

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Pentecost – The Church Model and The Church Builder
Acts 2:41-47

Last times...on the Feast of Pentecost, Peter stood up and bore witness of the doubters' questions

- How can these Galileans speak in our native languages?
- What does this mean?

Both questions being answered in prophetic Scripture of Who...Jesus Christ the Messiah

Then a topical study on the promises of the Resurrection, the central truth of the Gospel

This time...the Church is born

Given to us are the Church Model and the Church Builder

We are still in Acts 2

v41 gladly received...baptized...added:

What happened after Peter

- stood up and stood on the written Word of God,
- gave the sense of prophetic Scripture regarding the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ the Messiah,
- caused the hearers of his testimony to understand “How”, “What” and “Who”,
- issued a call of action to those who had their hearts pierced by the Sword of the Spirit (sharp two-edged sword of the Word of God)

1. Repent

2. Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ...sins forgiven

Rom 6:3, 5 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection

3. Receive (by faith) the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Breath of Life of God...everlasting life

4. Save/separate themselves from this untoward/corrupt generation/unbelievers...a new people separated from the uncleanness/defilement of sin/unbelief

About 3000 people “came forward”

1. gladly received Peter’s testimony

- considered the evidence
 - heard the Gospel in their native languages
 - eyewitness accounts
 - Scripture
- of their free will chose to believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God
 - it was not a forced march imposed by an oppressive or repressive tyrant
 - voluntary acceptance of the invitation extended by a Loving Creator
 - an affirmation/agreement of what God had said and done
- John 1:12
 - saved from eternal death
 - born again of the Spirit of God
 - made new creatures in Christ

2. obeyed

- stirred by the indwelling Spirit
- baptized
- in the mikvahs of the Southern Steps (?)

3. were added

- the same day – Pentecost
 - the firstfruits of the Lord (Lev 23:16-17)
 - the day of freewill offering unto the Lord (Deut 16:10) for the bondage broken (Deut 16:12)
 - the 1st day of Church history
- added
 - increase to the 120
 - by the Lord...not by Peter or by the 120
- souls
 - what the Lord came to save from death
 - came not to save our sin-defiled carnal bodies

v42 they continued steadfastly:

From that day, the ~ 3,120 people were constantly diligent in 4 things

1. the Apostle's doctrine
2. fellowship
3. breaking of bread
4. prayers

The Gospel was preached, the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes, to the Jew first and then the Gentile (Rom 1:16)

The Church was born, a new **people**/Body, a holy **nation**, a purchased **people**, the **people** of God, a spiritual house, the Temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 10:32, 1 Cor 12:13, 1 Peter 2:5-11)

Here, the Church Model...“doing church”, being the church:

1. the Apostle's doctrine

the study of the Word of God

2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth

the teaching of the Word of God

2 Tim 3:16-17 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Cor 4:1-2 Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

giving the clear sense of the written Word...John 5:39
learning all about our Lord and Savior

Imagine their excitement/heartburn as the Holy Spirit opened up the Hebrew Scriptures, brought into their remembrance all things Jesus said, and guided them into all truth, giving understanding of what God has said and done

2. fellowship
the closeness of being a part of each other, the family of God
ministering to/serving each other
mutual participation in what God is doing
3. breaking of bread
eating meals together
communion – remembering what Jesus did to make possible this
new, living people
4. prayers
worship
multiples...prayers and people praying vs one person praying
one prayer

The Church continued steadfastly in these things

They embraced the Word of God...hearts like Soil 4, not like Soil 1

They were not an emotional flash in the pan...ala Soil 2

They were not distracted by the world...ala Soil 3

These things were not one-and-done

These things were diligently attended to daily...

what the Church (a new people) did

And...

v43a fear came upon:

By the constant diligence to

- the study and teaching of the Word of God
- the fellowship of the Body by the Spirit of God
- communion with each other and with the Lord
- worship in prayer

fear came upon them, the ~ 3,120, a deeper and broader understanding of

- how great and powerful and awesome and holy and worthy is God
- how sinful and unworthy are we
- how merciful is God and how great is our need of God's mercy
- a reverence of and fear of the Almighty Creator that crushed Self-will

Unbelievers have no fear of God

Ps 36:1 There is no fear of God before their eyes
(quoted in Rom 3:18)

They have either a contemptuous or a casual and lazy attitude toward God

God is irreverently referred to as

- “the Man upstairs”
- “The Big Guy”

But, as revealed in Scripture, the Living God, Maker of heaven and earth, is not

- “the Man upstairs”
- “The Big Guy”
- to be disrespectfully minimized by addressing Him in terms on par with sinful man

He is the LORD Almighty that will be known!

He is the God that

- holds our breath in His hands
- holds the universe in the span of His hand
- when He returns to earth all the nations will wail
- speaks and His enemies are slain
- speaks and a new heaven and a new earth are created

Lost, in the Church and in the world, by the deception of our adversary the devil, who is like a roaring lion roaming around looking for someone to devour, is the

- awe
- wonder
- the fall-on-your-face majesty (Moses, Joshua, Paul, John, etc)
- “self-tinyness” of

Ps 8:3-4 When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?
(just a speck of dust on a speck of rock in vastness)

Ps 144:3 LORD, what *is* man, that thou takest knowledge of him! *or* the son of man, that thou makest account of him!

because, in part, the Church has not been constantly diligent in

- the Apostle’s doctrine...the studying and teaching of the Word of God
- going and teaching the nations

What the Spirit-filled Church did, the latter days Church does not to an alarming degree

v43b by the apostles:

Many signs and wonders were done “through” the apostles...by the Holy Spirit,
as promised/foretold by Jesus

Mark 16:17-18

Gifts of the Spirit were given by God to bear witness of the veracity of

- the apostle’s testimony of Jesus Christ
- the power of God

This verse (and Acts 5:12) is used as a proof text that signs and wonders
(spiritual gifts) were done only by the apostles and ceased operating with
the death of the 12 apostles (Cessationism)

Then why does the Holy Spirit teach us about spiritual gifts in
1 Cor 12-14 and Rom 12?

Why would the Holy Spirit stop using signs and wonders to testify of

- Jesus Christ
- the power of God

in other places and in other times in the history of the Church?

Methinks the key is in “by”...means “through”

The Real “by” is the Holy Spirit...who has not ceased His ministry!

v44-45 all things in common...parted...had need:

Other things the Church did at this time:

1. were together...in union, in unity, in close proximity
(not isolated from each other)
2. had all things in common...shared all things, as families do
3. sold their possessions and goods...liquidated or bartered their material
possessions,
 - maybe thinking only of heavenly things (2 Cor 4:18)?
 - maybe thinking Jesus was coming back soon (vs imminently)?
4. parted them to every man according to his need...distributed the
proceeds according to need (vs want), the Body of Christ caring
for itself

With this communal living, was the Church putting into practice Matt 19:16-29?

What was Jesus teaching?

v17b-19 Table 2 Love

v21 Table 1 Love

Matt 22:36-40 and Rom 10:13b

Salvation, a matter of the heart, not about private property

Regarding private property, the Bible teaches

- stewardship (Ps 14:1, Parable of the Householder, etc)
- God giving His servants material possessions according to His will (Parable of Talents)
- God giving His people the power to make wealth (Deut 8:18)

- Rendering unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's
- Remember Lot's wife

- Hospitality...His heart
- Generosity/liberality toward those in need...His heart
 - Ex 16:18 he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack
 - Ps 81:10 I *am* the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it.
 - Deut 15:7-11
 - Phil 4:14-20

God's desire is our heart, not "our" material possessions"

v44-45

- works when believers are Spirit-led, walking by faith with singleness of heart (God's heart)
- does not work when believers are carnal, double-minded, walking by sight (own heart when it comes to worldly stuff)

This worked early, but very quickly become a problem

Acts 5...Ananias and Sapphira (v1-11), problem is the lie and the lust, not the having the material possession

Acts 6...Greek widows (v1) murmured, this "system" was breaking down due to the carnal nature opposed to the Spirit (Gal 5:17)

Church in Jerusalem...impoverished such that the Apostle Paul collected offerings from "utter most part of the earth" churches to feed them

2 Cor 8:1-5, 12-15

“what goes around comes around”

v44-45 works in the Spirit

2 Cor 9:6-8

hold loosely onto the things of the world,
hold tightly onto the things of God

In like fashion, pay more attention to what
God is saying and less attention to
what the world is saying with the
news feeds, Social Media, etc

We can only understand what is happening
in the world by understanding the
Word of God

Due to the selfish nature of the flesh, v44-45 did not work very long in the
Church; the flesh corrupts everything given by God

Nor has it worked in the socio-economic and political systems of the world

Socialism – a theory or system of social organization that advocates the
vesting of the ownership and control of the means of production
and distribution, of capital, land, etc., in the community as a whole
e.g. Venezuela

Note: great part of USA wants this...

Communism – a God-less, atheistic system of social organization that
advocates the vesting of the ownership and control of the means of
production and distribution, of capital, land, etc., in the community
or the State
e.g. Soviet Union, East Germany, China

These systems do not work because the foundation is cracked – mankind

v46-47 they continued daily...the Lord added:
A division of labor in God's Plan of Redemption

The Church Model...the Church, daily

continued...with constant diligence ala v42

with one accord...unanimous, with one mind, the mind of Christ

- in the temple...gathering site for public worship
- house to house...breaking bread (communing with each other)
with gladness/joy and singleness/simplicity of heart
(after God's own heart, their new heart)

praising God...focused on Jesus, worshiping God, excited about what God was doing (in them and thru them)

having favor of the people...their light shining that the people would see their good (Godly vs carnal) deeds/living to the glory of God (Matt 5:14-16)

The Church Builder: the Lord, daily

added to the church...Ch 1:1, Matt 16:18, 1 Cor 3:6-8

Salvation is the work/power of God, NOT man's

Man needs salvation, cannot save self or another

God does the work of salvation

Man's role is preach the Gospel (evangelize) and to teach the Word of God (make disciples)...

and that only by the power of the Holy Spirit

Man plants and waters (gets to be a part of what God is doing), the increase belongs to God

such as should be saved...His invitation is to all/whosoever will believe, His will is for all to accept

But God does not impose His will on any individual

He does not orchestrate forced marches,
one to heaven and the other to hell

In His foreknowledge (because, after all, He is God!),

He knows who will believe His testimony and receive everlasting life (1 John 5:9-13, John 6:44)

He knows who will choose to walk on the narrow path that leads to eternal life and those who will choose to walk on the broad way that leads to eternal death and destruction

Application

Church Model

The Church is a mystery, a truth of God revealed in time

A spiritual people, not a carnal and worldly people, from every nation

Children of God, purchased with the Blood of Jesus Christ

Jew and Gentile, whosoever will believe

A holy nation, not a building or a campus or a denomination

What the Church is to do together...what “doing church” is:

1. the Apostle’s doctrine
2. fellowship
3. breaking of bread
4. prayers

5. sharing with and caring for each other (vs Self)
6. praising the Lord

All are targets of attack by the devil, the world, and the flesh

In the cross-hairs of the devil and the world in our current circumstances: fellowship

We are “focused” on our families and that is a great blessing, a foundational strength

Yet the Family of God yearns to gather together...

Hence the need by the Church...and every believer...for constant diligence

The latter days Church has strayed from the simple model established by the Holy Spirit

Let us strive to be what God intended us to be and do

Let us not be distracted by what the American church has become

Church Builder

The children of God must resist all desires of the flesh to be the church builder

- American business model
- Church Growth Movement
- Seeker Friendly
- Purpose Driven

The Church

- a new Body
- a spiritual house
- the Temple of the Holy Spirit

is built by Jesus Christ

It is not given to pastors/people to build the Church (Zech 4:6) in the image of the world

- An organization/business
- Numbers-driven
- Money-seeking
- Building/campuses centric

It is given to us to do our part – plant and water, speak and do
Jesus will build His Church!