

Lecture 10 – Acts 2:42-47 & the Ecclesiology of Acts

“And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” Acts 2:47b

Key Terms

Pillars of the church, apostle, teaching, fellowship, breaking of the bread, prayer

Objectives

- *List the “four pillars” of the church.
- *Give a definition of apostle.
- *Describe what characterizes the “teaching of the apostles.”
- *Formulate your response to the statement, “Organization follows charisma.”

Acts 2:42-47 & the Ecclesiology of Acts

I. Pattern

- A. External and internal growth
- B. External opposition and internal tension
- C. Fruit: community
- D. Context: What is the heart of that newfound life together in God? What is happening therein?
- E. Fellowship is a place of internal strengthening, only to go back out. Not an end station!
- F. Section is called: The description of the “four pillars” of church life
 1. Teaching of the apostles
 2. Fellowship
 3. Breaking of bread
 4. Prayer
- G. Sharing of goods is not repeated as consistently
 1. Valuable and important option, but not as central or binding

II. The Four Pillars of the Church

- A. Teaching of the Apostles
 1. Persistent devotion
 2. Apostle
 - a. One of the 12
 - b. Particularly educated and trained group
 - c. Acts 1:21, Definition of “apostle”
 3. Teaching of the apostles
 - a. Connected and rooted in the witness job
 - b. Ambassadors instructing the new converts
 - c. They communicate God’s agenda.
 - d. Their teaching is dependent upon God.
 - e. They communicate everything concerning Jesus.
 - f. They received teaching about the rule of God by means of:
 - 1) Actions
 - 2) Stories, parables
 - 3) Dialogues
 - 4) And then they went out two by two to do the work.
 - g. Leads to a systematic embedding of the truth
 - h. Their teaching is rich, but it is not their own. They are merely witnesses.
 - i. If we do not base our teaching on the Bible, we end up with a Jesus who reflects our society, not who Jesus really is.

j. Where the Word of God is taught, there is life, but where there is deviation from His Word, there is death.

B. Fellowship

1. *Koinonia* = fellowship
2. Result of reconciliation with God
3. Do not idealize it
4. A commission
5. A challenge, a task

C. Breaking of bread

1. Fellowship meals
2. Celebration of Lord's Supper

D. Prayer

1. Worship, Acts 4
2. Intercessory prayer, Acts 12:12
3. Prayer for sending out messengers, Acts 13:2
4. Fellowship prayer

III. Leadership

A. Reference in Acts 20 to leadership: *Presbyteroi, episcopoi*

1. Terms interchangeably used
2. Two descriptions of a group of leaders who "watch over" and shepherd the church

B. Wrong to claim that organization came later, after charisma

C. Authority, structure and order are there from the very start.

1. They reflect the character of God.