

Sharing Like an Acts 2 Church  
Acts 2:42-47

- I. Last week we began looking at the life of the early church.
  - A. Our picture comes from a brief, but detailed part of Acts 2.
    - 1) In these few verses we see the church at worship – we talked last week about connecting with God and with others.
    - 2) We also see the church sharing, growing, and connecting.
  - B. This week I'd like to talk with you about "sharing" like an Acts 2 church.
- II. So let's look to the early church in Acts 2:42-47.
  - A. Last week I used the phrase, "Spirit Led. Spirit Fed. Bearing Fruit."
    - 1) Let's look at it again in light of these verses.
    - 2) If we are a church that exhibits these three characteristics, did the early church have them?
  - B. First, notice that the church had power.
    - 1) Verse 43 says, "Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the Apostles."
    - 2) The church was up to something that only Divine Power could explain.
      - a) Religious movements were a dime a dozen during the Roman Empire.
      - b) Everyone had their own little gimmick or their own little "twist" to attract people to their God and their worship.
    - 3) People were amazed at the church!
      - a) Not because of the gimmicks, but because of the power.
      - b) They were experiencing signs and wonders that couldn't be explained.
    - 4) In other words, this was a church that was Spirit Led.
  - C. Now, notice that the church was known for its love.
    - 1) Verse 45 says, "Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need."
    - 2) Okay, we've moved from signs and wonders to "just plain crazy."
      - a) I work hard for my stuff. I earn my money. I'm not going to throw it away by propping up some low life that won't work.
      - b) First, Paul says, "If you don't work, you don't eat;" so we're not talking about throwing good money after bad.
      - c) Instead, we're talking about meeting real need, showing real love, and exhibiting real compassion.
    - 3) The church knew how to love. They knew that love spoken was only powerful when love was shown.
      - a) How did Jewish scholars and Pharisees in the church manage to show love to Greek slaves and widows?
      - b) How did Wealthy merchants and Roman officials manage to love Jewish fishermen and day laborers?
      - c) Only one thing makes that possible – the power of God through the Holy Spirit.
    - 4) In other words, this was a church that was Spirit Fed.
  - D. Finally, see that the church was growing daily.
    - 1) Verse 47 says, "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

- 2) There are two significant parts to this:
    - a) First, people were being saved. They were turning to God in repentance.
    - b) Second, these people were becoming a part of the fellowship of the church.
    - c) Turning to God in repentance and NOT becoming part of the church's fellowship isn't even an option!
  - 3) The Church in Acts 2 is doing something that over half the churches in the US don't do every year.
    - a) They are seeing people come to Christ and make professions of faith.
    - b) And they are seeing their church fellowship expand.
  - 4) In other words, the church in Acts 2 is Bearing Fruit.
- III. The early church shared everything they had with one another and that sharing made a profound difference for people, for families, and for their cities.
- A. A lot has changed in the world since the first century A.D.
    - 1) People are even more spread out, but at the same time travel more and are exposed to more – from all over the world.
    - 2) Information has become the new power and we have more information than we can ever hope to process.
    - 3) Can the church still pull it off? Can the church still make a difference?
- IV. We can, if we can answer three questions. First, what do we have to share?
- A. Is this Kiwanis meeting on Sundays? Or is this the body of Christ redeemed by his blood?
    - 1) Is this a tradition and an obligation? Or is this a celebration of God's great love for us in Jesus Christ?
    - 2) Are we going through the motions or does this "Jesus dance" that the world sees us doing really matter?
  - B. Until a church becomes convinced that what it has to share is nothing short of the most important message the world will ever hear – it was miss the boat.
    - 1) We are a church that knows God's forgiveness and grace – we've experienced it.
    - 2) We are a church that knows that real life, true life, abundant life can only be found in Jesus.
  - C. That's what we have to share: not a program, not a place, but a person (His name is Jesus).
- V. The second question to answer is this: why should we share it?
- A. First, out of gratitude.
    - 1) One thing we know is how much we have been forgiven.
    - 2) We know how much worse it could have been.
  - B. But also because we are God's one and only plan for the world to hear.
    - 1) God in his infinite wisdom chose you and me to be the bearers of this message.
    - 2) God chose us to be the way the Good News travels the world.
    - 3) And here's the kicker: there is no back up plan.
      - a) Well, God. What happens if I don't tell and I don't share? What then?
      - b) "Then those who need to hear never hear."
  - C. But before we start to think that this is a burden let's remember on thing.
    - 1) It's pretty amazing what God has done.

- 2) It's pretty amazing what God is doing!
  - 3) "It is no secret what God can do."
- VI. Final question is this: who should we share it with?
- A. Easy answer: everybody!
    - 1) Ok, John. Quit mess' around.
    - 2) All right. Everybody might be too big a group to get off to a good start.
    - 3) Sometimes the task seems so big and the responsibility so large that it paralyzes us.
      - a) The paralysis stops us from sharing with anyone.
      - b) We're not sure where to begin, who to begin with, what to share, and how to say it. [gooder]
  - B. God's first desire is that you share with those who are in your circle.
    - 1) You are the best person to share with those who are within your influence.
    - 2) Those you see everyday, those you have a lot of contact with, those you have a lot of influence over, those who already know you.
  - C. I want to give you a simple way to remember that this morning so I want you to get out the small pamphlet you received when you came in today.
    - 1) It's called the FRAN Plan
    - 2) It lays out those circles closest to you in an easy to remember way.
- VII. The FRAN Plan is this.
- A. Your initial sharing should be within four groups of people.
    - 1) Friends.
    - 2) Relatives.
    - 3) Acquaintances.
    - 4) Neighbors.
  - B. Over 70% of people who come for the first time, come because they were personally invited by someone they know.
    - 1) Don't underestimate the influence you have in those circles that are close to you.
    - 2) Chances are they will come to church – if you personally invite them.
    - 3) Chances are they will not come to church – unless you personally invite them.
- VIII. We are a church that is Spirit Led. Spirit Fed. And Bearing Fruit.
- A. We share that message and that power because:
    - 1) We know what God is doing in our lives.
    - 2) And we know that God is counting on us to share it, we are his first [his only] plan.
  - B. So we share with those closest to us.
    - 1) God has put them in our lives for just this reason.
      - a) We plant the seed.
      - b) We make the invitation.
      - c) We share.
    - 2) And God will do the rest.