

SERMON TITLE: Characteristics of a Great Church

TEXT: ACTS 4:32-5:11

INTRODUCTION.

Acts opens with the resurrected Jesus ascending to heaven, and the Holy Spirit arriving to empower the disciples to be his witnesses from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. The church grew in number daily as they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. There was such excitement that the religious leaders got mad. Some of the leaders were arrested. They were threatened not to teach about Jesus. But the church couldn't be stopped and continued to grow into the thousands. The first church immediately became a Mega church. This passage is tied together by the Greek word **megala** which occurs 4 times and means "great." From this, we can get a description of a "great" church.

DISCUSSION.

What do you think the average person would say when asked to describe a great church?

EXAMINATION.

4:32-33 What has happened in the previous verse (4:31) that would account for this extraordinary unity?

4:34-37 The adjective "great" is used twice in v.33 to describe power and grace. In what ways were that great power and great grace demonstrated?

Why do you think Barnabas was specifically mentioned?

5:1-11 What was wrong with Ananias' and Sapphira's gift?

What was God's purpose in this?

APPLICATION.

- What needs to happen for us to have great unity in the local church?
- Where does great power come from for the church?
- What does great grace look like in the local church?
- Have you ever witnessed great generosity among believers?

- How can great fear ever be appropriate in the local church?
- Fact: What is a key truth that you understood from this passage?
- React: What did you feel?
- Act: What are you going to do?