

August 14th, 2016
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: Acts Men
Sermon #12 Title: What To Expect From the Church (Part 1)
Sermon #12 Text: (Acts 5:42)

I heard an older preacher tell a story one time about a man who confronted him about some of the methods and practices that was going on in their church. The man said to the pastor, “Brother . . . you’re trying to set this church back 50 years . . . we want to get in touch with today!” To which the pastor replied, “No, brother you’re wrong . . . I’m not trying to set this church back 50 years . . . I’m trying to set it back 2,000 years . . . and furthermore . . . I don’t want to get in touch with today . . . I want to stay in touch with the Lord!”

- I don’t think that pastor’s answer could be said any better!

And that is why we are studying the book of Acts! – So that 1.) We will be, what God intended for us to be, and demonstrated for us to be in the early examples of the Biblical church; and 2.) That we will do, what God intended for us to do, and demonstrated for us to do in the early examples of the Biblical church.

Now here is what I know. I’ve been doing this long enough to know that many people do not come to church, to learn about the church.

(Some may be thinking right now, “Preacher, I didn’t come here to learn about some theological doctrine that has nothing to do with my life . . . Preacher, I came here to find out how to make it in the dark, live through depression, and get some good news about all the bad news I’m dealing with in my life.)

- If that is the case . . . then you are still in the right place.

When you see and understand the ministry of the church, the way the Lord wants you to see and understand the ministry of the church, you will begin to get answers to questions you never thought to ask . . . you will find comforts that you didn’t know existed . . . and you will find light that scatters the dark.

The problem for most people is that there is a fundamental flaw in their understanding of the church, and the church ministry, and the primary reason for that is that they get their ideas about “church” from the culture, not from the scripture, and it is here, and only here that you can learn what to rightly expect from the Lord’s church.

Furthermore, if there is anyone who ought to understand the church, it ought to be the church!

In chapter 5:42-6:7, we turn the pages of history back 2000 years and as Luke writes, “In those days” we can learn a lot about what to expect concerning the ministry, work, and role that we play in the life of the church, and the role the church plays in the life of believers.

The apostles have been released from prison. – They had been put there for preaching.

The early church was just a few months old, and had already endured Persecution from without from the Sanhedrin, Perversion from within, from Ananias and Sapphira, and now they are going to endure Problems from each other. What's more, while all of this is going on, people are still coming to Jesus.

Never get the idea that the church must be problem free in order for the Lord's Spirit to move.

2 things from one verse that you can learn to expect from the Lord's church:

I. The Practice of the Church – To Make Disciples

If we could only use three words to sum up the Primary Practice, and purpose of the church, it would be this – “To Make Disciples”

- In the Commissioning of the Church in Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus said that his apostles were to be “teaching men to observe all things whatsoever He commanded.”

- From the beginning the charge was to “make disciples” and with every ounce of unction that's what these men were attempting to do!

5:42 – “Daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

- What is our God given responsibility to do, that only we can do?

- (Remember – We cannot do, what only God can do – but we cannot Fail to do, what God has given us to do.)

A. What They Did – “they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

1.) that is they “explained” Jesus

2.) that is they “proclaimed” Jesus

- Now that didn't merely “proclaim” Him, they “explained” Him.

- The Message is Jesus, the Method is Proclamation and Explanation!

- This is what the God that Loves You says for us to do! He has instructed us to preach and teach, because that's what we need to Hear and to Know!

(Now here is the great disconnect for too many people – They never give ear long enough to understand the Man, Ministry, and Method of Jesus.)

- Someone says, “I'm depressed” –and you want to talk about Jesus.

- Someone else says, “I am sick, and suffering” and all you want to talk about is Jesus.

- Maybe someone says, “I am in an unimaginable circumstance, loved ones are in grievous pain, my children are suffering, I am nearly destitute, I come here to a church, and all you want to talk about is Jesus.”

- That's exactly what we are trying to say – regardless of what you are dealing with, Every answer, every help, every hope, every comfort, every shred of healing and power begins and ends with Jesus!

In 1973, a young Andrae Crouch penned these words –

If you have some questions

In the corners of your mind,
Traces of discouragement,
The peace you cannot find,
Reflections of your past,
Seem to face you everyday,
But this one thing I do know,
That Jesus is the way.

Jesus is the Answer for the World today, above Him there's no other, Jesus is the way!

- That's why Paul wrote in 2nd Corinthians 4:5 – "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord."

- Why is that?

- There is the Salvation of the Soul – in Jesus

- There is Stability of the Mind – in Jesus

- There is Comfort in Pain – in Jesus

- The very first thing that every person in every pain in every problem, in every sin . . . is to know and have an elementary understanding of JESUS!

(Now – note this – "Preaching, and Teaching" is ALL that we can do – we have no power to "do" anything else!

(Even our Praying, is contingent upon the Preaching and Teaching of the Word.)

There is only power in praying, as long as there is response to preaching and teaching)

- Preacher, I don't have to listen to preaching and teaching in order for my prayers to be heard?

- Says who? – Proverbs 28:9 – "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination."

- Why should God give Himself to hear any man, or any woman who will not give themselves to hear from Him?

Listen to what the Lord said to Israel through Zechariah the prophet....

Zechariah 7:11-14 – "But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear. Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the LORD of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the LORD of hosts. Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts:"

- The very most that we can do is proclaim the word, and explain the word, and JESUS is the WORD MADE FLESH – He is the Bible in a Body!

- We have no Power to do, what is only God's to do!

- we cannot change your heart

- we cannot govern the circumstances of your life.

- we cannot of our own accord heal people

- Men have the approach that says, "I need something you are going to do!" – God says "I have something, I first want you to hear!"

- We can Preach Jesus, We can Teach Jesus, and we can pray to the Father through by the Name of or authority of Jesus on your behalf – and that is all that God has given us the ability to do!

B. When They Did It

1.) "Daily."

a.) 3 times in the book of Acts

b.) twice in the book of Luke – the historian Dr. Luke underscores that Jesus taught daily, and the people that Jesus indwelt, taught daily.

b.) 2 Timothy 4:2 – Paul told preacher boy Timothy to “Preach the Word, be instant in season and out of season.” – which was Paul’s way of saying – “all the time.”

- The explaining of Jesus and the proclaiming of Jesus is to be the every present ministry because of our ever present life!

- This is a cousin of the commandment given to the Children of Israel in Deuteronomy:

- the Lord told them to Learn the Word of God daily –
- the Lord moved the church to Teach and Preach the Word of God daily.

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 – “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”

- If man doesn’t live by Bread Alone, but by Every Word that comes from the Mouth of God, then it stands to reason that this ministry is a daily ministry, not a Sunday Ministry!

C. Where They Did It

1.) “In the temple and in every house”

a.) What happens in the Lord’s house is to be part of your house.

(Far too many people live like “church is church” and the rest of life is the rest of life)

b.) Now this is an example of the homes of those believers . . . they didn’t leave the Word of the Lord at the “temple” but they welcomed it being taught in their homes.

The Word of the Lord was never meant to be tied up behind the four walls of a meeting place.

Now that being said, understand that the Practice of the Church is to be a Preaching Church, a Teaching Church, and while it is not in this text, it is to be a Praying and Praising Church.

II. The Power from the Church – To Become Disciples

Now there are many things the church cannot do, as we said, but that doesn’t mean there is no power that comes from it.

– The work of the church is to make disciples, the power to you from the church is to become a disciple!

6:1 – “And in those days, when the number of disciples was multiplied . . .”

- They were doing what they could do – preach and teach – and the Spirit of God was doing what only the Spirit of God could do, which was “convict and convert” – and people didn’t just become “believers!” – they became “disciples!”

- I want you to put this down big plain and straight! – The Power in your Life does not come from merely “believing in Jesus” – it comes from “BELIEVING JESUS” and being a “DISCIPLE” of Jesus!

A. What a Disciple Is – This word is way over used, and rarely understood.

1.) A “Mathaytace” The Greek word is “Mathaytace” – it is one who IS a PUPIL, and or a LEARNER! – by definition. – It is one who is “GIVEN” to LEARNING.

a.) The root word in the English comes from the same word we get for the word “Discipline”

For our vernacular we might say a Disciple is a DISCIPLINED BELIEVER. – An “undisciplined believer” cannot be called a disciple.

2.) A Martyr – the word in the Greek language that is translated as “Witness” in the English, is actually the word for “Martyr”. Martyroos.

- Now that being said, No one who will not be a Martyr, cannot be a Disciple!

- Where do you get that Preacher?

a.) Luke 14:26-27 – “If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”

A True disciple, is one who has walked away from his own life, his own will, his own plans, his own self, to be a living, breathing student of Jesus Christ!

B. What a Disciple Does

While the word Disciple does not appear in this text, the entire theme of it does marvelously.

1.) Proverbs 4:20-22 – “My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.”

a.) A Disciple – “LISTENS FOR THE WORD of the Lord – “attend to my words”

b.) A Disciple – “LOVES to hear from the Word of the Lord.” – “Keep them in the midst of thine heart”

c.) A Disciple – “LIVES what he has Heard from the Word of the Lord.” – “They are LIFE” unto those that find them.

(Now someone may take the erroneous notion of thinking – I can do all of that without the church . . . NO YOU CAN'T)

#1 – First of all, all throughout the New Testament, you find all “disciples” and “saints” everywhere connected to the Assembly of the Church – You’re not special.

#2 – Coming together in the Assembly is the New Testament Expectation!

4 times in the book of 1st Corinthians Paul said, “when ye come together”

#3 – Believers are to be Preached To Believers, they are to be Taught Believers . . .

1st Timothy 4:6 – Paul told preacher Timothy – “If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up

in the words of faith and of good doctrine where unto thou hast attained.”

#4 – Hebrews 13:7 – “Remember them that have the rule over you, who have spoken the Word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”

- There is the expectation that believers are under leaders.

- Now all of that beings said, a Disciple is Part of the Local Church, Listening For, Loving, and Living Out the Word of the Lord.

C. What a Disciple Has

- Here is where the rubber meets the road. – What does a Disciple have, that undisciplined believers do not have? What does a person get, by becoming a disciple, sold out to learning, loving, and living?

- 1.) Psalm 145:18-19 – “The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.”

- 2.) John 14:23 – “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

- 3.) James 4:8 – “Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you.”

A disciple has an intimacy with the Lord that no other person has.

- They will know the presence of the Lord
- They will know the power of the Lord’s comfort
- They will have the light of the Lord’s Wisdom

- They will have the peace that passes understanding

Conclusion: - The Practice of the Church is to Make Disciples of Jesus. The Power we get From the Church is Becoming Disciples of Jesus!

- that’s why – when someone comes to church suffering . . . we explain and proclaim Jesus

- that’s why – when someone comes to church filled with depression, facing destitution, sorrowing from devastation, we explain and proclaim Jesus.

Which is why Paul proclaimed to the church at Philippi in Philippians 4:6-7 – “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds *through Christ Jesus.*”

What you should expect from the church – Jesus!