

The Way

Birth of the Church

Lesson 03: The Church in Jerusalem Worshipped and Served the Lord Under the Leadership of the Apostles

We are indebted to [Ethnos360](#) for providing the basis of these lessons

Review (Where We've Been)

Key Points in the Story to Remember...

- Jesus' Promise - the Holy Spirit would dwell in those who believed
John 14:17 (ESV) "...the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."
- Jesus' Commission – make disciples
Matthew 28:19 (ESV) Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
- Jesus' Empowerment – the Holy Spirit gives power to speak and live the Gospel
Acts 1:8 (ESV) "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
- Jesus' Command – believe and be baptized
Acts 2:41 (ESV) So those who received his word were baptized...

BIG Idea

As people believed and were baptized, they were added to the church.

Acts 2:41 (ESV) So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Now the church in Jerusalem would learn what it looks like to worship and serve the Lord under the leadership of the apostles.

We have a model and an example of the actions from the first century church.

Information (What You Need to Know)

What Took Place Inside the Jerusalem Church?

▪ Discipleship

Acts 2:42 (ESV) And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching...

Disciple – learner who is taught by a master teacher

✓ *Characteristics of a believing disciple...*

- Following Jesus (His teachings)
- Being changed by Jesus (from disobedience to obedience)
- Being committed to the mission of Jesus (learn, obey, and make disciples)

✓ Jesus taught the apostles what they were to teach to those who became believers

✓ Spirit-empowered apostles would teach the Jerusalem church what Jesus taught

▪ Fellowship

Acts 2:42 (ESV) And they devoted themselves to...the fellowship...

✓ Believers met as a group, separate from the unbelievers

✓ Believers belong to Christ and are called out of the world to be in companionship with one another

✓ Believers should not isolate (withdraw) from the world, but insulate (protect)

Luke 5:30 (ESV) And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" **31** And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. **32** I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

▪ The Lord's Supper (regularly remembered the Lord's death)

Acts 2:2 (ESV) And they devoted themselves...to the breaking of bread...

"The church in Jerusalem obeyed the Lord's command to remember His body and blood which He gave as the payment for their sins." – Firm Foundations

Luke 22:17 (ESV) And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he said, "Take this, and divide it among yourselves." **19** And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."



✓ Bread – symbolizes Jesus' sinless body given in our place

✓ Wine – symbolizes Jesus' blood given as payment for our sin

■ Prayer

Acts 2:42 (ESV) And they devoted themselves to...the prayers.

Examples of those who prayed throughout the Scriptures...

✓ God's people in the Old Testament

Psalms 55:16 (ESV) I call to God, and the Lord will save me. **17** Evening and morning and noon I utter my complaint and moan, and he hears my voice.

✓ Jesus in times of decision (before He chose His disciples)

Luke 6:12 (ESV) In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. **13** And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles

✓ Jesus in times of suffering

Mark 14:32 (ESV) And they went to a place called Gethsemane. And he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I pray." **33** And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled.

✓ Jesus in relationship with His Father

Mark 1:35 (ESV) And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.

✓ Early church and individuals (we'll see this more as we move through Acts)

■ Helping one another

✓ Genuine needs of others were met

Acts 2:44 (ESV) And all who believed were together and had all things in common. **45** And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.

✓ People were also expected to provide for themselves

1 Timothy 5:8 (ESV) But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. **16** If any believing woman has relatives who are widows, let her care for them. Let the church not be burdened, so that it may care for those who are truly widows.

✓ Helping *can be* financial, *but also* time-oriented

■ Praising God and Maintaining Unity

Acts 2:47 (ESV) ...praising God and having favor with all the people.

■ Growth (number and maturity)

Acts 2:47 (ESV) ...And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

"How were people hearing and believing the Gospel? It was through the church. The apostles and believers were telling others the good news about how sinners can be saved through Jesus." – Firm Foundations

Application (What You Need to Do)

When the church follows the example of the church at Jerusalem in Acts 2:42-47, God will do His work in the hearts of people.

People will believe, be baptized, and become disciples.

This is God's prescription for church growth.

If we take care to follow the example of Acts 2:42-47, God will take care of growing the church Himself.