

The Early Church – Work of Acts 2:40-47

Introduction:

Acts 2 deals with the beginning of the Lord's church. Today, we will notice from this chapter some things that they did in the work of the early church. Each of these things are important for us to know so that we can do the work of the Lord's church.

Today, we will look at three aspects of the work of the church.

- I. The work of the church is to preach the gospel.
- II. The work of the church is to help those who are in need.
- III. The church is to edify one another.

I. The work of the church is to preach the gospel (2:40-41).

- A. When the church was founded, Christ was being preached.
 1. This is what Peter was doing in Acts 2:14-36.
 2. There was no manmade doctrine or teaching; they only taught Christ.
- B. The early disciples were commanded to preach Christ.
 1. The only message that we preach is the gospel of Christ (it encompasses many aspects, but it is still the message of Christ).
 - a. Mk. 16:15 - And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."
 - b. I Cor. 2:1-5 - And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. {2} For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. {3} I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. {4} And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, {5} that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.
 - c. II Tim. 4:1-2 - I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: {2} Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.
 2. We also have the example of the early church preaching the gospel to others.
 - a. This is exactly what Peter and the apostles were doing on the Day of Pentecost.
 - b. Acts 8:4 - Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.
 - c. Acts 8:35 - Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.
 - d. There were no gimmicks and no prizes in order to draw people into the church; they simply preached Christ.
 3. When Christ was taught, great things happened.

- a. Salvation comes by obeying the word that is preached.
 - b. **Rom. 10:17** - So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
 - c. **Rom. 10:14-15** - How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? {15} And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"
 - d. **I Cor. 1:18, 21-24** - For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. {21} For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. {22} For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; {23} but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, {24} but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
- C. The work of the church, both then and now, is to preach the gospel of Christ.

II. The work of the church is to help those who are in need (2:44-45).

- A. We are commanded as Christians to help those who are in need.
 - 1. **Pr. 3:27-28** - Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in the power of your hand to do so. {28} Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it," when you have it with you.
 - 2. **Rom. 12:13** - distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.
 - 3. **Gal. 6:9-10** - And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. {10} Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.
- B. Notice how the early church went about accomplishing this goal.
 - 1. The early church was willing to sell what they had in order to help those in need.
 - a. **Acts 2:44-45**
 - b. **Acts 4:32-37** - Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. {33} And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. {34} Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, {35} and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need. {36} And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the

apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, {37} having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

2. We must be willing to do whatever it takes in order to help those who are in need; especially “those who are of the household of faith.”
- C. Part of helping others is learning how to be a servant to others.
1. Jesus teaches us what it means to truly be a servant (and by helping others, we are being a servant to them).
 - a. **Jn. 13:1-15**
 - b. **Mk. 9:35** - And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “If anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”
 - c. **Mk. 10:43-45** - Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. {44} And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. {45} For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.
 2. We must learn to be a servant, just as Jesus was a servant (**Phil. 2:7**).
- I. The work of the church is to preach the gospel.
 - II. The work of the church is to help those who are in need.
- III. The church is to edify one another (2:46-47a).**
- A. When the church met daily, they were there, in part, to encourage one another.
 1. They had many struggles to deal with.
 - a. They lived in a time when there was a great punishment for being a Christian.
 - b. They needed the encouragement from their brethren in order to remain faithful to God.
 2. We need the same kind of encouragement because the ultimate goal is the same.
 - a. Our soul is at stake.
 - b. Even though we may not be threatened physically, we still have to remain faithful in order to obtain that home in heaven.
 - B. One of the main purposes of the church meeting together is to edify (encourage) one another.
 1. **Rom. 14:19** - Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.
 2. **I Cor. 14:26** - How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.
 3. **I Thes. 5:11** - Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.
 4. **Heb. 10:24-25** - And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, {25} not forsaking the assembling of ourselves

together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

- C. We must have love for one another.
 - 1. **I Cor. 8:1** - Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.
 - 2. If we truly love one another, we will do what we can to encourage each other.

Conclusion:

When these things are done, then growth will occur (and we will talk about that growth next week).

Each of these things are done so that the lost can be saved.

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