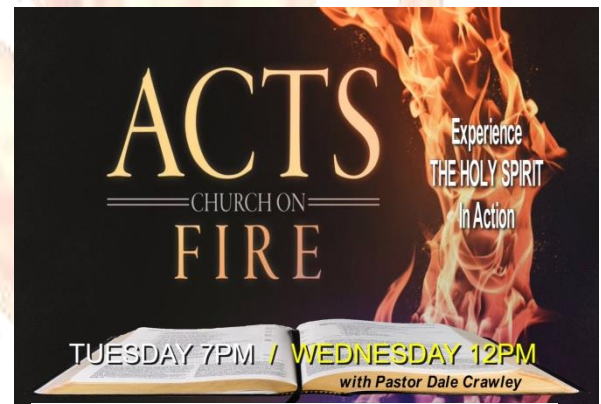


## ACTS 2:42-47 – “The Holy Spirit’s ‘Blueprint’ ... for Building His Church.”

A blueprint is a guide for making something — it's a design or pattern that can be followed. **Every built, starts with a blueprint.** Want to build the best tree house ever? Draw up a blueprint and follow the design carefully.



September 24<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019

*“And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”*

Matthew 16:18



**The literal meaning of a blueprint** ... is a paper — which is blue — with plans for a building printed on it. You can also call other guides or plans blueprints. The way you do your homework every night could provide a blueprint for your little sister’s study habits. A business plan is a blueprint for a profitable business.

Religions and philosophies provide the blueprint for many people’s lives. **A blueprint helps you figure out what to do!**

***In Acts 2:42-47 what we see is “A Blueprint” of the New Testament Church ... a foundation for Christian Life under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.***

This short passage of Scripture is a beautiful picture to us of what ordinary life looked like for the early church. Once they became followers of Jesus, what did they do? How did they spend their time? When did they gather? Where did they gather?

### **THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN LIFE**

***“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.”*** (Acts 2:42)

First, we see that the church (*the new born-again believers*) continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine: They relied on the apostles to communicate to them who Jesus was and what He had done. They just trusted in Jesus; now they want and need to know more!

The apostles had, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, taught the people the basics of faith in Christ and how to be forgiven of sin; but there was much more to learn. As Jesus had commanded, they needed to be taught all His will (Matthew 28:18-20). This teaching the apostles continued to do. We likewise need to be sure that people are taught the full knowledge of God’s will.

**Note that the apostles were the ones through whom this *inspired doctrine* came.** They had received the guidance of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13; Acts 1:8). Later they passed this miraculous knowledge on to others; but still it came, at least indirectly, through the apostles. There simply could be no revelation from God without the involvement of apostles.

*Today we have the message they revealed in the written word, so we no longer need living apostles (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Ephesians 3:3-5; 1 Corinthians 14:37). Since there could be no direct revelation without living apostles, and since there are no apostles living today (cp. Rev. 21:14) ... then there is no new revelation doctrine of the Spirit today. We have all truth in the Scriptures!*

**“Continued steadfastly”** uses a Greek verb communicating "a steadfast and single-minded fidelity to a certain course of action." There was to be no departure from the apostles' doctrine, because it was the truth of God. Thankfully, God allows us to sit under the apostles' doctrine - the New Testament record. Every pastor should seek to be unoriginal, in the sense that we don't have our own doctrine, but the apostles' doctrine.

**They continued in fellowship:** The Greek word for fellowship here is “*koinonia*”, and has the idea of association, communion, fellowship, and participation; **it means to share in something.**

**As Christians, we share the same Lord Jesus** ... we share the same guide for life ... we share the same love for God ... we share the same desire to worship Him ... we share the same struggles ... we share the same victories ... we share the same job of living for Him ... we share the same joy of communicating that gospel to others.

**They continued in the breaking of bread:** Even living so close to the time when Jesus was crucified, they still never wanted to forget it - how much more should we?

**They continued in prayers.** Whenever God's work is done, God's people are praying. Everything else we read about the power and glory of the early church flows from this foundation of the word, fellowship, remembrance of Jesus' work on the cross, and prayer!

## **THE PRESENCE OF THE POWER OF GOD**

**“Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.”** (Act 2:43)

- The power of God was evident because fear came upon every soul. One of the greatest, most powerful works God can do is to change the human heart towards a reverent honor of the Lord.

- The power of God was evident because many wonders and signs were done, and where God is moving, lives will be touched in miraculous ways.
- The power of God was evident here because Jesus and the Body of Christ became much more important to them than their personal possessions.

The church is meant to worship God and learn His Word together ... but it is also meant to do more; *God wants us to share our lives with one another (koinonia).*

**“So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart.”** (Acts 2:46)

- ***Praising God and having favor with all the people:*** Their Christian experience was **daily**, joyful and simple ... good examples for us to follow.
- ***And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved: This is God's prescription for church growth.*** If we take care to follow the example of Acts 2:42-47a ... ***God will take care of growing the church Himself!***

***As stated earlier, in Acts 2:42-47 we see is “A Blueprint” of the New Testament Church ... a foundation for Christian Life under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.***

## **THE CHURCH WAS DESIGNED BY GOD FOR A PURPOSE**

In fact, there are five basic purposes for each and every Church ... if we are building biblically. Dr. Rick Warren made these well known in his best seller **“The Purpose-Driven Church.”** God has designed 5 main purposes for the Church: Outreach (Evangelism or soul-winning), Worship, Fellowship, Discipleship and Service.

These five basic purposes of every local expression of the Body of Christ (*church*) are based on the example of the early Church as found in Acts, Chapter 2:42-47...

- They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching (**DISCIPLESHIP** – Edify)
- To the fellowship (**FELLOWSHIP** – Encourage),
- To the breaking of bread and to prayer (**WORSHIP** – Exalt).
- Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need (**SERVICE** – Equip).
- Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved (**OUTREACH** – Evangelism).