

Acts Chapter 2 - Marks of Teaching

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 03 January 2016

Preacher: Michael Grant

[0 : 00] for each one of us. And it is a complete guide for our faith, what we believe, and what we practice.

You and I must be careful not to divide the Scriptures. It's a complete whole. And all written under the superintendence of the Holy Spirit.

Hadn't Jesus Himself said these words in John 16 and verse 13, when the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into some truth?

Partial truth? No, when He, the Holy Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth.

We don't need any more than what is written in this book. This is our foundation. This is where we stand as believers.

[1 : 05] And we are to devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching. It's the foundation of the church. Ephesians 2 and verse 19 says this, that we are God's people and members of God's household built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone.

We move the foundation and the building collapses. There is no church in the meaningful sense. So thank God for His word. The third thing that I want to bring before you this morning is this, that their teaching was full of the Lord Jesus Christ.

After Peter explains what has happened on the day of Pentecost, how he speaks about Joel the prophet, what does he do? Well, he speaks about Christ.

Christ. And we shouldn't be surprised. Why? Well, because the Holy Spirit of truth, his task is to bring glory to Christ.

[2 : 40] And that's exactly what is happening as Peter preaches from verse 22 onwards right through to verse 41. He's saying who this Jesus is and what they must do about this Lord Jesus.

So he speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ. He speaks of His miracles. Those signs that pointed to who He was.

He speaks about the crucifixion of Christ. He has a lot to say about the resurrection of Christ. He speaks about the glory that He has gone to.

He speaks to us very clearly of the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. And the people heard and they believed about this Lord Jesus Christ.

What shall we do? Repent and put your trust in Him. And you will receive the forgiveness of your sins. Your problems of sin, the problem of sin will be dealt with and be baptized.

[3 : 52] You see, the apostles knew what Jesus had said. Go into all the world and preach the gospel.

And I'll be with you and teach them everything that I have commanded you. So they told of Jesus and they glorified Jesus and they taught the sayings of Jesus.

Their teaching was full of a glorified Christ. The real Jesus was proclaimed in the power of the Spirit.

and they continued steadfast in the apostles teaching which glorified the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we know that's true. When they were persecuted, what did they do? Well, they went everywhere. And what did they do when they went everywhere?

[4 : 58] They preached Christ. Wouldn't it be wonderful if you went down the streets of Carragaleine?

And people weren't talking about the weather. Although there's a lot to talk about the weather at the present time. But people's conversation was about the Savior.

But is our conversation about the Savior? Oh, that we might know that movement in our hearts.

For I know myself, and know that it is true of you also, that sometimes your hearts are cold as far as the Savior is concerned.

Oh, that the Lord will come afresh to us. And with a power that perhaps we have not known before, that we're full of Christ.

[6 : 02] because we have taken notice of what the scriptures say, and we will become devoted to the apostles' teaching, which was full of Christ.

The fourth thing I want to say this morning, their devotion to the apostles' teaching was continuous. A literal translation of verse 42, the first part of verse 42, says this, they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching.

And let's think, these apostles, who were they? Well, they were unlearned, ignorant men. They hadn't been to theological school.

They hadn't had the education of the scribes and the Pharisees. No, they were fishermen. They were ordinary people, but empowered by the Spirit of God.

And later we read that the whole world was turned upside down as a result of the apostolic teaching.

[7 : 22] As people heard it, they sought to communicate to others. They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching.

They were steadfast. They were single-minded. They were hungry for the Word, if you like. Not just the milk, but also the meat.

They sought to regulate their lives according to the apostles' teaching. They were steeped in the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees.

People who had constantly misinterpreted the scriptures. But there was this change of direction.

And they devoted themselves continually to the apostles' teaching.

teaching. So I'll ask you the question as I asked myself as I prepared this message. How devoted am I?

[8 : 27] How devoted are you? do you have a longing to know more? More of our blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?

Do you long to know more of what God says to you and to me in His words? Or is your heart cold?

Are there days when you don't even bother to pick up your Bible? When you come on a Sunday, you say, well, I've heard it all before. Instead of coming with anticipation.

Do you bother to get out for the Bible study in the midweek? Oh, I know there are various reasons why you can't be there. But examine those reasons, whether they are genuine reasons.

And I'm not just saying this to older people. I'm saying it to young people as well. Somewhere along the line, somebody said or suggested that the Bible study was just for people of a certain age.

[9 : 46] Where do you find that in this book? Oh, I know you have your studies, and perhaps it's just as simple as meant not spending quite so much in Facebook so that you can be at the Bible study.

You have to answer that. I can't be your conscience. Are we growing in our Christian faith? As I prepared this message, I thought of the Apostles' letter to the Ephesians in chapter 1.

1. And I presume the Apostle Paul, when he's writing to the church at Ephesus, expected the people to understand what he was saying, or at least for the elders of the church to instruct the people in what he was saying.

And he uses words there. Another part of our understanding. In chapter 1, he speaks about being chosen. He speaks about being predestined.

He speaks about being adopted. He speaks about redemption. He speaks about the riches of God's grace. He speaks about the sealing of the Spirit. And so much more.

[11 : 02] Do you long to know more of these truths? And how they apply in your daily life? And there's so many more scriptures.

Are we growing in our Christian experience? are we devoting ourselves to the apostles teaching? And is the truth gripping us?

Did the early church have an easy time? No, they didn't. How did they deal with their difficulties?

Well, we might look at Acts chapter 4, where Peter and John are thrown into prison.

But the word was in fire in their bones. They were threatened. They were told to be quiet. Oh, they said, but we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard.

And when they left prison, they pray. And their prayer is recorded for us in Acts 4 and verses 24 to 31. And what do they see?

[12:07] What do they understand? Well, they see the ruling authority, the sovereignty of God over the affairs of men. They see the triumph of the Lord over the authorities and powers of this world.

And they pray for more power to get on with the work of spreading the gospel. And if we go into Acts 6 and 7, here we have Stephen.

And he holds the truth, apostolic truth, before the people. And people look at his face as it was the face of an angel.

Israel. And when persecution broke out through the apostle Paul, those who had been scattered went everywhere, preaching the word wherever they went.

They were gripped by the truth. The truth was part of themselves. The word of God was hid in their hearts.

[13:08] Oh, that we might devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching in a way that perhaps we've not done before.

I ask you a question. Do you find yourselves arguing with apostolic teaching? It's evident that the apostle Paul recognized that there was a tendency for people to argue with apostolic teaching. Paul writes and encourages Timothy, and he encourages him to preach the word, to get on with apostolic teaching. Why?

Well, it was an imperative. Paul knew human nature, the tendency to go after the novel because people had itching ears to hear what they wanted to hear.

Some, you see, in the early church began to cherry pick. I can believe this, but I can't believe that.

[14:20] I'm happy with John, but I don't like Paul. I'm happy with the New Testament, but not the Old Testament.

I like what John taught about love, but I don't like what Paul had to say about predestination. I'm happy with teaching about heaven, but I can't accept judgment and hell.

We can't do that. It's the whole word of God. And we must accept it and submit to the apostolic teaching, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

The early church devoted themselves to apostolic teaching, and so must we. Now, I'm conscious of the fact that there's so much more that needs to be said.

and you say, you haven't said anything about fellowship, about baking a bread and a prayer. You haven't said anything about giving to the poor, etc., and the various things that follow.

[15:38] I know I haven't. But you see, all of these flow out of our faithfulness to the word of God.

You see, fellowship comes about as we hold on to this truth, as we devote ourselves to this truth. It's unity in the truth. Jesus says, I pray for those who believe on me through their message that all of them may be one.

So, fellowship is based on the truth. Remove the truth and we're just a club like any other club.

And fellowship brings together nations. It brings together ages. It brings together male and female. It brings together the married and the single.

[16:41] It brings together the educated and those who have comparatively little education. For barriers are broken down in Christ. And when we break bread, we will break bread with perhaps a new understanding of all that has happened to us in Christ.

And when we pray, we will pray after the mind of Christ. They're all interwoven. And when we go out into the world and into our places of employment, into our schools, into our colleges, we will want others to know of Christ.

Christ. So may you and I be granted strength to devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching, this truth on fire.

Pray for your pastor. Pray for the elders of the church that they too will know this power of God resting upon them.

what a difference it will make in our individual lives, what a difference it will make in our church life, and in the goodness of God, what a difference it will make in our community.

[18:14] Amen. Let's pray. Father, we thank you that you've given us your word. We pray that we will be mindful of that word.

Help us, O Lord, to know your word, to be well-versed in your word. And may your word, O Lord, come to us so that we're not just hearers of your word, but doers also.

O Father, we look to you and pray that you will come upon all of us as individuals and corporately with the empowering of your Holy Spirit so that others will be affected.
And this we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.