

“Glorious Church” 2026 - #3 – First Church
Acts 2:38-47

Glorious Church – That is our series.

Week 1: We discovered that the springboard for all He is working to do is the foundation of what He has already done: He has made us and sees us forever glorious in Christ.

Week 2 - Last Week’s Truth: What He has done forever sets in motion what He is working in us and through us to do.

- **His purpose:** For us *to BE to the praise of His glory*
- **His plan:** That as a consequence of What He is doing is us we, His church, *will make Him known to the world!*
- **His place:** He directs us to a place. To a people. Distinct. Local. Real. *“Unto Him be glory in the church”*

Today: We ask -

What does a Glorious Church look like in the real world?

We journey back in time through Scripture to our roots.

- To see and **experience the first church**.
- To see Christ in action through them.

Luke says, essentially, Let me show you! It was...

- Not their **building**
- Not their **programs**
- Not their **organization**

But their lives!

We don’t do everything they did. Some of what they did was **cultural. Some was **time relevant**. But, **it was written for us**.**

If **we are the glorious church that Jesus said the gates of hell would not prevail against, the church He would be with to the end of the age...**

Are the things we observe Him doing in them true of Us?

Notice four core characteristics:

I. Converted Membership

Before we can do anything for Him, we must know Him.

Before Luke tells us *what they did*, he tells us *what happened to them*.

- They heard.
- They were pierced.
- They asked.
- They repented.
- They received.
- They were baptized.
- They were added.

The church wasn't created by people deciding to join an organization.
It was created by people encountering Jesus.

II. Consecrated Mindset

"Consecrated" = *Set Apart; Dedicated for a purpose*

How do we know?

Their actions were like windows to their souls: What they valued in their hearts was manifest in their actions.

Their lives began telling the story of what Christ had done inside them!

A. Baptism. Vs. 41

B. Continuation. Vs. 42

The real test was not just a big splash or great beginning. It was in the day-by-day faithfulness to their Savior.

Three thousand people didn't merely make a decision. They were drawn **into a living, life-changing experience!**

What we do occasionally may reveal an interest. What we do consistently reveals a devotion.

C. Great Fear. Vs. 43

"Great fear" = Genuine respect and awe.

Not a casual, cool, "high five" approach to God.

We will be awed by something, and that something will drive and define us. Is it Jesus?

When was the last time we were genuinely awed by God?

- Not impressed by a service.
- Not moved by music.
- Not pleased with a sermon.

Awed by Him!

D. Generosity. Giving. Vs. 44-45

What we do with what we have is a clear sign of what we truly treasure.

Note: Their giving was a little different than many in the New Testament and since.

But - They were willing to loosen their grip on what they possessed because Jesus had possessed them!

The willingness to let go of

- what we treasure,
- what makes us secure,
- what gives us significance,
- what can build our dreams –

For Him is evidence of a soul sold out to Him. (Zaccheus; Mary – Alabaster box)

E. "Gladness" Vs. 46

Often the norm for our world is to

- See what we are against,
- See us seemingly always mad... disappointed... almost victims...

(Like we were weaned on pickles and raised on prunes!)

Are we overwhelmed with Jesus?! “Glad”?

Truly?

Is it what people hear from our lips?

Can it be seen?

***Could it be that when “they” see us “glad” – they see Him?!

F. “Singleness of heart”. Vs. 46

Singleness of Heart:

Great Commandment: *“Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, all thy soul, all thy might!”*

Greatest Pursuit: *“Seek ye first the kingdom of God...”*

Essentially, Jesus taught us to love Him first and most!
That’s Consecration!!

Not divided allegiance. cf. Jesus – Matthew 6:19-25

III. Constant Ministry. (Bullets:)

Jesus spilled out of them into everything!

- Evangelism – There was a buzz and it was all about Jesus!
- Discipleship
- Fellowship
- Worship
- Ministry

IV. Continual Multiplication! Vs. 47

What happens when Jesus works from the inside out?

What does a glorious church look like in the real world?

- **Not** perfection.
- **Not** an impressive organization.
- **Not** buildings.
- **Not** programs.

But – People...

- *Who have encountered Jesus*
- *Whose hearts have been captured by Jesus*
- *Whose lives increasingly reveal Jesus*
- *Through whom others people encounter Jesus!*

“Having favour with all the people” – They impacted their world

“the LORD added to the church daily...”

- God did what only God can do.
- God did what He promised.
- God did what He purposed for His glorious church! He added and added and added!

- **God did then what He is working to do now,**

In us...

In this church...

In our world!