

## The Church – Part 4 The Book of Acts

Thank you for joining me today for “It’s a Good Life.” We’re presently studying about God’s church. We’re in the book of Acts and we’re going to be looking at some other Scriptures, as well. This is actually study number four in our series, and if you’d like a copy of these studies that we’re going through, I’ll be glad to send you a transcript of each one absolutely free. Listen at the end of the program for the address that you can write to and request that. You can also go to our Websites and request a free transcript of these studies that we’re going through.

So, right now, study number four, God’s church. In Acts 2:1-4 it says, *<sup>1</sup>And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup>And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup>And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup>And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance*

Now, people often stop at verse 4 and dwell on the word “tongues.” We’re not going to dwell on the word “tongues,” but we’re going to read verses 5-6 that explain what “tongues” meant there. Acts 2:5-6: *<sup>5</sup>And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. <sup>6</sup>Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language*

I’ll simply say that the word “tongues” used here simply means languages, the language that these people were speaking they

previously did not know. Well, why did God allow this? He allowed it so that people out of every nation could hear the Word of God, how they could be saved and be on their way to Heaven.

I want you to notice something else in Acts 2:42. It talks about the apostles’ doctrine, in other words, teaching. Why teach sound doctrine? Second Timothy 4:3 says, *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.* Titus 2:1: *But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.* Titus 1:9: *Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*

Why are preachers to take a stand for sound doctrine today and throughout all history? And I Timothy 1:8-12 gives us the answer: *<sup>8</sup>But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; <sup>9</sup>Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, <sup>10</sup>For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.*

Now notice I Timothy 1:11-12: *<sup>11</sup>According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. <sup>12</sup>And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.*

Paul the apostle said it is so important for us to listen to and preach sound doctrine. The person sitting in a pew in the church needs to hear sound doctrine. People who are listening to teachings on the radio or TV, they need to be exposed to sound doctrine. And those people who are preaching or teaching, they need to give forth sound doctrine. Why? Because the Bible tells us that that is what is to take place. Sound doctrine. Sound teaching. And that sound teaching comes from God and that is, of course, the Word of God, the Bible. That's where the sound teaching comes from.

Now look with me if you would in Matthew 16:18. We've read this in our past studies now, but in that verse it says: *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

We read there how that Christ would build His church. I believe that Christ was actually laying the foundation. He is the foundation of the church. He is the foundation of salvation. I believe that He was laying the foundation as He walked on this earth, and as we study about His ministry in the gospels. And I believe also that as the church was being founded there, as He was laying the foundation, that on the Day of Pentecost the 120 who had gathered themselves together in the upper room, I believe when the Day of Pentecost took place, when it happened God actually sanctioned the church. In other words, He says, "All right, now go get 'em." In other words, "Go tell people about Jesus Christ, My Son," I believe is what God was trying to point out on the Day of Pentecost, and of course, He sanctioned the church, I believe, on that day.

In Acts 1:4, Luke tells us how the Lord had told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father. You can read about that in John chapter 14 about the promise. And of

course, the promise was the gift of the Holy Spirit which was to be sent from the Father. In Acts 1:8, the disciples were told that they would receive power to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the uttermost part of the world when the Holy Spirit came. And the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came as promised in Acts 2:1-4. Once again, we've read some of that today.

Well, in Acts chapter 2, we're given a view of God's visible church at Jerusalem. And as we view this church, several things become apparent about God's church. Actions, attitudes, and results are seen as the record of the church at Jerusalem unfolds in the account God has given us.

I want you to notice something first of all about God's church. We see the church was a visible church. Acts 2:41 says, *<sup>41</sup>Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.* This church that we're reading about in Jerusalem is not invisible, but it was visible. People could be seen. People gladly received the Word. They got saved, in other words. They got baptized after they got saved, and they became members of the visible local church, the people, the assembly. They joined together. They got saved. This was the assembly at Jerusalem. The Bible says the same day there were added unto them... this is the Jerusalem local church... about three thousand souls.

Well, next, we see the actions of the local church at Jerusalem. Acts 2:42, once again, says, *And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

First, I see the people were steadfast in the apostles' teaching. They were faithful. They listened to the teaching... the doctrine of the apostles, and that would be the doctrine of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Word of God.

And then we see the people had fellowship. Once again, in verse 42, it talks about the fellowship that they had together. Fellowship, a group of likeminded people sharing common interests, goals, experiences, and views, and I believe that primary on their minds at that point was the risen Savior, how that He had been crucified, buried, and resurrected and had ascended back to Heaven. He went to the Father so that the church could actually be sanctioned on that Day of Pentecost and so that people could go forth and spread the Word of God.

Well, they had fellowship and they were steadfast, and also, they remembered something. In once again Acts 2:42 it tells us that something took place there. They were breaking bread, and I believe this is speaking of the Lord's Supper, communion, breaking bread from house to house, remembrance, communion, the Lord's Supper. They remembered the One Who had died for them and that He was coming again. First Corinthians 11:26 says, <sup>25</sup>*After the same manner also he took the cup... this is Jesus... when he had supped saying, **This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.*** <sup>26</sup>*For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.*

I believe when we read there about the breaking of bread, I believe they not only gathered together to have a meal, but they also gathered together in remembrance of the Lord, of the Lord's Supper. Once again, Acts 2:46: *And they, continuing daily with one accord in*

*the temple, and breaking bread from house to house.*

Well, notice now something else that took place. They prayed. Verse 42 says not only did they continue steadfastly in the doctrine of the apostles and in fellowship and breaking of bread, but they continued in prayers. Acts 1:13-14 says, <sup>13</sup>*And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room... This is the hundred and twenty now just before Pentecost... where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.* <sup>14</sup>*These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*

This is the first of at least thirty occasions of prayer mentioned in the book of Acts and the ministry committed to Christ's disciples is to bear witness of Him in all the world, but this must always be accompanied by prayer and supplication.

Now, something else was going on there, not only do we see actions; not only was the church visible and we see the actions that took place there. They were steadfast; they had fellowship; and they remembered the Lord by observing the Lord's Supper; and they prayed. But I want you to notice something else, and we're going to stop with this today... the people's attitudes. First they agreed. They continued daily, and this means consistency. "One accord" means they were in agreement. There was no arguing, backbiting, or disagreement as to who was in charge of His church. God was in charge. It was and is His church, and so many of us need to remember that today, that it is His church; it's not our church. It is His church, so therefore, we need to follow what God has set down in His Word

the roadmap, if you would, the way that the local church is to be taken care of. It's God's church. It's not man's church. So, therefore, we need to be following the Word of God and doing what God would have us to do in His local church.

I pray today that if you've never trusted Christ as your Savior, that you would ask Him to come into your heart right now. You need to say, "Lord, I know I can't save myself. I want to go to Heaven. I'm praying now, God, that you would save me through the blood of Christ. Jesus, come into my heart. I receive You as my Savior. If you are saved, you need to be living for Him and working for Him. Let's pray.

Father, thank You today for loving us so much and giving us the opportunity to receive what You have for us. You are God. You are the Creator. You are our Heavenly Father and I thank You for that. Save that person who needs saved today who's never trusted Jesus. For Christ's sake. Amen.

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Until next time, this is Doug Anderson reminding you it's a good life living for the Lord. May the Lord bless you richly is our prayer.