

Grow In/At Faith

Here We Grow – Acts 2:42-47

Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

- They continued in Doctrine
 - What God's Word Teaches from Scriptures
 - The Godhead
 - God the Father
 - God the Son
 - God the Holy Spirit
 - Jesus Christ
 - Hell
 - Satan
 - Mankind
 - Salvation
 - Baptism
 - Sanctification
 - Have we left any?
- They continued in fellowship
 - This means that when church was had they were there
 - Hebrews 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is;

but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

- They continued in breaking of bread
 - This is not a “pitch-in” thing
 - This is about the Lord’s Supper
 - One of the doctrines we believe and ordinances we observe
- They continued in prayer
 - Jesus said, “My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.” – Matthew 21:13
 - Prayer is our greatest, most effective resource
- So, they didn’t change what they were doing, they did what Christ told them to do...
 - **Matthew 28:19** “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, **I am with you alway**, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
 - And they did so with HIS Presence...
 - **2Corinthians 3:17** Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

- God honored the apostles with His power
 - The only difference between now and then is we have changed too much from what we are supposed to be
 - Has God changed?
 - Has His Word?
 - Has His power failed or lessened?
 - I recognize and repent that my greatest weakness is my prayer life
 - This affects my obedience
 - This affects the fruit of the Spirit in my life
 - This causes others see more of me than they see Christ
 - We relinquish God's power or gifts of the Spirit when we don't walk (continue) in Obedience
 - I'm not talking about apostolic power
 - But about Gifts of the Spirit used to show the world Christ in His Church

44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

45 And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

- In 2022, I presented this passage and said...
 - Let's be honest...does this sound like Faith Baptist Church?

- Do we put our church family's needs above our own?
- Am I willing to give truly sacrificially?
- We convince ourselves that coming to church or serving in some way that isn't during a church service is "doing our Christian duty" ...but is it?
- If Christ was standing before us right now asking us these questions, would we lie to Him like we lie to ourselves?
- I want to say, God has been moving and changing hearts!
 - We are not the same body of believers we were over 3 years
 - We are and have been taking steps in the direction of being what God's Bride should be
 - Last year we started our discipleship courses and some of you have been faithful to yield to the spiritual growth
 - When do we cease or stop being a disciple of Christ?
 - Where do we grow from here?
 - I learned several years ago that before there can be numerical growth, there must be spiritual growth
 - We have been seeing both this last year
 - So how do we best get ready to move forward allowing for growth?

46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from **house to house**, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,
47 Praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

- I believe our next steps are right here in our passage
- Groups of believers coming together to “break bread” whether literally in communion or in a spiritual sense of communion
 - Gathering in one another’s houses to disciple one another
 - **Proverbs 27:17** Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.
- Even after being beaten and threatened death by the religious rulers of the day...
- **Acts 5:42** And daily in the temple, **and in every house**, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.
- So, what do we do?
 - Our Continue class has run its first course
 - Journey is for those new to Faith
- So, what do we do now...just quit Sunday afternoons?
- Pastor Larry, what if I am just uncomfortable with any of this?

- We have to understand that in order to grow, we will have to make changes
 - We may have to let the Lord change our view of what church is supposed to look like to us
 - We may have to change some things in our lives to better serve
 - Look at the New Testament church's heart...
 - **Acts 2:44** And all that believed were together, and had all things common;
 - **45** And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.
 - Me Casa Su Casa
 - They were together in considering each other's needs
 - Why is this important?
 - So, that our lives are not distracting us from our Mission
 - To Continue Daily!
- I have been praying that God help me show you my heart in this...
- **Galatians 5:1** Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

2 Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing.

3 For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.

4 Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.

5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

6 For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

- Christ was not confined to the 4 walls of a church building.
- Christ was not confined by anything save the will of God the Father...
 - that alone bound Him.
 - It was in that constraint to fulfill His Father's will that Christ dwelt in and found great liberty to speak to those He loved,
 - no matter where they were,
 - no matter who they were.
- The church at Galatia was struggling to understand what liberty in Christ meant.
- They had become confined by a set of standards and rules that had to be met in order to be called a "Christian" or "disciple".
 - Paul addressed it and in so doing addresses every New Testament church that would adopt a rule-based mindset of sanctification.
- We are not confined a set of rules and standards set forth by anyone outside of Scripture as to what a church is or what church should look like;

- nor are we confined to some set behavior in order to live in sanctification...
 - Stand fast in THE liberty that Christ made you free with
 - Don't be chained to anything but that liberty
 - This is about following Christ not a format or formula
 - Your "self-control" doesn't matter
 - There is no eternal or temporal profit to works based sanctification
 - There is no eternal or temporal profit to maintaining standards that keep us from liberty
 - Our Righteousness is a product of faith not efforts or works
 - performance for righteousness is bondage
 - performance from righteousness is liberty
 - This all takes us to a place where no matter the direction or discomfort
 - We are dead to self and alive to righteousness
 - We are only here to follow the leading of Christ through His Spirit
 - Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty
- So, in closing...
 - I haven't got the logistics all set

- I honestly thought I had a few more weeks of continue and am sorry that the logistics are not fully planned
- We need for some folks to be liberated from their current view of what church looks like as they step into this new role of discipleship
- So please pray with me as we enter into this new old way of doing church
- And while there might be some thinking, “Are we going to vote on this?”

- **Romans 14:4** Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

5 One-man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. **Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.**

6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

- **Your vote will be in how you're persuaded to participate...or not to**