

Three Things To Continue

Acts 2:42-47

Introduction: Someone said that there are 3 main groups in every church: the plus-plus group, the plus-minus group, and the minus-minus group. The plus-plus groups say, "I can do it, you can do, so let's get it done." The plus-minus group says, "I can do it, you can't do it, so get out of my way." The minus-minus group says, "I can't do it, you can't do it, and who brought it up in the first place?"

The early church was filled with the plus-plus group. Once the Holy Spirit came to church, He **assumes control** of it, He **administers conviction** to it, and He **affirms commitment** in it. We read in verse 43, "*And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.*"

What the Holy Spirit did in Jerusalem at Pentecost is exactly the same thing He desires to do here. Because these people allowed the Spirit of God to have His way, they became a group of committed people, committed to:

A) Lordship

B) Stewardship

C) Fellowship

A) LORDSHIP

We read in verse 42, "*And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*"

William Barclay said, "They always spoke to God before they spoke with man; they always went into God before they went out into the world; they could meet the problems of life because they had first met God."

The spiritual fingerprint of a local, New Testament church, where the Holy Spirit is present, is not the height of the steeple or the sound of the bell. It is not whether they sing hymns, or praise choruses. It is not whether they use PowerPoint or hymn books.

The most important thing is that the Spirit of God is at work to take the Word of God to exalt, glorify and honor the Son of God.

These early believers fell in love with the Word of the Lord, because they had fallen in love with the Lord of the Word. The God of the Bible because the God of their belief and behavior. Thus, they became committed to Lordship, as well as:

B) STEWARDSHIP

We read in verse 45, "*And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.*" They not only were a growing church, but a giving church. Because they were committed to Lordship, they became committed to stewardship.

When the Holy Spirit came to church they became less concerned about their own needs, and more concerned about the needs of others.

Do you know why you ought to give, and tithe to this church? Number one, because God **demand**s it. Number two, because this church **desire**s it. Number three, because you **deserve** it. You deserve it because God wants to bless your life, and He will bless you if you become committed to Lordship, stewardship and:

C) FELLOWSHIP

In verse 42, we're told that they were involved in "*fellowship and in breaking of bread.*" In verse 44, we find that, "*And all that believed were together, and had all things common.*" Someone has defined fellowship as, "Two fellas in the same ship!" I like that definition.

Fellowship means "to share, or to have in common with." Thus, where there could have been division the Holy Spirit came to church and brought devotion. Instead of fussing, feuding and fighting, there was fellowship.

Nowhere in the books of Acts do we read where someone got mad because of the color of carpet on the floor, paint on the wall, or the style of music they sang.

Why? Because **they made the main thing the main thing**. And the main thing was to allow the Holy Spirit to come to church and produce an atmosphere of Lordship, stewardship and fellowship.

I thank God for this church. I am thrilled that God sent me here to be your pastor. But I must admit while we have a good church, we could have a GREAT church. Do you know how to tell if a church is a great church? By looking to see if the Holy Spirit is at work in that church, and if the people are committed to Lordship, stewardship and fellowship.

The result of the Holy Spirit coming to church is described in verse 46-47, *"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 favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*

That, ladies and gentlemen, is a GREAT church!

You have often heard me refer to the great Welsh revival that took place in 1904. I have had the awesome privilege of walking through Moriah Chapel where the Spirit of God came down upon the little town of Lougher, Wales.

The man God used was a man by the name of Evan Roberts. He was away at Bible College when God burdened him for the people of his hometown. He returned to Moriah Chapel, shared his burden with the pastor, and met with anyone who shared his same burden. He held a Monday night prayer service. Seventeen teenagers showed up to pray for revival.

From that tiny beginning, a true move of God swept through the land. There were over 100,000 people converted in a 5-month period. Rapes, robberies and murders became non-existent. Drunkenness was cut in half. The illegitimate birth rate dropped 44 percent in 2 countries within a year.

When the converted coal miners went back to the mines they couldn't get the mules to work. The reason was that all the mules were used before was profanity, cursing, and vulgarity. Thus, they did not understand the language of redeemed lips.

However, the great revival was sparked by the specific prayer that Evan Roberts prayed. He stood before that group of people and prayed 8 simple words, "Holy Spirit, visit Moriah Chapel for Jesus' sake."

As a result, the Holy Spirit came to church at Moriah Chapel and did something that could not be worked up, shut down, or taken over.

I have been praying for several months now, "Holy Spirit, visit Faith Baptist Church for Jesus' sake!" Why? Because I know that when the Holy Spirit comes to church, He will assume control of this church, He will administer conviction to this church, and He will affirm commitment in this church.