

The Blessing of Community

Acts 2: 44-47

The verses we have read offer insight into the makeup of the early church. This was a very exciting time in the lives of those within the church. The early believers had only one thing on their minds – to serve the Lord in such a way that would honor Him and reach those who had not yet come to know the Lord.

There is no doubt we are blessed at Fellowship, but I wonder at times if we are actually receiving the full benefit of community within the church. When we study the lives and commitment of early believers, it is apparent they enjoyed much that has been lost down through the years. As the Lord designed the church, He intended for it to be a community of believers benefiting from one another, while contributing to the good of the entire body.

As we continue in our series: *Church – A New Testament Model*, I want to examine the [attributes](#) within the early church as we consider: [The Blessing of Community](#).

I. The Fellowship of the Church (44a) – [And all that believed were together](#). We find the early believers all came together. This wasn't a select few who had met for worship; ALL the people had come together. There was a great sense of fellowship among all the believers. They didn't have mini-congregations within the body; they all stood together and fellowshiped with one another.

- If we are to be all that we could be, we must all come together. We all share a common bond – saving grace through our Lord. We are all going to spend eternity in heaven together. We must be willing to fellowship together in this life?
- Genuine fellowship within the church requires more than just gathering under the same roof. We must all come together, desiring to be together. The church will never prosper and be all it can and should be without unity and fellowship among the believers.

II. The Focus of the Church (44b) – [And all that believed were together, and had all things common](#). They were a group of believers who not only enjoyed a close fellowship, but shared a common focus. They shared of their possessions, but more importantly they shared a desire for the things of God. When they came together for worship there was a common desire to serve the Lord in a way that pleased Him. They were willing to sacrifice of themselves for the good of the church. They weren't bogged down with petty debates and meaningless disputes. They had all things common.

- If we are to become what we need to be, we must all share a common focus. We must all agree on why we are here. We have not come to please ourselves, but to serve the Lord. It isn't about us; it is all about Him! Jesus is the reason we have come today and we must make Him the focus and the desire of our hearts.
- Many churches never prosper because they can never agree on what they need to accomplish. Do you ever consider why we are here? What is our purpose for being here? Can you imagine what this congregation could achieve if we had all things in common? We need to embrace the vision and see the big picture. We have a wonderful opportunity to make a difference in the lives of people, but we must come together to achieve it!

III. The Faith of the Church (45) – *And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.* There is much that could be said about the deeds of the early church. They were willing to give sacrificially for the good of others. They sold their personal possessions and brought the proceeds to the church so that it might be distributed among those who were less fortunate. They were more concerned about the needs of others than they were for themselves.

- As I considered this great act, I became aware of the faith it took for these to do such a thing. They had reached the place in their spiritual lives that they were willing to depend solely upon the Lord to meet their needs. These were people of faith. They had no way of knowing what their future held, but they were willing to trust God.
- Now, I am in no way advocating that you ought to sell everything you own and put the money in the offering plate, but I am saying we need to learn to trust the Lord and live by faith. Many times we miss our blessings because we lack the faith to be obedient unto the Lord. If we can't see how it's possible, we assume it cannot happen. If we are to become what the Lord desires of us, we must learn to trust the Lord and follow Him. I have no doubt that God wants to do great things for us; we must have faith!

IV. The Fervency of the Church (46-47a) – Here we discover the great zeal and fervency the church possessed for the Lord. Consider:

A. Their Attendance (46a) – *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple.* Did you see where they were and when? They couldn't get enough of the Lord. Every day they made their way to the house of God. Things were available at the temple that the world didn't offer. They were being fed spiritually, growing and maturing in the Lord. They had a hunger for the house of God that simply couldn't be satisfied.

- Oh how we need that in our day. We need a church body that is hungry for the Lord. We need those who are committed to making their way to the services and finding their place among God's people. We are living in difficult times. I need all the help and instruction that is available. We need to do all we can to be at the house of God at every possible opportunity! Make it a priority to attend the house of God. You will find help and strength for your soul.

B. Their Attitude (46b) – *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.* If they weren't at the temple, they were fellowshiping with one another. Their lives were consumed with spiritual activities. I know we have to work and do other things, but there is nothing better than building your life around the church and the people of God.

- I noticed this attribute as well. They were filled with *gladness and singleness of heart*. This wasn't a disgruntled group. They weren't grumbling and complaining. They were happy to be around fellow believers and content with what they had. We certainly need to find that in our day. I love the church; there is nothing like it in the world, but you don't have to be around church people long before you start hearing someone complain. We have been given far more than we deserve. We ought to rejoice that God has spared our souls from hell. We have a beautiful place where we can come and worship. There are those of like faith with whom we can fellowship. We need to refocus our attention and develop a godly attitude.

C. Their Affection (47a) – *Praising God, and having favour with all the people.* They simply loved the Lord. He had provided for their salvation and they couldn't help but praise Him. If you are saved, I know that you love the Lord, but we need to rediscover our affection. We need to develop a genuine passion for the Lord.

- Their affection wasn't reserved for the Lord only. They had favor with all people. There is that word ALL again. They were not a people who excluded others. They loved everyone. The word *favor* is an interesting word. It means "*that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech; good will, loving-kindness.*" They were literally glad to see one another. They greeted each other with grace and joy. The love they had for fellow believers was openly displayed.
- Ill will and discord will not survive where love is present. Would you like to see Fellowship transformed for the glory of God? It can happen if we would determine that we were going to love Jesus and others as we should.

V. The Fruit of the Church (47b) – *And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.* It would be wrong to assume the early church was perfect. It was made up of those who lived in the flesh, but it was a church that desired to live for the Lord and please Him. They were not perfect, but God blessed their efforts. *He added to the church daily such as should be saved.* The people were daily living for the Lord and they were continually seeing souls saved.

- God has not changed. He is well able to do the same for us. Is there anything more critical for the church than to reach a lost and dying world? That is likely the weakest aspect of the majority of churches in our day. We gather together, but we are not seeing much fruit. I don't know about you, but it thrills me to see a lost sinner come to Christ in salvation. We are here to be a witness unto the world. God wants to bless us and save lost souls. There is no reason for this, or any other church, to exist without seeing souls saved.

- The early church was made up of ordinary people like you and me. They were just committed to living for God and He blessed them because of it. Do you have lost family and friends that you would like to see saved? Sure; we all do. What can we do to achieve their salvation? If we would follow the pattern we have looked at today, I have no doubt Fellowship would begin to see much fruit for the Lord. God will bless us if we will conform to His ways.

Conclusion: While the early church wasn't perfect, she did portray how a healthy community of believers should look and function. These elements of community are present here, but I am convinced we could improve. There is nothing like being part of the body of Christ, the church! We are blessed beyond measure to have this opportunity.

Do you desire this community of believers to be strengthened? Has the Lord revealed areas in your life that need addressing? Have you received salvation in Christ, being added to the church? If there are needs today, bring them to Jesus. He stands ready and able to meet your need.