

Signs of Life: Commitment

Acts 2:33-47

3/14/2026

Scripture

Acts 2:33-47 (NKJV) [33] Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. [34] For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, [35] Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" [36] Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." [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?" [38] Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [39] For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." [40] And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." [41] Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. [42] And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. [43] Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. [44] Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, [45] and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. [46] So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, [47] praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Illustration

Sparklers at the wedding

Quote

— John Stott

"Before God sent the church into the world, he sent the Spirit into the church."

Well, we pick it up in verse 33 with our next sign of life: Commitment. As I read the account of the beginning of the church, I am amazed by these people's level of commitment to this newfound faith.

Main Point

The Faith Received

Scripture

Acts 2:33-37 (NKJV) [33] Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear. [34] For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: 'The LORD said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, [35] Till I make Your enemies Your footstool." ' [36] Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." [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?"

How awesome would this be if people around you were asking you how to be saved because of what they saw and heard in your life!

The value of conviction - conviction is the God who knows everything, reminding us that He knows everything.

Scripture

Hebrews 4:13 (NKJV) [13] And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

When we are convicted, we need to be careful not to let the transformation stop at the feeling of conviction, but to allow ourselves to ask the question, "What must we do?"

Scripture

Acts 2:38 NKJV - Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'
Acts 2:39 NKJV - 'For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.'

Here, the culmination of Peter's message is the gospel. He lays out three aspects of the salvation experience:

Repentance Baptism Empowerment

Now, some would argue that Peter is demanding baptism as a prerequisite for salvation. I don't believe this is the case at all. I believe Peter is simply outlining the progression of coming to Christ. In other words, when you want to know how to respond to the gospel, it's in these three steps: Repent, Respond, and Receive.

Repent:

When you hear about your sin and Christ's offer of forgiveness, you start by repenting of your sin and trusting in Christ. At that moment, you are forgiven and born again.

Quote

— David Guzik

"Repentance must never be thought of as something we must do before we can come back to God. Repentance describes what coming to God is. You can't turn towards God without turning from the things He is against."

Respond:

In response to this gift of salvation, you obey Christ's command to be baptized in an act of identification with Christ and declaration that you now belong to Him.

Application

Are you ready to be baptized? If you have turned from your sin to follow Jesus, you should be baptized. First, because Jesus commanded it, and second, because it communicates to the church and the world that you are a new creation in Christ.

Receive:

Part of what comes when you give your life to Christ is the gift and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, enabling you to live your life effectively for Christ.

FAITH: Some might say, 'Peter didn't even mention faith!' In my view, it's inherent within his presentation. It didn't need to be mentioned. If you are a Jew, and are convicted, you repent and turn to Christ, are baptized and filled with the Spirit, it's a given that it requires faith!

Scripture

Acts 2:40 NKJV - And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, 'Be saved from this perverse generation.'

The core of the gospel is Christ crucified, risen, and received by faith. But the gospel has implications... that one removes themselves from the decaying and perverse Generation: Oh, man... can anyone relate? What is the most needed thing when living in a perverse generation? THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST!

We live in a twisted, malfunctioning generation. This perverse generation is on a one-way course to God's judgment, and if you want to be saved from going down in flames with the rest of humanity, you must come be forgiven through Jesus Christ!

THE RESULT:

Scripture

Acts 2:41 NKJV - Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

Wow, talk about a great first sermon! Three thousand people received Christ and were baptized on the first day! Where and how they did that is beyond me, but there must have been quite the buzz in the air. But it didn't stop there! Look at the end of verse 47:

Scripture

Acts 2:47 NKJV - ...And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Illustration

You've heard the math equation of the early church, right? In Acts 2, God adds to the church. In Acts chapter 6, He multiplies the disciples. He never divides, but as proven in Acts 5 (Ananias & Sapphira), sometimes He must perform subtractions.

Regardless, God does it all! He added those souls. It wasn't the result of a detailed church program or outreach. BUT, it did come through the faithful preaching of the gospel. Thank God the church had people committed to preaching the good news of Jesus daily wherever they went. I believe God will still add daily to the church as we stay committed to boldly proclaiming the good news of salvation in Christ Jesus.

Main Point

The Faith Practiced

Scripture

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

These were the pillars of the early church. They were simple, and yet they knew how to major on the things that mattered most.

We miss the point if we major in the minors and minor in the majors. These are things we should strive to commit to today. They were committed to the gospel.

A. Committed to Sound Doctrine

Scripture

Acts 2:42 NKJV - And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine...

Remember, the first church had no canonized New Testament. They had the Old Testament scriptures and the apostolic authority to learn the things of Christ. Imagine those poor apostles! No wonder they had to find other guys to serve the people while they devoted themselves to prayer and doctrine. They were in the process of writing the New Testament! There were thousands of people, a newfound faith, and no one knew what to do, so everyone looked at the apostles. They must have hit their pillows hard at night!

And I would like to argue that we have the same today, even more so!

BIBLE: Our Bible contains the entirety of the inspired Old Testament scriptures, and then we have all of the apostles' doctrine, written by their hands, in the New Testament. And just as they did back then, we must stay committed to it.

Custom

CONTINUED: The tense here actually means, 'They continually continued. Past, present, and future.'

A church that has the power of the Holy Spirit freely reigning is also a church that is steadfastly committed to God's inspired Word.

We live in a day and age where the Bible is being challenged more than ever before. Its authenticity, historicity, scientific accuracy, and authority are all being challenged. Why? Because we are now enlightened and can see through it? Of course not. The Bible still holds up to the highest scrutiny. But because people hate God and don't want their darkness exposed. Now, we, as individuals and as a church, must adhere to and remain committed to the Word of God.

Scripture

Colossians 3:16 NKJV - Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

B. Committed to One Another

Act 2:42 NKJV - And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship,

Custom

Fellowship - (koinonia) Denotes sharing and commonality.

We don't see this word in the NT until the Holy Spirit is given. Another evidence of the Spirit, along with commitment to the gospel and God's word, is a genuine commitment to each other.

As we compare and contrast how we might define fellowship and how they defined fellowship, we might be truly challenged.

1.) Fellowship was sacrificial (verses 44-45):

Scripture

Acts 2:44-45 (NKJV) [44] Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, [45] and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.

Now, before we move on, we should address something that often comes up when people read verses 44- 45.

Some have tried to use this passage as a biblical justification for modern-day communism or government-enforced socialism. But that is not what is happening here.

What we see in Acts is communal generosity, not coerced redistribution.

No government authority stepped in and seized property.No system was imposed requiring believers to surrender their possessions.

Instead, individuals willingly sacrificed for one another out of love.

This was voluntary. It was relational. It flowed from hearts that had been transformed by the Holy Spirit.

In fact, just a few chapters later in Acts 5, when Ananias and Sapphira lie about their gift, Peter makes something very clear. He says:

“While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control?”
(Acts 5:4)

In other words, the property was theirs to keep or give. The sin was not that they kept some of it, but that they lied about it.

Application

So Acts 2 is not prescribing an economic system for governments, nor even mandating a universal model for every church. Luke is simply describing the remarkable generosity that flowed from a Spirit-filled community. When the Holy Spirit grips a people, they begin to see their possessions differently. They stop asking, “What’s mine?” and begin asking, “How can what I have serve others?” That is not socialism. That is Spirit-produced love. And when that kind of generosity takes root in the church, the world cannot help but notice. I like how Kent Hughes puts it:

Quote

— KENT HUGHES

The point is, the fellowship of the early church rested on a mutual generosity and sharing.

Illustration

JOKE: Seeing her two sons fighting over the last piece of pizza, the mother said, "You boys should be acting more like Jesus, if He were here, He would share and give His brother the last piece." The older brother looked at his younger sibling and said, "Marty, it's your turn to be Jesus."

Breaking of bread - there are some who imply that this is directly related to communion or the Lord's supper. While it is definitely possible and even probable that this happened, there's nothing in our text to imply that. In fact, verse 46 defines that the breaking of bread was actually people going to each other's homes and sharing in a meal together, regularly!

There is a special fellowship that is built when I share food with others.

Gladness and Simplicity of heart - it wasn't complicated! There was no pressure and there was no burden. There was no "My house isn't presentable." There was no, "What are they going to serve for dinner?" They just found Jesus! And there was no one else anywhere that could relate. They were just GLAD to be together.

Application

You see, coming into the same building and shaking hands on Sunday morning does not constitute fellowship. Liking and commenting on someone's Facebook post is not fellowship. Sharing your life, resources, and experiences sacrificially with other Christians is the true foundation for building genuine fellowship.

2.) Fellowship was centered on Jesus

EXAMPLE: It wasn't that you like football and I like football. It wasn't that you like to fish and I like to fish. They loved and cared for each other based on their common faith.

It wasn't that you're rich and I'm rich, or you're white and I'm white. It was, "You're saved, and I'm saved."

Application

We would be wise to stop viewing people within our own comfortable parameters. We must look at the body of Christ and make an effort to share our lives with each other in fellowship, true unity, and true oneness.

C. Committed to Prayer

Prayers - The early church was committed to worshipping and praying together.

PRAYERS - probably actual written prayers that they would recite, much like written songs that we sing.

Some of our songs are prayers, others are declarations, others are praises. They are all good and should be a regular part of our corporate gatherings.

Scripture

Colossians 3:16 (NKJV) [16] Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Consistent prayer, both personally and corporately, is necessary to a healthy and growing church. Paul followed the model in his commitment to praying for the local churches. In his letters to the churches, he uses terms like:

We do NOT CEASE to pray for you...Praying for you ALWAYS Thank God ALWAYS concerning you...ALWAYS in EVERY prayer of mine, making request for you all...

We have a very uncomplicated formula, from the first church, of what we should seek to build upon. If you are having trouble gaining good vision for your church, then simplify it! Write these 3 things down in a place that you will always see and be reminded:

Keep your life rooted in the Word of God. Continue to share your life with one another in loving each other and sharing life together. Commit yourself to prayer, both corporate and private

If these things become the foundation of a church, it will be a healthy place to grow, and a place of power and truth. So where did this good foundation lead?

Main Point

Point 3

The Faith Expanded

This internal love produced a strong reputation in the community

Now we know that when we truly follow Jesus, there will always be opposition. Jesus told us plainly: If the world hated Him, it will hate us also. He warned us to beware if everyone speaks well of us all the time.

But notice what Luke records here:

Acts 2:47 — they were “praising God and having favor with all the people.”

When the surrounding community saw the life of the church—its love, its generosity, its integrity, and the power of God at work among them—people glorified God.

The church became known not for hypocrisy, not for self-righteousness, not for causing problems, but for love, sincerity, and integrity.

Listen carefully: If people hate us because we stand for truth and light, so be it. But may they never hate us because we simply don't look anything like Jesus.

Our reputation matters because Jesus' reputation matters, and we are His body.

A businessman cares about the reputation of his business. A father cares about the reputation of his family. A leader cares about the reputation of his office.

How much more should the reputation of the church matter to those who have been called to represent Christ as His ambassadors?

The result is recorded in the second half of verse 47:

“And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”

I have met many churches and many pastors who approach evangelism in different ways, but I have never met one who didn't hope for this outcome—that people would continually come to Christ and that the church would grow because lives were being transformed.

Illustration

Let me give you a simple example: Imagine you are hiring a nanny to care for your children. You would probably be very careful in that process. A woman walks in wearing a shirt that says "World's Best Nanny." That's promising. Then she hands you her résumé. You begin to read. • She has never had children—but she says, "How hard can it really be?" • No criminal record... except for three charges of child endangerment. • She was fired from three previous nanny jobs, but claims the parents had "unrealistic expectations" about their children's safety. • She can drive your kids anywhere—as long as you overlook the suspended license from last week's DUI. At that point you're probably thinking, "You are not watching my kids." Well, I think the Lord has standards too. The Bible says the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. So the question I ask myself is this: "Is this the kind of church where the Lord feels confident sending His new children?" Is this a place where new believers will be loved? Discipled? Protected? Encouraged to grow? I long for the answer to be yes.

Conclusion:

If we commit ourselves to these foundational truths—truth, relationship, worship, generosity, and integrity—over time the church becomes a healthy place where God entrusts His people.

But that requires long-term resolve. We must continue in these things even when we don't see immediate results. We must resist the temptation to bypass the foundation and attempt to build something in the flesh.

Because a work of the flesh may look impressive for a moment—but it carries no eternal weight.

So let this be our prayer today:

Custom

"Lord, help us lay a strong foundation of truth, worship, and genuine relationship. Make us fruitful in every good work you have prepared for us, both inside and outside the church. Give us favor with those around us, that the name of Jesus would be honored because of our witness. And through these things, open doors for the gospel, so that many would come to know the saving grace of Christ."