

Eternity Daily Bible Study - No. 355
Series: The Primal Church - Acts Chapters 1-8
Verses: Acts 2:42-47
Topic: The Spirit-Filled Community
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Acts 2:42-47 MKJV And they were continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in fellowship and in the breaking of the loaves, and in prayers. (43) And fear came on every soul. And many wonders and miracles took place through the apostles. (44) And all who believed were together and had all things common. (45) And they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, according as anyone had need. (46) And continuing with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they shared food with gladness and simplicity of heart, (47) praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

These verses are worth meditating on – they indicate what true revival looks like and give us a high calling to aim for in our fellowships.

These things are purely the products of a powerful move of God. No program can bring Christians to the point of gracious united communal living or of many miracles or of abundant joy or of favor among all the people.

Man simply cannot create these things – they are a product of the Holy Spirit, obedience and prayer.

The true transforming power in the Church is not the latest book or song or video (though these things have their place and are often blessed by God) but rather is God Himself.

We need to have God turn up. We need God to lead us into repentance and joy and faith and love and Christian community.

Many churches run very well without God turning up. They are nice and pleasant and function like the Jewish synagogues of old, with good teaching etc. But Jesus did not die in order to establish more synagogues.

Jesus died in order to create something that was not merely human. Jesus lived a supernatural life and He died so that we could have access to His supernatural life. The Church is “supposed to be” a Spirit-filled community of believers with supernatural powers living a life of amazing love in complete holiness.

For a moment that existed in Jerusalem; it has also existed among the Moravians in Herrnhut and at various other times and places of revival in Church history. Occasionally the Church does get it right. And all the times when the Church has got it right it has been in much prayer.

Revival should result in a self-less, harmless, generous community. While people remain individuals they become God-centered and not self-centered. The words I, me and mine will get used less often. Possessions are held lightly. Grace matters more than gold.

Sharing is a sign of maturing love. It is one of the main things we expect from our children as they mature. A child who will not share with his brothers or sisters is considered morally deficient. And so it should be among brothers and sisters in Christ:

Acts 2:44-46 And all who believed were together and had all things common. (45) And they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, according as anyone had need. (46) And continuing with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they shared food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

Acts 4:32 And the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul. And not one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own. But they had all things common.

Mature Christians are filled with love and generosity. They are not greedy, covetous or selfish. They have a highly developed sense of compassion, are sensitive to the needs of others, hearken to the voice of the Spirit and obey the clear and commanded will of God.

The Holy Spirit will never produce people who are greedy for more and more of the world's goods for themselves.

Covetousness is idolatry (Ephesians 5:5, Colossians 3:5) and the only way out of idolatry is worship of the one true God. Which is why they "met in the Temple" and "were continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in fellowship and in the breaking of the loaves, and in prayers." Spirit-filled worship will help people to be God-centered and not self-centered and thus assists them in fulfilling the commands of Christ.

"Praising God and having favor with all the people." Praise lifted the community up to a higher plane of living. It made them observably better so that others gave them favor. They were positive folk, happy folk, grateful, joyful and worshipful. People liked them and liked being around them and were glad to join them. "And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved."

Jesus gave us a new commandment "love one another". This differs from "love thy neighbor" because your neighbor could be quite distant. "Love one another" means communal love – form a community and love one another. That is what they did in Jerusalem – they lived together and loved one another in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Blessings,

John Edmiston

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