

Action Steps
Church Expansion Series
Acts 4:32-33 **July 15, 2018**

Acts 4:32-33 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.³³ And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

When the Church takes Action Steps The Holy Spirit brings Results! Here are six Results of a Church in Action!

I. **Action Steps** lead to Church **Growth (32)** Now the full number of those who believed

The church had grown from 120 to over 5,000 in a very short period of time. Every member sought to be an effective witness for Jesus Christ. Evangelism was the daily delight and ministry of the entire congregation.

1 Corinthians 3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

➤ **Church Growth Formula**

- Man's Formula $(v+p+d+a)m = \text{Growth}$
- **God's Formula** $(p+w)G = \text{Growth}$

What does Man's Formula leave out? God!

II. **Action Steps** lead to Church **Unification (32)**
were of **one heart and soul**,

All the believers shared in this unity. Not just the apostles. Not just the leaders. All the believers were unified. There was a fundamental solidarity of love and purpose. To be one in heart and mind is to be unified in every fiber of their being.

➤ **They were family in Relationship**

They shared the same spiritual father - God Almighty. They shared a spiritual birth - they were born again into the family of God. A song Bill and Gloria Gaither wrote describes this family relationship: "I'm so glad I'm a part of the family of God - I've been washed in the fountain, cleansed by his blood! **Joint heirs with Jesus** as we travel this sod; for I'm part of the family, the family of God."

➤ **They were friends in Fellowship**

They shared their lives and their possessions with one another. It went beyond a kind word and a pat on the back. They **gave priority to meeting the physical and practical needs** that were evident in the community.

➤ They were followers of Christ in **Partnership**

These men and women shared an enterprise together. They did not assemble merely for family gatherings, or for making sure their physical needs were met. They came together in order to attain an

objective. These men and women were partners in **reaching the world for Christ.**

III. **Action Steps** lead to Church **Unselfishness** (32) and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had **everything in common.**

First we need to remember that this verse is about **Devotion not Doctrine.** This does not advocate for communal living nor socialism! This was unique to the infant Jerusalem Church. Coming to Christ came at a great cost. The new believer would have been removed from the support of their family. Women especially would suffer as they were totally dependent on their Father or Husband to provide them with the basic needs of life.

Philippians 2:3 Do nothing from **selfish ambition** or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be **lovers of self**, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. **Avoid** such people.

IV. **Action Steps** lead to Great **Power** (33) And with **great power**

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

V. **Action Steps** lead to Great Preaching (33) the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus,

Romans 10:14 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?

God has chosen to use individuals to proclaim his word to others. In the OT he use Prophets, Judges, and Priest to advance His plan of Salvation. Today He uses Teachers, Evangelist, and Preachers to lead people to Salvation in Jesus.

Notice the Apostles were sharing their own Testimony to the Resurrection as way of proclaiming Christ.

You as a believer has a Testimony that you can share! It's your story about The Story!

VI. **Action Steps** lead to Great Provision (33) and great grace was upon them all.

Grace is a constant theme in the Bible, and it culminates in the New Testament with the coming of Jesus (John 1:17). The word translated "grace" in the New Testament comes from the Greek word *charis*, which means "favor, blessing, or

kindness.” We can all extend grace to others; but when the word *grace* is used in connection with God, it takes on a more powerful meaning. Grace is God choosing to bless us rather than curse us as our sin deserves. It is His benevolence to the undeserving.

Ephesians 2:8 says, “For by grace are you saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves.” The only way any of us can enter into a relationship with God is because of His grace toward us. Grace began in the Garden of Eden when God killed an animal to cover the sin of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21). He could have killed the first humans right then for their disobedience. But rather than destroy them, He chose to make a way for them to be right with Him.

God is still offering Great Grace to all who will tear down that Wall of Pride and come to Jesus by Faith!

Romans 10:9-10 because, if you **confess** with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and **believe** in your heart that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved**.¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Will you do that today? Will you come to Jesus right now?