

Intro

- ~ When something is made and is successful it's not long after that you see "knockoffs" (Rolex, Prada, Gucci)
- ~ Others are Dove is Dave, PlayStation is Polystation, Addidas is adidos, Microsoft Windows is Michaelsoft Binbows, Olay is Okay, Oreos is Borios, Arm & Hammer is Arm & Hatchett, Colgage is Collage, Crest is Crust
- ~ When we left the hotel to come back to the states while we were in Guatemala there was a guy standing outside announcing he was selling Rolexes. You know there not real.
- ~ There's many schemes to imitate that which works well and pass it off as if it is the real thing
- ~ Knockoff's use the blueprint of the real to make their products with less than quality materials and craftsmanship
- ~ One danger we don't want to make as a church is to act authenticate while were not
- ~ The best way for us to be a biblical church is to look to the word and imitate it, obey it and practice it
- ~ While we have Paul's letters to lay out parameters for the NT church we have the early church in the book of Acts to show us how the early church did it. What did they do and how did they go about church?
- ~ Acts 2 shows us what the early church was doing. This is what we have as a model. A real model, not the fake
- ~ It was a fellowshiping church, sharing church, preaching church, meeting church, caring church, giving church, a spiritually growing church, a glorifying God church and as result it was a growing church
- ~ This was a church that was diligent about their relationship with God
- ~ Is numerical growth our goal or is it spiritual growth? Our growth should be to worry about depth and allow God to take care of the breadth
- ~ Weirsbe - They met daily (Acts 2:46), cared daily (Acts 6:1), won souls daily (Acts 2:47), searched the Scriptures daily (Acts 17:11), and increased in number daily (Acts 16:5). Their Christian faith was a day-to-day reality, not a once-a-week routine. Why? Because the risen Christ was a living reality to them, and His resurrection power was at work in their lives through the Spirit.
- ~ I find 4 things in Acts 2 that point us in the direction of a biblical church:
 - Reaching in – serving / ministering
 - Reaching out – sharing / evangelizing
 - Rooting down – Anchoring / building on right foundation
 - Rising up – Adding (the Lord is adding to the church)

OutlineReaching out - Sharing

- ~ In Acts the propagation of the gospel is an overarching theme demonstrated by where the disciples went, Peter goes to Cornelius's house, Paul from the point of his conversion on was preaching the gospel, Paul's missionary trips were for preaching the gospel, even to the very end Paul was sharing the gospel (Acts 28:23-31)
- ~ In the OT Israel was to be a proclamation nation to the gentiles and they didn't do it
- ~ Jesus gave the Great Commission to the disciples before he left this earth and it wasn't only for the disciples
- ~ If we want to see people come to Christ and be disciples how do we expect that to happen? We share the gospel and invite people to church to hear the gospel. God hasn't appointed angels to come down from heaven to preach the gospel but God has appointed us to do that
- ~ How do reach out? We're always inviting people to church. Carry tracts with you and as you go share Christ

Reaching in - Serving

- ~ Notice how the church was like a family just as the CEV reads
- ~ Sports teams who were talented could only go so far until that talented team had chemistry
- ~ The chemistry a church has should supersede that of a sports team because what we have in common is Christ. ~ A sports team may have winning as their common goal but we have Christ
- ~ Band of Brothers soldier was glad for Hitler only in the sense it brought him together with his fellow soldiers. They were close and truly brothers. They truly were a band of brothers
- ~ How is chemistry developed? A commitment to serve each other, care, love, sacrifice for each other
- ~ We went to Bob David's a few weeks ago, a work day, a picnic, fellowship are means of building chemistry
- ~ This word chemistry reminds me of the word unity
- ~ *Ps 133 A Song of degrees of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! 2 It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; 3 As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.*
- ~ List some of the "one anothers"

Rooting down – Anchoring

~ Growing up spiritually based on the right resources

~ Spiritual roots of the Word and Prayer

~ Once those people came to Christ they were hearing the word taught and praying together

~ Right off the bat these new believers were learning the basics, the foundations – the word and prayer

~ Read your bible and pray every day and you'll grow, grow, grow (bible club song)

~ We see the importance of this later in Acts 6 when there was dissention over the feeding of the widows. The Greek widows said they were not given their fair share of food when it was passed out so they went to the apostles and the apostles said they shouldn't leave preaching and prayer to serve tables (Acts 6:1-7)

Prayer

~ You ever notice that Paul's prayers are never to get out of his situation but for God to give him boldness for Christ in his situation?

~ *Eph 6:18-20 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; 19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*

~ *Acts 28:30,31 And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, 31 Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.*

~ The disciples devoted themselves to prayer. It was prayer for boldness to speak God's word.

~ Acts 4:13 – the city officials notes the boldness of Peter and John. They were bold yet they were uneducated

~ Acts 4:29 – Peter and John were detained for peaching Christ and were released but told not to preach anymore. So what do Peter and John do? They pray for more boldness to speak God's word

~ Acts 4:31 – As they prayed the place was shaken and they spoke God's word with boldness

~ Pray for boldness but after you pray that you go and do it and the boldness will compound

Word of God

~ The people continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine

~ Steadfastly continued (proskartereo) to be earnest towards, that is, (to a thing) to persevere, be constantly diligent, or (in a place) to attend assiduously all the exercises, or (to a person) to adhere closely to (as a servitor)

~ This idea of continuing appears often in these early chapters of Acts

- Acts 1:14 Continuing in prayer
- Acts 2:42 continuing in teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer
- Acts 2:46 continuing daily in the temple and breaking bread from house to house
- Acts 6:4 the apostles said they would give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word

~ The apostles teaching was based on the OT and what Jesus had taught them

~ The core of their message/preaching was Jesus crucified and risen from the dead

Rising up - Adding

~ This church was doing the right things and God added to it

~ This early church positioned itself to be blessed by God

~ We have to control the things we can control and let God control the things beyond our control when it comes to church growth

Conclusion

~ The things we can control are Reaching in, Reaching out, building on the foundation of prayer and the word

~ This church was doing the right things, praising God, having favor with the people and the Lord added

~ V47 the church grew because of the way they loved each other. Jesus said by this the world will you know you're my children by the way you love each other (Jn 13:35). What does the world see? The church fighting with each, sinning, having affairs, and making a mockery of the name of Christ. It's no wonder the world doesn't want to come to Christ. The world needs to see the church care about each other

~ A church that is attractive to the world is a church that is excited about its church. A church that doesn't complain about its church,

~ There's always something to complain about but do we pray as much as we complain?

~ The world needs the church to speak about Christ