

The Jerusalem Church: the Original

--7/5/09, Sun Valley, tp

Introduction

- A. The first church established on Pentecost: **Acts 2:41-47**
- B. Began as a "mega-church" of 3,000 then 5,000 but then was scattered in **Acts 8:4**
- C. Thereafter, mostly the churches are much smaller: commonly small groups meeting in the homes of the brethren. They were designed to be tight-knit families.
- D. Let us examine what the churches were designed to be in the ideal recorded by God.

I. Formation of the Body

A. "Received his word"

- 1. Word is from logos, **John 1:1-14**. Jesus revealed and embodied the propositional truth which leads to know God.
- 2. Gospel sermon of **verses 14-36** was the Word that they received
 - a. Explained the signs
 - b. Prophecies of **Joel 2:28-32 and Psalm 16**
 - c. Applied these truths to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus
 - d. Jesus is Lord. From His throne He had sent, poured out the Holy Spirit which they were now the witnesses of.
- 3. What shall we DO?
 - a. Repent (of their disobedience toward Jesus and all of God's purposes revealed in the Bible)
 - b. Be Baptized in the name of Jesus (who has the authority to forgive sins)
 - c. For the forgiveness of sins (past sins exposed by Jesus' teaching and all Scriptures)
 - d. Receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (also called the earnest of our inheritance in Ephesians 1 and promises us great benefits in living our lives according to the inspired writings of the Comforter as promised in John 14-16.)
 - e. Many other words ...
 - Solemnly testified.
 - Exhorted: save yourselves from this Perverse Generation. (There will be no regeneration if don't realize that our generation is perverse and destructive to our souls.)

B. Were baptized and added: some 3,000 souls

- 1. Lord forms the body, **v. 47**
- 2. Names written in heaven, **Hebrews 12:23**
- 3. Citizenship is in heaven, **Philippians 3:20**
- 4. Body of Christ: **Ephesians 1:22-23**
- 5. Thus equipped to edify itself in love: **Ephesians 4:12-16**

II. Continually devoting themselves to FOUR THINGS:

A. Apostles' teaching Fellowship Breaking of bread Prayer

B. Apostles' teaching

- 1. **Matthew 28:18-30** teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

2. **John 8:31-33** disciples who follow Jesus will know the truth, and the truth will make them free.
3. **Romans 6:5-7** Freed from sin with the death of the body of sin
4. **Ephesians 4:17-24** Walk no longer as the Gentiles, in the futility of their minds
 - a. ignorance, hardness, sensuality, greed
 - b. Put on the NEW Man: Christ, **Galatians 3:27**
 - c. Especially in the HOME: **Ephesians 5:22-33**. As the church forms you into a new family, your own family life must change.

C. Fellowship (koinonia)

1. Partnership, coparticipation, sharing, joint activity, corporate functioning (as the body of Christ)
2. Putting into practice the principles of serving one another and saving the lost.
 - **Philippians 1:5; 2:1; 3:11**
 - **1 John 1:3, 6-7**
3. Putting into practice the principles of worship, "communion"
 - **1 Corinthians 1:9; 10:16; 2 Corinthians 6:14**

D. Breaking of bread: the Lord's Supper

1. **1 Corinthians 11:23-26** "do this in remembrance of Me" ... "show forth His death until He comes.
2. **Acts 20:7** the purpose of the assembly on the first day of the week
3. **Hebrews 10:24-25** Not forsaking the assembling, but exhorting one another daily ...

E. Prayer: again, continually devoted ...

1. Thanksgiving and praise, **Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2-4** devoted to prayer
2. Petition, **Ephesians 6:18-20** for all the saints, and especially for the evangelist, for doors to open.
 - **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18** rejoice, pray without ceasing

III. All who believed were together.

A. Had all things common -- as if they were family.

1. They say "blood is thicker than water"
2. In the flesh, the clan is first before all other relationships.
3. Not so in the family of God.

B. **Matthew 12:47-50** (all three accounts record this pronouncement, even John implies it at the cross of Jesus)

1. "whoever shall do the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is my brother and sister and mother."
2. **Galatians 6:10** do good to all men, especially to the household of faith
3. **Romans 12:10** preferring one another in honor
4. **1 Thessalonians 4:10** taught at the very beginning to love the brethren
 - **1 Peter 2:17; 1 John 2:10; 4:21; 3:14, 16** lay down our lives for the brethren

C. Day by day, continually with one mind in the temple

1. breaking bread from house to house -- bonding with one another in our houses and homes by

eating together, sharing our tables with brethren as we do with our family in the flesh.

2. taking their meals with gladness and sincerity of heart. -- joy of being together for completely selfless reasons.

D. Praising God -- Having favor with all the people: impressive to see this new man and new family