

LIVING SPIRITUALLY: THE CHURCH

Acts 2:41-47

INTRODUCTION

- A. Knowing Your Place.
 - 1. In business, we know expectations and how to achieve.
 - 2. In school, we know expectations and how to achieve.
 - 3. But in the church, we may feel somewhat lost as to expectations.
- B. The church that we are talking about began on Pentecost.
 - 1. It is given a prominent place in God's scheme of redemption.
 - a. Ephesians 1:22-23
 - b. The fullness (completion) of Christ.
 - 2. We are a called out people (1 Peter 2:9-10), in subjection under one Sovereign, and that being Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18).
- C. Life in the early church, Acts 2:41-47.
 - 1. Worship and fellowship an important part of the early church.
 - 2. But, how does that work in my life?

I. WHY THE CHURCH WAS ESTABLISHED.

- A. Let's notice three reasons this morning:
 - 1. Fellowship.
 - a. Malachi 3:16
 - i. Being together.
 - ii. Speaking with one another, perhaps
 - aa. about God.
 - bb. thinking on His purposes for their lives.
 - iii. A book of remembrance of words and acts, which pleased the Lord.
 - b. The people of the Lord need the spiritual stimulation to grow.
 - i. *"Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another"* (Pr. 27:17).
 - c. We share:
 - i. Romans 12:15 – sorrows/joys.
 - ii. Hebrews 10:24-25 – encouragement.
 - iii. Galatians 6:1 – mutual "picking-up".
 - iv. *"And sometimes we laugh together, sometimes we cry; sometimes we share together, heartaches and sighs; sometimes we dream together of how it will be when we all get to Heaven, God's family."*
 - 2. Worship.
 - a. The local church is a society of worshippers. That special group of people authorized to be priests, 1 Peter 2:9.
 - b. Each part of the church's worship meets a vital need.
 - i. Romans 10:17 – teaching nurtures faith.
 - ii. Colossians 3:16 – singing exhorts us.
 - iii. 2 Corinthians 9:7-8 – giving makes us partners in the work of God.
 - aa. Philippians 4:10ff; 1 Corinthians 3:9
 - iv. James 5:16 – prayers give us power with God.
 - aa. Philippians 4:6-7, 13
 - v. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 – Lord's Supper is an event of spiritual renewal.

3. Good works (benevolence).
 - a. The church is a place of organized labor and service, Acts 6.
 - b. Also, preaching the gospel, Ephesians 3:10; 1 Peter 2:9-10.

II. THE ROLE YOU FILL.

- A. Where do YOU fit as a member of the body of Christ?
 1. You are a vital part of the local church.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 12:12-14
 - b. For every Christian who is not actively involved in the work of the church, there is some work of God in this world that is being left undone.
 - c. Band formations – absent member left a gap.
 2. Be regular in your presence for and participation in its public assemblies.
 - a. James 4:17 – sin of neglect.
 3. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 – Be a cheerful giver.
 4. Let people see you as a worthy representative of the purity and righteousness for which the church stands, 1 Corinthians 10:32-33; 1 Peter 2:12.
 5. Use your special abilities and training in the work of the church.
 6. Love your brothers and sisters in the Lord.
 - a. Galatians 5:15 – don't create friction.
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 – be positive.
 - c. John 13:34-35 – Love is to be a special characteristic.