



## ***The Church***

### ***“Demonstration of Change”***

**Acts 2:46-47**

Every follower of Jesus should have one goal in mind, to honor and magnify the name of Jesus Christ. It is in the power of the name of Jesus that men, women, and children are forever changed and brought into a right relationship with God. We, as His church, should be consistently demonstrating a life that has been radically changed. Our life should reflect that we have been transferred from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light.

The characteristics of a true New Testament church are the following: ***worship, prayer, teaching, fellowship, communion, community, and service.*** All of these characteristics were being applied in the relationship the church at Jerusalem had with one another. They were being obedient to Jesus’ command to love one another (John 13:34).

What happens when a church patterns itself after the example of the first New Testament church? What is the result of demonstrating our faith? How is our faith best demonstrated? **COMMITMENT.**

#### ***1) Commitment to UNITY and WORSHIP (v.46a)***

(cf. John 17:20-21; Ephesians 4:1-6; Hebrews 10:23-25)

Consumerism robs us of this incredible joy of being the church because it subtly drives a wedge in our love and unity. Before we know it we are acting incredibly selfishly toward one another.

#### ***2) Commitment to AUTHENTIC Christianity (v.46b)***

This is doing life together. Doing our own thing and being private people have been engrained in our American culture, but the Bible teaches something completely different for Christ followers.

***3) Commitment to being in a right relationship with GOD, a right relationship with His CHURCH, and a right relationship with those OUTSIDE the church. (v.46c-47a)***

There were no stones of selfishness in the hearts of the believers in the church at Jerusalem. Because of this obedience and rightness with the Lord and one another, joy and peace were demonstrated in authenticity and this was extremely attractive to those outside of a relationship with Christ.

#### ***4) Commitment to BE the church so that Jesus can BUILD His church. (v.47b)***

When followers of Jesus live life in authenticity, the Holy Spirit has the freedom to demonstrate the love of Christ through them. A canned program approach to which a box can be checked to sooth the religious conscience falls short of being an authentic New Testament church. – Being an authentic New Testament church is only possible through the obedience and commitment to the command of Jesus in John 13:34-35.

Followers of Jesus are to be the church in all aspects of their lives: growing in the knowledge of God in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, loving and caring for other believers, protecting the unity of the body in the bond of peace, remaining faithful to worship and to community – just like the church at Jerusalem. When this happens the unbelieving world takes notice of a relational authenticity that demonstrates and reflects the presence of God on earth.

#### **Next Week:**

***“Perfect Practice Makes Perfect” (Romans 12; Ephesians 4)***

cd.TCT.82116