

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Acts: The Continuing Earthly Ministry Of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Part IV: The Empowering Of The Church For Ministry, Acts 2:1-47
D. The Ministry Of Christ In The Local Church
(Acts 2:42-47)

I. Introduction

- A. Many evangelical churches hold to novel ideas on the mission and function of the local church: beyond using contemporary worship, some run coffee shops, restaurants, auto repair shops, pharmacies, banks and housing complexes (William C. Symonds, "Earthly Empires," 5/23/05 issue of Business Week, p. 79-88)!
- B. Since Scripture is our source of faith and practice until the coming of Christ according to 2 Timothy 3:15-4:2, we do well to review the mission and function of the first local church that is described in Acts 2:42-47 to see what **Christ** would want *our* local church to have as its mission and function (as follows):

II. The Ministry Of Christ In The Local Church, Acts 2:42-47.

- A. The book of Acts describes Christ's continuing earthly ministry through Christians on the earth after His ascension (Acts 1:1-2), so the description of the ministry of the local assembly given in Acts 2:42-47 gives a concise view of what Christ wants the local church have as its mission and function in the Church era!
- B. First, Acts 2:42a in its context shows Christ wants the church to give highest priority to Bible exposition:
 - 1. Peter's Acts 2 sermon led 3,000 souls to trust in Christ and to join the body of 120, Acts 2:41; 1:15.
 - 2. He had stood with the other apostles in giving this sermon (Acts 2:14), so all the Apostles with Peter kept expounding the Scriptures to the people so they continued steadfastly in their words, Acts 2:42a.
 - 3. This ministry was later considered so important that the Apostles delegated the work of feeding needy believing widows to deacons so they could continue their Bible exposition and prayer, Acts 6:1-4, 5-7.
 - 4. Thus, the **primary** ministry of the local church was to be the exposition of Scripture, 2 Timothy 4:1-2.
- C. Then, Christ wills that "fellowship," which is clarified in the Greek text as "the breaking of bread and prayer" that we call "worship", is to flow from the body as a result of this Bible exposition, Acts 2:42b:
 - 1. In response to Scripture's exposition, the people fellowshiped, and since there is no "and" between the word, "fellowship" and the phrase "the breaking of bread and prayer" in the Greek text, these last two activities are in apposition to "fellowship," describing what it means, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 360.
 - 2. Thus, believers responded to Bible exposition with worship, celebrating the Lord's Table and praying!
 - 3. Accordingly, their worship was not an entertaining function as is often promoted in contemporary worship, but a response to the Word of Christ that had been taught in line with Colossians 3:16-17.
 - 4. [The believers were **united** opposite many seeker-friendly churches that host different kinds of worship services for different groups, for they met "unanimously, of one accord" (*homothumadon* , U. B. S. Greek N. T., 1966 ed., p. 425; Arndt & Gingrich., A Greek-Engl. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 569) in the temple, not in differing types of worship services in different " **courts**" as the NIV states and Rick Warren suggests, for the **Greek** text says merely "in the temple," Ibid., U. B. S. Greek N. T.!]
- D. Due to Bible exposition and worship, Christ led His body to meet each other's material needs, 2:43-47a:
 - 1. A sense of awe came on all the believers as great miracles were being performed by the Apostles, Acts 2:43. Those in the body then sold their possessions to minister to fellow needy believers, Acts 2:44-46.
 - 2. This activity spilled over into fellowship with one another in their own local homes, Acts 2:46.
 - 3. Accompanying all this activity was great joy, an evident result of the Holy Spirit's work, Acts 2:47a.
 - 4. A result of this activity was favorable relationships with the community of onlookers outside the Church, Acts 2:47b. Accordingly, people were continually being saved, and the Lord added to the Church daily those who came to faith in Christ, Acts 2:47c.

Lesson: Christ's will for the local church's mission and function is for the Word of God to be taught by its Holy Spirit led leaders as a priority so that believers can be edified, resulting in united worship that spills over into edifying relationships with one another, acts of mutual help and joy in relationships with one another and with unbelievers, and consequent evangelism and Church growth by the Lord.

Application: May we keep Bible exposition the primary focus of our church that true, united worship, edifying relationships, deeds, evangelism and God's growth of the church might flow from it all.