

## **How Can A Church Grow?**

(Acts 2:37-47)

**Sundays, May 6,13,20 2018**

Christians often try to grow churches and fail. They ask, “How can a church grow?” To find the answer to such a question, we need to turn to a resource for church growth, namely, the book of Acts. The church in Jerusalem from its beginning was a growing church. It grew because the conditions were right! In this lesson we want to examine those conditions.

### **I. A Growing Church is an Evangelistic Church.**

One of the conditions that produced church growth was an evangelistic concern. The church in Jerusalem was interested in reaching others with the gospel.

- a. Evangelism grows out of basic beliefs. “And they continued steadfastly in the Apostles doctrine” (2:42). The concept of the “Apostles doctrine” seems to be diverse. More than likely, some of these doctrines included:
  - People are lost
  - Christ can save
  - People can be changed by Jesus Christ
  - Eternal destiny depends on a person’s response to Jesus Christ.

These kinds of beliefs motivate one for evangelism.

- b. Evangelism extends to various groups. The church at Jerusalem made the Jews their target group. Later, the Christians aimed at Samaritans [half-Jews] and pagans. The church must have an evangelistic appeal for all people. Salvation is for everyone. The plan of salvation is inclusive. Christ paid the price of redemption for the entire human race.

### **II. A Growing Church is a Worshipping Church.**

From the earliest records of the New Testament Church, the congregation engaged in worship. Worship of Jesus Christ made the conditions right for the church to grow.

- a. Genuine worship has praise of Jesus Christ as its object. The Lord Jesus Christ was the object of the church’s affection.
- b. Genuine worship has personal evaluation as its result. Whenever one directs thoughts and affection toward Christ, painful realization comes of human finiteness and sin. Christians see themselves as they really are.

## Sunday, May 27, 2018

### **III. A Growing Church is a Caring Church.**

Careful study of the Jerusalem church indicates another condition that is imperative for church growth. It is the care the believers had for others.

- a. The church recognized their union with each other. A prominent word that describes the union of believers with Christ and with each other is fellowship. The word is descriptive of a joint partnership because of a union with Christ in faith.
- b. The church practiced fellowship. The more one study's the New Testament churches, the more one can see their Christian relationships with one another. They respected one another, helped one another, and forgave one another. Furthermore, the church ministered to the needs of those who were not in their fellowship.

## Sundays, June 3, 10, 2018

### **IV. A Growing Church is a Praying Church.**

No church can grow without the prevalence of prayer in its life. The early church prayed constantly. "And they continued steadfastly.....in prayer" [vs42].

- a. Prayer represents a communion with the Lord. The New Testament Christians prayed as an act of enjoying the presence of God. There is a book entitled, "The act of being with God." Just that title alone gives the best definition of prayer.
- b. Prayer represents a dependence on the Lord. The early Christians prayed in order to seek God's will and to ask for God's power. Their prayer life represented a dependence on the Lord.

## Sundays, June 17, 24, 2018

### **V. A Growing Church is a Giving Church.**

A casual study of the New Testament will disclose that the early church had a sacrificial spirit. They were willing to give.

- a. Giving comes from the willingness to give oneself. Many of the New Testament believers loved the Lord so much that they gave their lives. Stephen was a prominent example of one who did not love his life more than Christ.
- b. Giving demonstrates itself in the area of time and possessions. The First – Century believers took time to accomplish Christ's mission. They gave of their possessions so His mission could be completed.