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The Early Church

Acts 4:32-37

INTRODUCTION:

1. You cannot expect to have the _____ experiences.
2. You should not fixate on _____ and location.
3. You must be careful of only looking at a _____.
4. You should steer away from using the early church to _____ your own church.

MESSAGE:

I. The Unity of the Church (v. 32a)

- A. United in _____ doctrine (Eph. 4:1-6; Jn. 14:6)
- B. United in _____ fellowship (Jn. 13:35; 17:21; Phil. 2:3-4; Gal. 6:2)

II. The Preaching of the Church (v. 33)

- A. Great _____ comes from being spirit filled (Acts 1:8; Lk. 24:49; 1 Thes. 1:5)
- B. Great _____ is about proclaiming the resurrection (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 15:3-5, Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 34, 37)
- C. Great _____ was upon them all (Eph. 2:8-9; Acts 11:23)

III. The Caring of the Church (vv. 32b, 34-35)

- A. A willingness to _____ financially (v. 32b) [1 Cor. 4:7; Jms. 1:17; Acts 2:44; 1 Jn. 3:17; Jms. 2:14-16]
- B. A willingness to _____ extra resources (v. 34) [Acts 2:44-46; 5:5:4; 12:12]
- C. A willingness to _____ to the apostles' leadership (v. 35) [Matt. 16:19; 2 Cor. 8:1-5]

IV. The Disciples of the Church (vv. 36-37)

- A. Barnabas, which means son of _____ (v. 36) [Acts 9:26-27; 11:22-24, 30; 13:1-2; 15]
- B. Barnabas, who was an _____ of generosity (v. 37) [Num. 18:20-24; 2 Cor. 9:6-7]

TAKE HOME

- How can you ***practically*** demonstrate a unity in essential doctrine and in experiential fellowship?
- Why is it so important for the church to focus on the preaching of the ***resurrection***?
- How can you joyfully ***sacrifice*** what you have in order to serve the needs of others?

STUDY QUESTIONS

James 1:22 says, *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”* These questions are designed to help you apply today’s message to your life. We encourage you to thoughtfully answer these questions and discuss your answers with others. For more information about joining a small group that uses these questions as the basis for discussion, prayer, and accountability, please visit our website at placritachurch.com.

1. Read Acts 4:32a. Should the modern church be like the early church in every way? Explain your answer. How can we truly be of one heart and one soul? (Eph. 4:1-6; Jn. 14:6; Jn. 13:35; 17:21; Phil. 2:3-4; Gal. 6:2)

2. Read Acts 4:33. What does being filled with great power do to the believer? Is this happening in your life? (Acts 1:8; Lk. 24:49; 1 Thes. 1:5)

3. Why was it so important for the Apostles to keep preaching the resurrection? How can you emphasize the resurrection to a greater degree in your life? (Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 15:3-5, Acts 2:24, 32; 3:15; 5:30; 10:40; 13:30, 33, 34, 37)

4. Read Acts 4:32b. Why do you think there was a special willingness for the early church to sacrifice financially? (1 Cor. 4:7; Jms. 1:17; Acts 2:44; 1 Jn. 3:17; Jms. 2:14-16)

5. Read Acts 4:34. How did the early church share their resources? How do we share our resources as a church today? (Acts 2:44-46; 5:5:4; 12:12)

6. Read Acts 4:35. Why was it so important to submit to the Apostles’ leadership in distributing the resources? What does that look like for us in our church today? (Matt. 16:19; 2 Cor. 8:1-5)

7. Read Acts 4:36-37. Why was Barnabas referred to as the son of encouragement? How can you learn from his example of generosity? (Acts 9:26-27; 11:22-24, 30; 13:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7)

“Not every believer can be like Peter and John, but we can all be like Barnabas and have a ministry of encouragement.”

- Warren Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*