

Foundations

Acts 2:42-47

Introduction

ILLUS: Opening Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dUq-Ku-1nNU> (~ the first 1:10)

Foundation: The lowest load-bearing part of a building, typically below ground level. An underlying basis or principles upon which other things are built.

When you look into Acts chapter 2, specifically Peter's sermon at Pentecost, what you find is an outline for preaching. Peter Exalts the Savior, Exposits the Scripture, and Encourages the Saints.

This morning, we are going to look at this last section – the Encouragement of the Saints – by somewhat expositing verses 40-47 (I say this because we are not going to really unpack each point Peter makes in the verses – there are at least 9 and I promised last week not to keep you too long –, but look more at the environment in which these things occurred) and, by doing so, prayerfully encourage us all to exalt our Savior.

However, there is something I want to point out before we begin in verse 42. Look with me in verse 37.

Acts 2:37 (NKJV) — 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

This was the question of the lost at the end of the message wanting to know how they could be saved. Peter gives them instruction on how to come to faith in Christ.

But Luke, the author of the Book of Acts, doesn't stop with the questions of new believers being answered. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he instructs us concerning the questions he knew those in the church would ultimately ask.

Beginning in verse 42 – Luke gives us a beautiful picture of what how the early church functioned providing for us the foundations for the church today.

Certainly, times change and culture changes – so I am not suggesting that the application today should look identical. However, I am saying that church today cannot function and thrive as God intended apart from these foundations.

This morning, we are going to look at these foundations and the environment in which they flourished. Because I feel I (we) have lost some our focus and I want to led us back to the foundations.

Now, let me ask you this question. What was the commission Jesus gave to us as His people/His Church?

Make disciples! Now, let me ask a follow-up question. How do you that? This is what Luke is detailing for us in this passage. While the large group gathering is part of it – Peter preached a message – the larger portion was not what they did on one day of the week but daily. Further, even as Jesus modeled, He gathered with the multitude, the twelve, the three, and one on one. While what they did at the temple on the Sabbath was important, much of the discipleship happened day to day. Now, I while I wish we could gather daily – culturally that is not going to happen. Yet, despite the cultural changes, the fundamentals are still the same.

And here is what I know, what gets prioritized gets done. We prioritize the multitude (worship gathering) and the twelve (Connection Classes) – but, as a church, we have lost focus on the three and the one on one. I want to prioritize

these, as the early church did, by returning to the foundations.

They were their passion and I want it to become ours!

So, look with me at the first part of verse 42 ...

Acts 2:42 (NKJV) — 42 And they continued steadfastly ...

Acts 2:42 (ESV) — 42 And they devoted themselves ...

Acts 2:42 (NASB95) — 42 They were continually devoting themselves ...

Teaching (42)

“Doctrine”

“We should count it a wasted day when we do not learn something new and when we have not penetrated more deeply into the grace of God.” (Barclay, 25)

Motivating (42)

“Fellowship” – is the Greek term *koinonia*

Too often – even most often – in the church today this term is used to describe casual conversation over a meal. Some even say, well yeah it says “the breaking of bread.” But the reference here is the Lord’s Supper. While it is not without its social aspects, as it is to be done with the church body, the function is spiritual – that is biblical fellowship.

Every time you see fellowship, “Koinonia,” the people were gathering over spiritual matters, not social activities. (Tony Scarbrough)

Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV) — 24 And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, **25** not

forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

In the Scripture we are told to love one another, be devoted to one another, honor one another, live in harmony with one another, build up one another, accept one another, admonish one another care for and serve one another, forgive and be patient with one another. We are to consider other better than ourselves and look out for the interests of one another. We are to comfort and encourage and exhort one another. We are to pray for one another.

And you can't one another alone – it must be done together in genuine, biblical, fellowship.

Praying (42-43)

“Prayers”

While this would certainly individual prayers, the focus here is that of corporate prayer. The church gathering to pray over specific things whether needs, provision, mourning, praise, gifts, goals, vision ...

It is a fact that prayer is greatly neglected in the church today and is undoubtedly one of the contributing factors to a lack of gospel effectiveness and God's manifest power.

Notice the result of the prayers:

Fear – and while fear can mean anything from reverence and respect to intimidation and terror – contextually it speaks of “awe.”

Acts 2:43 (ESV) — 43 And awe came upon every soul ...

Miracles

“If we expect great things from God and attempt great things for God things will

happen.” (Barclay using William Carey’s quote, 26)

Notice, the people were not “awed” by the buildings they met in or the programs they ran. Nope, they were awed by the display of God’s power as the result of their prayers offered to Him.

As Vance Pitman says, “Prayer is the work, then God works!”

Believing (44)

“Believed ... together”

Believed what? God’s Word – together, God’s call – together, God’s purposes – together, God’s vision – together!

Giving (45)

“As anyone had need”

Contrary to what some have taken this to mean, the early church was not a communist commune. They did not sell everything they had and put the money in a communal account.

However, what they did do, was when there was a need that arose, they would sell what was needed in order to meet the need.

Genuinely co-heirs with Christ.

Gathering (46)

“Continuing daily with one accord”

In the temple, in homes, and over meals – they were “of the same mind.”

Philippians 2:5 (NKJV) — 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

John 17:21 (NKJV) — 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

And all of gathering was done with gladness ...

Luke 1:44 (NKJV) — 44 For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for **joy**.

Jude 24 (NKJV) — 24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, And to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

“And simplicity of heart” this is the only place in the Scripture this term is used and carries vivid pictures of meaning. “Without a stone,” “level,” “purity of intention”

It was smooth, go with the flow, not over thought, but with a oneness of heart as to the purpose.

Philippians 2:1–2 (NKJV) — 1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, **2** fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Which resulted in ...

Worshipping (47)

“Praising God”

This is speaking of spontaneous worship – just breaking out in praise!

Luke 2:13 (NKJV) — 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

Engaging (47)

“Having favor will all people”

The term “favor” means “a winning quality or attractiveness that is inviting.”

John 13:35 (NKJV) — 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

“Real Christianity is a lovely thing.” (Barclay, 27)

Growing (47)

“the Lord added daily those who were being saved”

On Pentecost there were 3,000 saved and Luke tells us they begin discipling people that day using these foundations.

By Acts 4:4 we read ...

Acts 4:4 (NKJV) — 4 However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

“True evangelism flows from the life of a healthy church.” (MacArthur, 92)

Conclusion

“This church, though not having any cultural elements of success, no worldly strategies, was still endowed with every necessary component for accomplishing the purposes of the Lord.” (MacArthur, 80)

These are the foundations! The foundations of making disciples and being the church!

The foundations we “must always strive for, constantly return to, and discover anew if [we] are to have that unity of spirit and purpose essential for an effective witness.” (Polhil, 122)

Wiersbe says, “The Christians you meet in the Book of Acts were not content to meet once a week for “services as usual ... Their Christian faith was a day-to-day reality, not a once-a-week routine. Why? Because the risen Christ was a

living reality to them, and His resurrection power was at work in their lives through the Spirit. (Wiersbe, 411)

“The oneness of the early church was organic oneness, not organized oneness.” (Phillips, 63)