioned in Acts 4: 34 - 36 sold land and houses and brought the money and laid it at the apostles feet.
- Not a very easy thing to do.
- It took time, effort and the giving up of personal wealth.
- Jesus loved the church sacrificially and the Church therefore loved one another sacrificially.
- We too must imitate Christ!
- The church, along with the poor and needy must be in the top priority list of every believer.

## **Delightful Fellowship**

### **The Church Attended The Temple Day By Day.**

1. Why the temple?
  
2. As shown in chapter 3, the Church most likely went to the temple to observe the daily hours of prayer.
  
- 2b. These were held at 9am, 12 noon, and 3pm.
  
3. Perhaps another reason why the church went to the temple was to bear witness to the gospel. As we see the apostles Peter and John do also in chapter three.

### **The Church Was Breaking Bread in Their Homes**

If you have an ESV Bible, an interesting observation to note is the different wording used in verse 42, in comparison to the wording used in verse 46.

Verse 42 says, 'to the breaking of bread, and the prayers', whereas verse 46 simply says, 'and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts.'

Why does verse 42 say 'the breaking of bread', and verse 46 just say 'and breaking bread in their homes'?

- As we explained in verse 42, yes, the church devoted themselves to the partaking of the Lord's Supper.
  
- But here in verse 46, it is suggested that Luke is more highlighting the fact that the believers ate their daily meals together in their homes.
  
- David Peterson explains that an ordinary Jewish meal included the initiation of breaking a loaf with the hands and giving thanks to God.

- This is not to say that they didn't have Communion in their homes, with their meals.
- As John Stott explains that the Lord's Supper in the early Church took place as part of a large meal.
- This actually coincides with the practice of the Corinthian Church, in the partaking of the Lord's Supper, as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.
- But here in Acts 2:46 Luke is highlighting the Church was hospitable,
- They had an open door,
- They welcomed one another,
- They shared their food and received their food with glad and generous hearts, Praising God!

*The Church Had Favor With All The People*

- Highway To Heaven tv show (Love)



Finally, in verse 47, we read that

*The Lord added to their number daily, those who were being saved.*

And so we see the Church fulfilling the command of the Great Commission again!

The Church was displaying love and integrity.

They were a good witness.

They also preached the Gospel and God added to their number daily, as explained in Romans 10:13-15, which says:

'How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"'

Brothers & sisters the baton has been passed onto us, so let's ensure that we too display:

love!

Integrity!

and preach the Gospel!

Thus fulfilling the Great Commission!