

July 4, 2010

The Bridge Bible Fellowship

Pastor Paul S. Brown

Acts 2:41-47

“The Local Church Part Two: Memories of the Early Church – Part Two”

The Church – 2:41-47

A. Who?

B. What?

1. Identity = “they”

2. Commitment = “continually devoting themselves”

3. Doctrine – “the Apostles’ teaching”

4. Fellowship – “the fellowship”

5. **Communion – “the breaking of bread”** (Acts 2:46; 20:7; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:23-25; Jude 12; Dt. 29-31; Joshua 24; 1 Chron. 30; 35;

Application:

- Do you make a point of gathering when we all partake of communion together? Is this a PRIORITY for you?
- How often do you remind yourself of the New Covenant purchased by the death, burial & resurrection of Jesus Christ?
- Do you preach the Gospel to yourself every day and remind yourself that it is 100% GRACE?

6. **Prayer – lit., “the prayers”** (Acts 1:14, 24; 4:24–31; cf. John 14:13, 14; Lk. 18:1; Eph. 6:18; Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2)

Application:

- Devoted to CORPORATE prayer? (Sunday morning; Weekly small groups; Special Concerts of Prayer)
- Do we demonstrate our ABSOLUTE DEPENDENCE upon Jesus for everything?

7. **Awe of God – “Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe”**

- **Everyone KEPT FEELING** = on-going sense of feeling AWE / FEAR!
- The word “awe” is actually the Greek word – “**fear**.” (Acts 5:5, 11; 19:17; Lk. 7:16)
 - **The fear of experiencing God’s wrath.** The fear of every heart that has not embraced the salvation of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 5:11; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 20:10-15; 1 Jn. 4:17-19)
 - **The FEAR that knowing God brings** (Prov. 1:7; Ps. 130:4)
- **What marks true “fear of the Lord”?**
 - A **listening** posture – see Proverbs for the common calls to listen, and not to be a “fool”
 - To **hate evil** – Prov. 8:13
 - A belief that **God will not be mocked.** There are always consequences for conduct and character.

Application:

- Do we have a healthy “fear” of God?
- Do we fear Him more than we fear man?
- Does that fear produce genuine humility and praise?

8. Confirming Power

- **Wonders** = miracles evoking awe; **Signs** = miracles pointing to a divine truth
 - ALWAYS refer to miraculous activity of God that is pointing to something or confirming something that is to be known. Three exceptions where they refer to false signs and wonders done at the end of the age by false Christs (Mt. 24; Mk. 13; or by the “man of sin” in 2 Thess. 2)
 - These AUTHENTICATED the message of the Apostles. They were limited to the Apostles and their close colleagues (e.g., Philip in 8:13; cf. 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3, 4).
- **WERE taking place** = kept on taking place (Acts 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 8:6, 13; 14:3; 15:12).

Application:

- Do we have absolute confidence in the Word of God?
- Do we praise God for the miracles He continually does today? (i.e., saving lost sinners; providentially leading and providing; answering prayers)

9. Sacrificial sharing

- This is NOT a form of COMMUNISM! It is an outgrowth of FELLOWSHIP! (cf. Acts 5:4)
 - Acts 4:32-35 = They did not claim (say) that anything belonged to them. They did not give up POSSESSION; they gave up OWNERSHIP!
 - Followers of Jesus will obey Him and be GENEROUS! (cf. Lk. 3:10-11; 8:1-3; 12:15, 33; 14:33; 18:18-30)
 - Material possessions were never to be an END, a GOAL, or a “god.”
 - Rom. 12:13; 1 Cor. 7:29-31; Gal. 6:10; Heb. 10:34; 13:16; James 2:14-17; 1 John 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 4:16-5:10

Application:

- Is there anything in our lives that we are unwilling to share for the benefit of the body? Why?
- Do we own our possessions or do they own us?
- Does the way we handle material wealth demonstrate that we believe Jesus is coming back?

10. One mindedness

- **One mind** = 11 times in the NT (10 of them in Acts – 1:14; 2:46; 4:24; 5:12; 7:57; 8:6; 12:20; 15:25; 18:12; 19:29) = “one mind; one accord; by common consent; unanimously”
 - One mind directed by the Apostles Teaching (**Word of God**)

Application:

- Do we fight for our own agendas or do we seek only to do the will of God?
- Do we seek God’s Word as our absolute & final authority in all things?
- Do we have biblical support for the things that we believe and hold dear?