

## Acts of Jesus – part 6

--The last time we were together we began to answer the question of what according to the Bible is a truly orthodox, reformed, fundamental, Spirit-filled church.

--Who she is in theology; who is she in practice?

--What practices does the truly right church do? What does she look like in practice?

--Everybody has their opinions.

--**Those opinions are not worth hearing or keeping** if they do not line up with this single example of church done right here in Acts.

### **1. Let's read about this church with the right practices: Acts 2:42-end.**

--The characteristic of this first church that I'm going to spend the most time on is not the one that gets the most emphasis in the majority of the sermons I've heard concerning the early church.

--The majority I've heard speak on this emphasized the church's subjection to the apostle's doctrine or emphasized their devotion to prayer.

--While those are extremely important aspects of the early church that we need to mimic, they are not the weightiest characteristic described here.

If you had to answer in a single word what God's dream for human beings is, what would you say?

--The right answer might surprise you: the answer is "community."

--What about salvation, justification, sanctification? These are so important, but they are a means to an end and not the end in itself.

--Why did He save you and me ultimately? So we could be His --- so we could be in community with Him.

--So, we could be in community with each other

--It is these things that were lost in the fall of Adam and Eve.

### **2. Let me direct your thoughts with a series of questions:**

The people God first created; were they rugged, independent, individuals?

--Nothing close; -- What was the only thing not good about God's creation? Adam was alone!

--You might say that God had a real problem with individualism.

--Eve was made from Adam's rib – God could have chosen anything including dust, but He didn't!

--Upon seeing Eve, Adam declared "this is now flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone," "This is a part of me"

--How can we do anything without a part of ourselves?

--Not exactly a shining example of rugged individualism is it?

--**They were a community of two.**

Was this the first place community and oneness existed? Hardly.

--Before anything existed, God was eternally One.

--He has been and will always be an eternal community of three persons in one being.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **A tri-community.**

--When God recreates through His Son Jesus, He creates community and oneness:

**John 17:11b**

--How One is God? How involved, related, much do they share?

Humanity again created in His image and with the responsibility of conveying that image to a world that does not know Him.

--**Jn. 17:23** Did you catch the implications of that verse? When we are not in community and Oneness, we fail to convey His image and the message of His Son.

--Our model prayer is a community prayer: "Our Father..."

### **3. One of the most convincing proofs of the truth of the gospel is the perceptible oneness of His Followers.**

--Not our doctrine or our prayer meetings -- **These are a means to an end.**

--When doctrine becomes the end, we get legalism and this is the death of community ("you have to believe just like me or I won't tolerate you")

--How doctrinally sound was the church here in Acts? – honestly, not very sound.

--They didn't even know that Gentiles were allowed in the church (Their leaders thought it was a horrible idea!), they still thought they had to follow the dietary codes of the Old Testament, many believed that Gentiles needed to become Jews before they became Christians...

--Their doctrine needed help as does ours but their oneness was a practice that marked them as belonging to God.

--Without community among believers there is no Christianity; there are individuals who are Christians; the Church is not individuals, it is the collective. Christianity as a force and movement does not exist apart from community.

--Since community is deeply rooted in the nature of God, the **making of community cannot be optional for believers but an absolute necessity.**

--**V. 42** = "they were devoted to the fellowship" Does that describe your relationship to the body of Christ?

--If all you do is come to this worship service, you are not having church **V. 42, 44, 46**

--Has this been your experience of church? If not, you're getting ripped off!

--Part of the light we shed is showing them a group of people who are very different

If we can't show them a difference, it won't matter what we believe.