

Edified and Multiplied

Text - Acts 9:31

Introduction: When you study the book of Acts, what you see is the progress of the church. You find the birth and the development of the New Testament church. As we read along in this wonderful book we get snapshots and glimpses of what the church is to be about. It talks about how the churches had rest, and were edified. Then it speaks of walking in obedience of the Lord and being multiplied. What we have here is a perfect balance.

Evangelism is the main business of the church, but it is not the only business. Evangelism is our ministry to the lost. We ought to be trying to win the lost to Jesus. But I also know that if all the emphasis is placed on evangelism, we would be heavy on the go but short on the grow. People get saved but don't grow in the Lord. Let's look at two points.

Inward Edification

There is something I want you to get a hold of here as we begin. Something has to happen on the inside of the church before anything will happen on the outside of the church. God must work in you before He will ever work through you. God must work in the church before He will work through the church.

Now let's look inside the church for a while. He says the churches were edified. That means to build up. He is talking about building a building. I don't know much about building but I know before you go up you have to go down. If a building is to stand there has to be a foundation. Now what is the foundation of the church? Jesus Christ! 1 Cor. 3: 11 says, "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Any church that has something other than Jesus Christ as its foundation is destined to fall.

You don't build a church on gimmicks. I have heard that some pastor swallowed a goldfish if a certain number shows up in church. I realize there is no unfair way to win people to Jesus but a church is not built upon gimmicks.

I heard about a church one time announced Ed, the wonder horse, was going to be in service on Sunday morning. Everybody came to see the wonder horse Ed. They called Ed to the platform and ask him some questions. Ed, how many gospels or there in the New Testament? Ed stamped out 4 times. The congregations mouth dropped open. Ed, how many disciples did Jesus have? Ed stamped out 12. Ed, how many hypocrites do we have here today? Ed broke out into a gallop. You don't build a church on gimmicks.

There are a lot of good things that go on in town every week. But there is nothing that goes on that's more important than the teaching and preaching of the Word of God.

Some say preaching is out and old-fashioned, not needed. Some say preaching is dead. It is not dead. There may be a lot of dead preaching today but preaching isn't dead.

I heard about a preacher whose preaching was dead. He was going along in the service when his notes blew out in the cow pasture. Along came the cow ate his notes and dried up.

Have you ever thought about the miracles that happen in one preaching service? In one service

- The Troubled Will Be Consoled,
- The Bereaved Will Be Comforted,
- The Committed Will Be Challenged,
- The Indifferent Will Be Confronted, And
- The Lost Will Be Converted.

The Word Of God Builds The Church. But it is more than "knowing" & "preaching" and "standing for the truth"..... I also want to tell you that the most loving place in town should be the local church.

Outward Multiplication

I can put it all in a nutshell right here. If the first is done, inward edification, then there will be multiplication. If there is inward edification, building up of the believers, then multiplication will take place.

Listen, God has to work on the inside of a church before He will work on the outside. Not one can do all the work but we all can work together to accomplish as much as possible. Are you willing to allow God to do a work in you? Are you willing to let God work in us that He might work through us?

1. **Preaching edifies** – **1 Cor. 14:3** But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to **edification**, and exhortation, and comfort.”

2. **Faith edifies** – **Jude 1:20** But ye, beloved, **building up** yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

3. **Love edifies** – **1 Cor. 8:1** Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity **edifieth**.

4. **Spiritual gifts edify** – **1 Cor. 14:12** Even so ye, forasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual *gifts*, seek that ye may excel to the **edifying** of the church.