

Being a Church the Lord Adds to

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[0 : 0 0] talking about it for a few weeks, been praying about it and asking you to invite a friend. And we're praying, I'm praying for a good turnout. I'm praying for somebody to show up that didn't come today, somebody that you invited. And I trust and I hope that you're taking it serious and that you are inviting somebody. And so in light of next Sunday, I want to just address something or point something out here and preach through a short message from Acts chapter 2. And before we make comments, let's read the passage, the very end of the chapter, go all the way to the end, to chapter 2, verse 42 through 47. And let's read this together. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul. And many wonders and signs were done by the apostles and all that believed were together and had all things common and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved.

Now this is the first local church ever established in history as we know it, the very first one. And as we've studied Sunday school recently, you kind of got your bearings a little bit. This is where it started. Here in Jerusalem, here with these disciples of the Lord that were gathered. And there was more than just 12. There was a group of them. And as they begin with and endowed with the spirit of God and power that they received, they go on to witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And many are coming and believing and they're being added. It's a little bit later, there's thousands. I'm actually in, it's 3,000 in verse 41. And so there's a no small stir. Now this local church is getting established. It's very, very elementary, very just beginning stages of getting some kind of form or assembly together. But they're meeting and you can see some things they're doing. And we'll look at that in a moment. But these are Jews in Jerusalem and they're being converted to a belief that Jesus Christ is their Messiah and that they killed him, but that he resurrected, he's alive and he's the true Messiah. They're believing that he was in fact raised from the dead. And I'm not going to take the time to run the references, but from the very beginning, that was what they were to be witness of when Jesus Christ says, you shall be witnesses unto me. And you'll look in the next chapter 2 and 3 and 4 and 5, you'll see that they were witnesses of his resurrection. That they knew, they all knew about Jesus Christ. This was very popular and public knowledge of what took place there in Jerusalem. Now as we're reading this in Acts chapter 2, historically speaking, we're just weeks, just weeks removed from Calvary. So it's very alive. It's very fresh. It just took place. It wasn't that these preachers were preaching on what they did to Jesus and drumming up some emotion. No, they all knew what took place. It was public, it was heralded, and some were very much themselves witnesses of his crucifixion. I think it's hard for us to see the scene.

[3 : 3 0] Some 2,000 years we'd say, not quite, but close. 2,000 years backwards into history to see the scene here in Jerusalem and to really sense and know the spiritual climate of the city and of what's taking place with these apostles of the Lord. I mean, the three and a half year ministry of Jesus Christ and them going all over Israel, preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand and preparing that people to receive their king, the king of kings, their messiah, the Christ, and the healings and the signs that are associated with that kingdom that were prophesied by those prophets that he would come and he would show the power of God. And he showed up to his disciples and he gave them power. And they had power to cleanse the lepers and raise the dead and heal the sick. And these are all signs that were attached to their message that was the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This is a Jewish kingdom. It's something that God promised to Israel where God would be their king and it would reign over the world through the throat of David in Jerusalem. And so all of those signs and those powers and wonders and that message was all associated in

that day with that kingdom. Now, this reached a climax when Jesus Christ came into Jerusalem, riding on a colt, the foal of an ass, and they lauded him as their king and they

Hosanna, glory to God in the highest and laid down their coats and they laid down the palm fronds and he walked into Jerusalem like the king was entering his city. And then just a few days later, they apprehended him, arrested him, fake trial, false witnesses, beat, bloodied and murdered him. Just like that. And then days later, there's rumors, there's sightings, he's alive, he's resurrected, there's this confusion and this just such an emotional roller coaster going on and of what is true and what is happening and what is this all about. And so Jesus Christ then ascends to heaven in Acts chapter 1 and then the Holy Ghost arrives with these powers and signs. These men are speaking with other tongues and now they've got the gifts back and they're doing things, he's doing wonders as we just read in this chapter in verse 43. Many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. So this is a transitional time is what we call this, a transitional period that we're reading early in the book of Acts. And I just say this to clear the minds and a set of foundations so you know where you're at and have a handle on it today, not to be confusing in any way.

This is transitioning from the ministry of Jesus Christ with these Jewish apostles that he picked and in this book it shifts from them and their ministry that they just came off the heels of into the apostle Paul and to him taking this new revelation to Gentiles all over the region.

[6 : 31] And when the epistle closes Paul says to the Jews I'm going to the Gentiles and they will hear it. But the Jews have neglected and rejected as a nation this offer and this message that was going on here early in the book of Acts. Now this is not a model what we're reading here for church operations in which we live today. There's a lot of differences that can be observed and the one I mentioned was the signs and the wonders. As the Jews rejected and rebelled against this message and this offer the signs and the wonders of the apostles that were being wrought at their hands it only goes through a few chapters. In time it goes through a few years and by the end of the apostle Paul's ministry it's gone. It's phased out. It's not being preached or taught and you can find that on a timeline if you line up your books of the Bible and see where which churches and when he talks about it you'll see that they're disappearing. In verses 44 and 45 there's something else to note a difference here. We read that they they that believed were together and had all things common sold their possessions goods parted them to all men every man had need.

What are they there there this is like a socialist society here in our that's what we call it today it's the next thing to communism what they're agreeing to a commune of coming together and just everybody's got all things common. There's no rich there's no poor everybody's taken care of everybody's on level ground. Now what we're not trying to do is imitate this setup in the early book of Acts, the early church. It had potential to work in its moment and in its day. Had the Jews responded to the preaching of the apostles and responded to the acts of the apostles, to their signs and wonders that God had wrought among them.

But as the book progresses, God incrementally withdraws his hand from Israel. He withdraws his hand temporarily from that nation. And by the end of the book, they're going to the Gentiles.

And the way the books of your Bible are laid out, it's a perfectly placed transitional book from the gospel ministry of Jesus Christ. I mean, in the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and then this Jewish discipleship carrying forward, transitioning to the apostle Paul.

And then we read the ministry of the apostle Paul, where he's going and preaching new doctrine, as it were, to the church. So this is a little bit of rightly dividing the word here to get your bearings. And I hope you understand what we're talking about. So the point is, this is not a place in scripture or in church history that we attempt to emulate today or attempt to duplicate in our local churches. The doctrine and the practice of the age are tied together to the moment in history. But nevertheless, there are some constants. There are some things that we can observe that hold true through time, some details that are worth noting and considering today. This is a happy, a healthy, this is a unified and a growing assembly. And that's something we can focus in on.

[9 : 50] As I said, next week, we want our friends to join us. And if they attend, my question is, what will they see? What will they observe? What will they experience when they come through these doors of Bible Baptist Church? Will they sense that happiness and that healthiness, that spiritual quickening and life in this building? What's more to want in a local church but that the people are happy and healthy in the Lord and that they're growing together and unified in Jesus Christ and the Word of God? What's more to want?

So I want to know if next week, if a visitor shows up here, if they understand and sense life and joy or if it's just dead, if it's just dull, looking around, just, they're all just waiting for it to be over to go to lunch. I want to point out a few things about this church in Acts chapter 2 and determine if Bible Baptist Church compares and determine if Bible Baptist Church is worthy of being, as we close this chapter, a church that the Lord would add to. That's what we're after.

Let's think about that. So let's pray together and then look at three things in this passage. Lord, I ask that you'll, that you personally will descend in our midst and clear our thoughts and minds of the things we've heard and have already been declared and let us just now, for this moment, focus on the Word of God. Focus on this church. Focus on these positive things that were going on there and that it was such a place that you decided to add to. Lord, help us to consider this. Help us to consider our role and our part in this local church and that it be a church that you would add to as well. We love you for saving our souls and for the Lord Jesus Christ and what he's done.

And may he get the glory from whatever's done, both right now and in this church forever. We pray it in his wonderful name. Amen. All right. So Acts chapter two, let's take a look at something here in verse 42. The first thing I want to say is this is the kind of church that Lord would add to because they bonded in spiritual matters. Notice verse 42, they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers. These people weren't forming relationships based on their employment and their jobs and careers or sports or any carnal interests. Their bond was so much stronger, so much better, so much better foundation for a unification. And it was over spiritual matters. Notice it said in verse 42 that they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Doctrine is teaching. These apostles of the Lord were teaching the people some things, some things from the truth of God. They had walked with Jesus

Christ. They had personal fellowship and personal private lessons even with the Lord Jesus Christ. They knew some things. And Luke 24, he sat down with his disciples and he opened their eyes. He opened their understanding and expounded to them the scriptures. They had learned some things in Luke 24 that they did not know about the Lord Jesus Christ. He was in mentioned in the scripture all throughout and that they missed it.

[13:26] And then he opened their understanding. And now these guys have some news to tell others. They have some news to tell the Jews. They don't have Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Roman. They don't have a New Testament.

They only have an Old Testament. But they took those scriptures and they said, look, there he is. Look over here in Isaiah. There he is. Look in the Psalms. There he is. He did that. Weren't you here when he cried, my God, my God, why? He wasn't talking to Elias.

He was fulfilling the prophecy and they had something to declare. The people, the Jews that had scriptures had their eyes were opened. He did fulfill that scripture. He is the Messiah.

And they joined together. They were bonding in spiritual matters. The apostles' doctrine and fellowships, things that they had heard and never understood before were now opening their eyes. It was a blessed time for them. They were learning some things as well that they should do and shouldn't do. They were learning the ways of Jesus Christ. I'll just read you a verse here from Ephesians chapter 4 where Paul says this. He talks about Gentiles being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness. But he says, but ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that ye have heard him and have been taught by him. Well, these disciples have been taught by him. They have heard him. And now the apostles have doctrine and teaching for the people. And so they're learning and they're growing in the word of God. They're not only that, they're hanging out with the apostles, the fellowship of the actual apostles of Jesus Christ. It was probably exciting at the time to be close to them and to learn of them. At the same time, it put a mark on their back because these are the guys that in a few short chapters or even very soon are going to be arrested and are going to be beaten.

And then a little bit later, they're going to be stoning them and they're going to be chasing them down to whatever city they can find them in and hailing them back to prison and putting them to death. And so meeting with the apostles, there's a fellowship going on. It's a spiritual thing.

[15:35] And what a blessing this was to this people bonding over spiritual matters. They didn't join some horseback riding club or learn to play lacrosse or meet them at the YMCA. No, they met them meeting together with the apostles of the Lord, the preaching and teaching of the word of God.

They bonded in spiritual matters. It says in verse 42, the breaking of bread. Well, I'm going to spiritualize that. You better believe it. We like to eat, don't we? Well, this is culturally, not just here, but today even it's a sign of acceptance and a sign of agreement, meeting together to a meal, to sit down to a meal. These people are growing together, spending time together with what you'd normally do with your biological family.

They're now doing with other people that believe on Jesus Christ as their Messiah. The breaking of bread is a bonding time. It's more than just being social. It's forming a spiritual bond with new brothers and new sisters in Christ, not their family. It's a change that's going on in their lives because now they're hanging out with people that are going to help them grow and people that are going to influence them to give their life to serve Jesus Christ, to learn new truth, to do right. People that will pray for them, people that will love them in the Lord, people that will care about their walk with Jesus Christ through their struggles and through their faults. These are spiritual matters that they're bonding over. And in that, it includes developing relationships with other brothers and sisters in the local church. It also says in verse 42, and in prayers. That's a good one. Bonding in spiritual matters and in prayers, bonding together, talking to God together, approaching the throne of grace with a partner or as a group, collectively bowing below the throne of grace to present requests or to acknowledge and praise and lift up the Lord. Being of the same mind, seeking the same things from God. It's bonding in spiritual ways. So I wonder when a visitor joins us here for a service and they come in looking in on us, do they see us bonding together? Do they see us bound in spiritual matters? It's my desire that they'd observe and see that we're not some tight club with a history that they're not part of, but rather that it's a spiritual element in this congregation that we have in common that's on display. We believe a book. We believe the King James Bible and stand by it and love it.

[18 : 18] Let them see that. Let them see that we know we're saved and that we have joy that we know we're saved and we can't lose it according to the word of God. Let some visitor come in and see that we have that eternal security and aren't ashamed to proclaim it. Let them see that we have a joy in our hearts as we sing and as we worship the Lord Jesus Christ. Let them see and understand we have a disdain for the world.

You know how somebody that comes in can see that you are in agreement with that? is when the word of God and when I say something that's true and that you know it's true and it's been true in your life, you say, amen. You say, that's right. You say, yeah, preacher, you tell them. You agree verbally. You nod your head. You wave. You show outwardly that you agree and you believe what's being said. But when his preacher stands here and just puts out the truth and puts out the truth and you sit there like this, who knows that you are in agreement with that? Who knows that that's even the truth or that they're just like, huh, he must just be talking about one of those things.

Preachers, they all just yuck, yuck, yuck. But when you agree and when you agree and testify to it, boy, that visitor says, oh, oh, all these people are in agreement on these things. They're all bound together in these spiritual matters of the blood of Christ, of eternal security, of doctrine. They're being bound together in those things. Secondly, look in verse 43. It says that fear came upon every soul. Fear. That's interesting to me that fear came upon every soul. This happens again. Look at chapter five. I'll show you another case and an instance where we get an idea of what this is. And God helped me to make this point clear. What I want to say is that they believed in the seriousness of the ministry, of their meeting together. In Acts chapter five, we'll just skim the beginning.

[20 : 49] There's a man, Ananias and Sapphira. If I backed up a little bit, you'll see that they're still doing this same communal type of system in verse number 34 of chapter four. Neither was there any among them that lacked for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold, laid them down at the apostles feet and distribution was made unto every man according as need. And it's happening. You see it in verse 37, having land sold, it brought the money.

You're not doing that here. So you better get your head together and realize you don't want to duplicate what's going on early in the book of Acts. Now there's a man, Ananias and Sapphira, and they sold a possession in verse one. And they decided to keep back part of the price. They decided together we're not going to give the whole thing. And I don't know if that was right or wrong that they made that decision. But the fact that they lied about it was definitely wrong.

Peter said, you lied to the Holy Ghost. Now I suspect they were to give the whole thing. That was the setup. That was what was going on in this early time. So just a few verses later, Ananias fell down and gave up the ghost. Notice that in verse five, Ananias hearing these words fell down and gave up the ghost and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And then his wife shows up a little bit later, didn't know that her husband was already in the ground or dead. And he asked her the question, was, would you sell the land for lady? And she said a lie that her husband had told her to tell.

And in verse nine, Peter said unto her, how is it that you have agreed together to tempt the spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet and yielded up the ghost. And the young men came in and found her dead and carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And then notice verse 11, and great fear came upon all the church and upon as many as heard these things. So what I'm saying here is with this early church we're reading about in chapter two, that fear came upon every soul.

[22 : 59] This isn't something that you mess around with. This coming together, this is a new thing for them. Understand that. Try to get yourself in this moment.

They're coming out from their religion and their observance of these laws and testimonies and things of Moses and of what they call the Old Testament, the Old Covenant. And they're hearing the apostles teach some things. And they're believing and agreeing and coming together as a new assembly, a new congregation.

But they are together fearing what's going on here. This is of God. I've stressed that in Sunday school a thousand times it feels in the last three weeks. This local assembly, this new thing is a work of God. And they feared it. They revered it. They respected it. This institution isn't of man. It's not something there to treat with just a nonchalant attitude. It's established by God. It's established for God who is just as holy in their presence and in this day as he was when the high priest had to approach before that mercy seat, not without blood. It's the same holy God that they have worshipped and observed in those ordinances. But now he's doing a new thing. They feared as they should have.

They feared. Look at 1 Corinthians chapter 3. You can keep your place in Acts, but go to 1 Corinthians chapter 3. And here's something Paul writes to a local church not in Jerusalem.

[24 : 36] Twenty or so years later, there's an assembly in another town far away. But he writes to them a few things. Look at verses 16 and 17.

1 Corinthians 3.16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God.

Now let me point something out in verse 16. It says, Know ye not. Ye is a pronoun. It's plural. It's not, we say you for everything today, but it's ye.

If it was a singular person, it would be thou or knowest thou not. But it says, Know ye not that ye, plural, are the temple of God, that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? That's also plural. If any man, singular now, defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy.

For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Now it's a people. It's an assembly. It's not a building. But it's likened to something else. Now I'm getting back to Acts.

[25 : 45] What God instituted for his children is not to be treated with contempt, or to be looked on second rate, take it or leave it. That attitude is wicked.

The temple of God is holy. The congregation of the Lord is holy. And these Jews back here in Acts, in this early assembly, they used to fear the priests.

They used to fear the Pharisees and the scribes and these different sects that were around in Jerusalem. They promoted themselves as holy men that needed to be obeyed and observe what they tell you to do.

And they threatened. Remember in John chapter 9 when that man was blind? He was born blind. He was healed. And they bring him in for questioning. And they grill him. And then they grill his parents. And they're all afraid that we're going to get kicked out of our synagogue because that's how they ruled.

That's what they grew up fearing was these men, these religious, just like many religious priests today in denominations all around the world. You come in here and you observe what I tell you to do.

[26 : 48] You do what I tell you and you do it, do it, do it, or you're out. You're going to be holy. You're going to give. You're going to do what I tell you. Now they're not fearing these men anymore, but they're fearing the true God, and it's a good thing.

They're fearing what God is establishing. It's keeping them from taking this local assembly for granted, from getting complacent, and from viewing it with contempt.

Now how does that apply to you today? Well, they took it serious. They believed in the seriousness of this ministry. They feared. You know, it shows in your, I don't want to put too much emphasis on your outward appearance, but it shows in your outward appearance, as well as your countenance, your dress.

It shows, because, you know, that's all we can see. But it shows what you think of coming to church. It's your choice to display yourself and how you're going to treat this.

Do you take it serious? Or is it just, eh? I mean, is coming to church the same to you as just going to poker night with the neighbor guys? Or going to the movies?

[28 : 02] Or going out to eat with your friends? Is coming to church just in that same category? If it is, something's very bad in your mind and you're wrong in your head. You're thinking, this thing is holy before God.

It's an assembly of His children, called out from the world, to assemble under the blood of Jesus Christ, in communion with Him, to lift up the candlestick, remember?

To lift up the light of the world. This isn't entertainment. This isn't filling the time. This isn't just checking something off your box of making God happy.

Your attitude, your body language, exclaims to everybody what you really think about being here.

The spirit in which you sing, the way in which you respond to preaching, it speaks to the congregation, whether you take it serious or not.

And not only do I see it and others see it and God sees it, but your friend will see it. You want Him to come? When you fear, when you revere this assembling of ourselves together, when you see it as a calling and an institution of God, you won't be so quick to fuss about something that you're not sure you like.

[29 : 28] You won't be so quick to complain or to spread gossip around the horn. You won't be so quick to sow discord when you say, no, this is sacred. This is of the Lord.

And I need to be in submission to it with all humility and fear. Because it's a privilege to be part of a God, Bible-believing, Bible-preaching, born-again assembly local church.

It's a privilege. You don't believe that. Some of you don't believe that. I know you don't believe that. You're not seeing it right. If God drop you off in India, drop you off in some little town in Africa, and watch you fend for yourself spiritually, give you a Bible and say, come on, what are you going to do with that?

But the fact that God has placed you where there is a Bible-believing church that will preach and teach and assemble and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, how many people despise this every day? Don't even take it for granted and could care less. Consumed with other things, the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of riches, the lusts of other things, and don't take it serious.

[30 : 49] This group believed in the seriousness. The seriousness. I wonder when your friend shows up next week, will they see that you take this thing seriously? Will they say, wow, this guy really likes this place.

Wow, these people are really his friends and family. They really know each other and like each other. Wow, he believes what's in those songs. He's raising his hand when it says that burdens are lifted at Calvary.

He must have had some burdens lifted at Calvary because he believes it. When your friend comes, will they see that this is serious to you? That it means something to you?

That the Word of God means something to you? The doctrine means something to you? The songs mean something to you? The Savior means something to you? This church believed in the seriousness of the church.

The third thing I want to point out, in verses 44 and 45, they that believed were together and had all things common. They sold their possessions and goods and part of them to all men is every man had need.

[31 : 50] We looked at this already. I want to point out thirdly, they blessed the struggling members. So the first point is they bonded in spiritual matters.

They believed in the seriousness of this ministry. And thirdly, they blessed the struggling members. Some of them had need. That's what it says.

They had need. As every man had need. And those needs were met. Not by their kin, not by their bosses, but by the church. Paul says, to bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of the government, the church, no, the law of Christ.

Bearing one another's burdens. When a brother or sister has a need, it's our duty to support them and to care for them and to help them and to assist them. And understand, I'm not saying it's our duty to bail them out of their foolish decisions.

We racked up, I just couldn't stop watching Home Shopping Network and I've got all these bills.

Well, that's on you, sister or brother. We're not here to bail you out because you're foolish.

[33 : 01] But we are here and we are to be here one for another. Much more than financial issues, emotional issues, spiritual issues, sin issues.

We're to be here. A call. A visit. A card. A gift. Some extension, some personal touch, some reach that shows you care.

and maybe best of all, the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man. Turn with me to Romans.

Keep your place again. Romans chapter 12.

I want to read a few verses. Paul puts on these Romans. Romans chapter 12 and let's read verses 9 through 16.

Notice the language. Romans 12 verse 9. Let love be without dissimulation. So there's a hypocrisy in that. That's a saying it, but not doing it, not meaning it.

[34 : 09] But let it be real. The word of love, not in word, but in deed and in truth, James says. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil.

Cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love. In honor, preferring one another. Now let me point something out here and we'll see this again, I think, if we turn to it.

In honor, preferring one another. It's easy to prefer somebody that is quote unquote above you. If you consider somebody's, you know, has a position or smarter, wiser, more established, older, you can prefer them.

That's natural. But when is it unnatural? When do you have to have the word of God tell you to do something? It's when you have to prefer somebody who's considered below you.

Somebody who's in a mess. Somebody who's made dumb decisions. Somebody who's problems or somebody who has issues they've created. You get the idea. You could despise them, look down on them, you get what you deserve or you could prefer them.

[35 : 24] And how can you do that? Well, kindly affectioned. Verse 11 says, Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer.

Verse 13, distributing to the necessity of saints, given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you. Bless and curse not.

Rejoice with them that do rejoice and weep with them that do weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Here it is again. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.

Be not wise in your own conceits. It's natural to mind high things, to prefer and honor high things, but in the Christian's mind it's to humble themselves and to look on the needs of others.

I'll turn to one more place here. Look at 1st, no, 2nd Corinthians chapter 1. This church blessed the struggling members.

[36 : 35] They backed them. They helped them. They lifted them up. 2nd Corinthians chapter 1. Notice verses 4 and 5.

The Bible says, Who comforteth us, this is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. Now when you go through, if you've never been through anything, you've never messed up royally, if you've never been through some bitter agony and pain in life and never had God draw you to himself and hold you in his hand and take you through it, then you don't know what it's like to need that and to feel the need for that.

But when you have gone through it and you have tasted it and you have the scars and you know the pain, that's given to you as a gift for others.

The consolation that you've felt and been abounded with in Christ is to abound in you and through you to your other brothers and sisters, to bless them, to comfort them, to bear their burdens when they're in trouble.

[38 : 10] Now there's other passages we could look to but that'll suffice. This church we're reading about in the book of Acts took care of one another. We read the words brotherly love, hospitality, distributing, praying, even rejoicing and weeping.

They came together, they bonded over spiritual matters, they believed in the seriousness of what this thing is, it's of God, this ministry and then they took care of one another, they blessed those struggling members.

This is ministry. They're ministering to each other. I wonder, can I ask you this, have you ever ministered to anybody since you've been coming to this church?

Have you ministered to anybody in any way? Or are you quick to condemn somebody or rebuke somebody or call them out?

Or do you see somebody struggling as an opportunity to be a blessing, an opportunity to care, an opportunity to comfort them?

[39 : 20] I'm going to turn really quickly, as soon as I get it, I'm reading Philippians chapter 2. The Bible says, let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Now come back to Acts chapter 2. I want to conclude with one point and bring all this together.

In verses 46 and 47, let's read again in Acts chapter 2, the close of this chapter. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. When the church is coming together, when they're bonding in spiritual matters, when they're taking this seriously, it's of the Lord and they need to be a part of it. They need to be committed to it. They need to grow in it. They need to participate in it. They need to care for each other. They're praising God in this passage.

[40 : 35] There's joy and gladness. The Lord then does something special. And to close the chapter, the last sentence of verse 47 says, And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

The Lord added to the church. What happens when the church is this type of church functioning in these manners, God adds to that church.

It wasn't a program that Peter implemented. James and John didn't go to some guru's sessions and seminars and come back with, we've got a new way.

We're going to fix this. We're going to grow the church. It had nothing to do with man. No strategy or work of man. It was the Lord. The Lord added to the church.

Who added to the church? The Lord added to the church. It's a true work of God. And as a true work of God in the next few chapters, there's, it gets attention from others.

[41 : 38] And as we said, when that candlestick lifts the light up, it draws men that do good come to the light. And other men run from the light. Some people try to snuff out the light. And there's opposition that comes in the next few chapters.

That's expected. That happens. But this church we're talking, this local church, this first church is the kind of church that God adds to. It's a happy church.

Happy in the Lord. Healthy in their doctrine and in their fellowship. Taking it serious. Believing this is right. This is of the Lord. This is what I need to submit to and be connected to.

They're caring for one another, ministering. It's my desire that the Lord would add to this church. It's my desire. It's not a, it's not a, a burden on me.

It's a, just a desire that the Lord would see fit to do that. It's on him. It doesn't mean that we just neglect anything, but we have a duty. And as we fulfill these roles and these things we've seen even this morning, that'd be a church the Lord would add to.

[42 : 46] The Lord will bring people in the doors. He'll add to his church. Would God help us to, to mimic and to match these particulars that I said are constants that carry through the transitional period.

The fact that they're taking care of one another and they're taking it serious and that their bond is on the truth, the spiritual matters that, that we ought to be concerned with.

So I hope that your attitude even in this week and then moving into our friends day is that as we, God willing, bring some people into these doors that they'll see a place that's alive and a place they'll realize this is where Christ is.

This is something I need in my life. I've been in dead churches, folks. I trust some of you have too. I don't want that.

God help us not to have that here. You don't want to be in a dead church. There's, why would you go to a dead church?

[43 : 48] Watch TV. Watch the news. You'll at least get angry. Why go to a dead church? Let's not be that. Let's, let's do these parts here and let the Lord grow us as he sees fit.

Let's bow our heads together and pray. Father, I ask that you'll use the thoughts and the truths that we studied this morning from Acts chapter 2 from this, this assembly, this historical assembly of people.

The characteristics that was true of those people and you added to those people and from that things spread and the gospel got out and Lord, what a thrill and a blessing to be part of a work that you're doing and to have you looking down and using us.

So God, please use us. Use this little church in Silmar. God, clean us up. Stir our hearts. Don't leave us to ourselves to just die in this world.

move amongst us. God, I pray you'd raise up some soldiers and some servants and touch some hearts and bring your hand down into this congregation that we'd be stirred on the inside to care about you and nothing else.

[45 : 19] Draw us to you and to your word. Grow us as ministers. Lord, I pray that you'd want to be in our midst, that you bring others to our midst as we lift up the Lord Jesus Christ.

Thank you for salvation. Thank you for life in our souls and a reason to shout and to glorify Christ. Thank you for the work you've already done in our lives and here.

Lord, may it not be the end, may it just be the beginning. this morning as your heads are bowed, I want to ask you something. I've been talking about Friends Day for a while now.

Have you invited a friend? Have you invited somebody to come and join you next week? Do you feel like a hypocrite at all?

Do you know that you're not living for God and that you're not showing the spirit and attitude in your daily life of what Christ has done for you and you feel a little bit you neglect inviting somebody because you know you're a hypocrite.

[46 : 44] if the Lord's dealing with your heart about it now would be a good time to clear the air.

If the Lord lays somebody on your heart that you should be inviting to join with us that the Lord might add to us why don't you commit to them that you'll reach out to them this week? That's all you can do but why don't you commit that you'll do that?

Would you pray? Would you commit to praying that the Lord would allow you to invite somebody would put somebody on your heart would guide you to the one or the group that the family that he would add to this church?

how about then you analyze your own heart you take this seriously this morning you're just showing up nonchalantly when it's convenient or is this serious to you?

Is this what God has gifted you for your Christian life and you believe in it and it shows? I don't want to ever put any pressure on anybody more than God puts on people let it not be me pressuring you to be somebody or do something but if the Lord speaks to your heart it's your duty to respond and if you like and someone gets in aot täll with it and you don't even anything like Wine and all that they know is that what you can he particularly is that all of some people can do some of of the women know how can pay a sound to