TAKING INVENTORY

"What we need to know about Church Unity"

Acts 2:42-47

INTRODUCTION:

1. **The Bible teaches that the unity of the church is the Holy Spirit's ministry.**

2. ***1 Corinthians 12:12-13***

a) *Our spiritual unity as Christians is as essential as the unity of the human body.*

3. The word **unity** means ***oneness,*** but that is different from ***sameness.***

4. ***Unity in Christ is possible because we are united around Him*** – yielding to His Lordship and obeying His commands.

5. ***True unity is finding oneness of purpose and commitment, moving toward a common goal, despite our differences.***

I. THE POWER OF UNITY

A. THE STORY OF THE CHURCH

1. So, Jesus told the disciples not to go anywhere or do anything until the Holy Spirit came.

a) ***Acts 1:12-28***

2. These disciples, who numbered 120, went into God's presence and were unified in prayer.

a) They were all on the same page!!! And the Spirit came in POWER at Pentecost.

b) ***Acts 2:41***

a) "***so those who received his (Peter's) word were baptized***"

b) "***and there were added that day about 3000 souls***."

3. **In the Early Church, new believers confessed their faith in Christ and were Baptized**. *What did they do?*

a) They believed.

b) They **confessed**!!!

1) ***Romans 10:10***

c) And were **baptized.**

1) ***Once a person's confession was made….***

2) *They were asked to make a public declaration of their faith and be Baptized.*

d) ***Conversion, profession, and baptism was the pattern in the New Testament.***

B. A <u>MODEL</u> OF CHURCH UNITY (Vs 42-47)

1. **Verses 42-47** are a portrait of a church united.
   a) These believers worshipped and fellowshipped together!!!!

   b) **Vs 46 KJV**
      1) "***in one accord***" – means "***with one mind***"
         a. And the results were powerful. **Vs 47**

   c) ***Acts 4:24***
      a) "***They lifted up their voices together***"
         1) **Vs 31**

2. ***In these verses we get a simple but clear description of the 1st church in Jerusalem***, so we must pay close attention to the **Key Elements** of success that brought God all the Glory.

C. KEY <u>INGREDIENTS</u> FOR A POWERFUL CHURCH

1. **<u>EVANGELISM</u>**
   a) **Vs 41**

2. **<u>BAPTISM</u>**
   a) **Vs 41**

3. **<u>PREACHING</u>/<u>DISCIPLESHIP</u>**
   a) **Acts 2:42a**
      1) "***And they devoted themselves to the apostles teaching…"***
         a. "***devoted***" – means to remain, to cleave faithfully, committed to.
         b. KJV – "***continued steadfastly***"

4. **CHURCH <u>MEMBERSHIP</u>**
   a) **Vs 41**
      1) "***and there were added that day about 3000 souls***"

5. **<u>FELLOWSHIP</u>**

a) ***Acts 2:42,44-46***

1) "***and to fellowship***"

a "***koinonia***" – gk = mutual sharing the life of Christ

2) "***to the breaking of bread***" – The Lord's Table and a meal.

b) **WOW!!!** These people enjoyed being with each other.

6. **PRAYER**

a) **Vs 42**

1) "***and prayers***"

7. **WORSHIP/PRAISE**- The early church regularly prioritized WORSHIP

a) **Vs 43a**

1) "***and awe (fear) came upon every soul***"

a. Godly fear or reverence!!!

b) **Vs 43b**

1) "***and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles***"

c) **Vs 46-47**

8. ***When the church's corporate unity is prioritized***.

a) When a body of people are indwelt by the Holy Spirit in Christ's name to worship, pray, and serve with one mind and heart, ***the Spirit's power is consecrated like a Lazer.***

b) ***Acts 12:3-19***

II. ORIGIN OF THE CHURCHES UNITY

A. CHURCH IS GOD'S IDEA

1. ***Ephesians 4:1***

a) "***I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord***"

1) "***urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called***"

2. ***Ephesians 4:3***

a) "***eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace***"

3. "***eager to maintain***" – means to make unity a top priority.

B. HIGHLIGHTING THE CHURCH'S IMPORTANCE

1. ***Ephesians 4:11***
    a) Christ gave gifted people to the Church.

2. ***Ephesians 4:12***
    a) "***To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ***"

3. ***Ephesians 4:13***
    a) "***until we all attain to the unity of the faith***"

4. The emphasis here is on the growth of the whole body. **Vs 16**
    a) *And this growth requires the participation of every member of the body.*

5. Back in the day, old folks used to say if someone wasn't in church, something was missing.
    a) **Every part of the body is essential to the body**.

6. ***Cancer begins in the body with rebel cells that want to do their own thing***.
    a) WOW!!! *Rebel cells quickly reproduce after their own kind* because disunity ***never likes to do it's work alone***.
    b) ***That's why people who sow disunity are always gossips***.

C. CRUISE SHIP CHRISTIANS

1. One of the awesome things about going on a cruise is, somebody else does everything for you.
    a) Everything on a cruise ship is designed to pamper you.

    b) On a cruise ship you just kick off your shoes and relax.

2. **That mentality has invaded the church!!!**
    a) Let's see what's on the music menu.
    b) Or the Bible Study menu…or sermon buffet!!

3. **HERE'S THE PROBLEM:** The church is a **BATTLESHIP**!!

CONCLUSION:

1. **THE BATTLE IS RAGING** - What we need in Church – is "**ALL HANDS-ON DECK**"