

ACTion Church

Embrace Communalism

Live Oak Church
February 22, 2009

Acts 2:

41Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

The Fellowship of the Believers

42They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

43Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. **44**All the believers were together and had everything in common. **45**Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. **46**Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.

They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

1 Peter 3:

15But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, **16**keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

John 13:

34"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. **35**By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one

another."

God has provided _____

_____:

To _____,

not a big headed thing

My Teaching may not be the most significant

Small Group Teaching

The Instant message, the speaking of psalms, hymns, as in Ephesians 5, Romans 1

(mutual encouragement),

Thus they were devoted to

_____,

Romans 12:

4Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5**so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the

others. **6**We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

7If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; **8if it is encouraging, let him encourage;** if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

_____ with an attitude of thanksgiving,

:

:

They gave _____

Their life _____

Next Week read Acts 4 - 9

Resources used: *The Acts of the Apostles*, William Barclay; *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*; *Faith Lessons on the Early Church* Ray Vander Laan.



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John 16:

33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Last Week I asked have you ever wondered how the Church got to be what it is...

Perhaps a better question is What should the church look like...

[A few slides of some churches](#)

Perhaps the church less like this (church building picture) & more like this (News Week Cover)

The church is not the physical structure, then perhaps it is the programs, or the internal structures

maybe it is the staff - **(Carter church assistant video?)**

Church is not even just the people who regularly attend worship at a particular house of worship... It's the body of Christ, comprised of the **community** of believers

Jesus sets His church that was to come in opposition with the world around it.... In the pagan world, religion had little to do with the morality of everyday life. It was primarily a way of appeasing or bartering with the gods to get what one wanted...

Relationship between Rabbi & Talmidim (disciples) based not on knowledge, but commitment, life, action.

God has provided all that is needed for the church to be the church God has called it to be

God provided the people, the people brought 3 aspects: Devotion, Sense, Sacrifice.

Devotion:

They devoted themselves **daily**

To teaching,

not a big headed thing

My Teaching may not be the most significant

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hymns, as in Ephesians 5, Romans 1

(mutual encouragement),

Thus they were devoted to

fellowship,

Romans 12:

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needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

(Insert Picture of Sled Dogs)A few years ago, an old acquaintance of mine served as a police officer in a northern native settlement in Canada. One day a rabid wolf wandered into the aboriginal settlement. My friend eventually shot it, but not before it attacked a young man and his grandmother in their home, making kindling out of a chair the young man used to protect himself from his attacker.

There were about 150 sled dogs in the village—more than a match for one sick wolf—yet the intruder was left alone to do her work. Why? My friend explained that in order to prevent the dogs from fighting and wounding each other, they had each been tied to wooden stakes spaced far enough apart to prevent them from reaching any neighboring animal. Because of this, the wolf walked freely among the dogs, killing some and badly wounding others. In isolation they were no match for their foe, and they suffered terribly for it.

What a picture of the need for every Christian to belong to a body of believers. Alone and isolated, Christians present themselves as much easier prey for the schemes of the Enemy of our souls.

Awlwyn Balnave, Calgary, Canada.

breaking of bread with an attitude of **thanksgiving,**

prayer - not so much for themselves as for God's mission,

the rest of the fellowship, the world

Sense:

They had a sense of **awe, wonder, &**

expectation for God to move,

& miracles were done. (**& celebrated in the fellowship**)

Sacrifice:

They gave everything for the cause

They were willing to give up anything

Their life of love impacted their community

Established favor with the community.

1 Peter 3: 15&16

15But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, **16**keeping a clear conscience, so that **those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.**

Going Viral update... Live Oak Church facebook page is getting members who have never been to Live Oak.

Some of them are your friends, some are mine & Katie's, there is one who is a friend of a friend of mine... neither of whom have been to Live Oak.

As I read accounts of the New Testament church, no characteristic stands out more sharply than [diversity]. Beginning with Pentecost, the Christian church

dismantled the barriers of gender, race, and social class that had marked Jewish congregations. Paul, who as a rabbi had given thanks daily that he was not born a woman, slave, or Gentile, marveled over the radical change: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

One modern Indian pastor told me, "Most of what happens in Christian churches, including even miracles, can be duplicated in Hindu and Muslim congregations. But in my area only Christians strive, however ineptly, to mix men and women of different castes, races, and social groups. That's the real miracle."

Diversity complicates rather than simplifies life. Perhaps for this reason we tend to surround ourselves with people of similar age, economic class, and opinion. Church offers a place where infants and grandparents, unemployed and executives, immigrants and blue bloods can come together. Just yesterday I sat sandwiched between an elderly man hooked up to a puffing oxygen tank and a breastfeeding baby who grunted loudly and contentedly throughout the sermon. Where else can we find that mixture?

When I walk into a new church, the more its members resemble each other—and resemble me—the more uncomfortable I feel.

Philip Yancey, "Denominational Diagnostics," Christianity Today (November 2008), p. 11.

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