

THE MARKS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

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

In this verse we find some of the key characteristics of the early church in its ideal character. Can we be like that church? Is it possible to be what that church was? Yes! We are in fact, in many ways, throughout the NT instructed to imitate that first fellowship of believers.

It was a studying church

They were committed to studying, for it says, “**they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine.**” They knew all too well that : *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work* (2 Tim. 3:16-17). They gave themselves to being instructed and teaching others (2 Tim. 2:2). Doctrine is fundamental.

It was a fellowshiping church

They also, “**continued steadfastly in fellowship.**” The fellowship of the body is the interaction of believers with each other in ministering their spiritual gifts and various other ministries. This means there should be a spiritual togetherness.

We ought to be together all the time. Heb. 10: 25 admonishes, “*Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing.*” Why? You might ask. Because, v24 tells us, “*That we might provoke each other to love and good works.*”

It was a bread-breaking church

The symbol of their togetherness and fellowship was the “**breaking of bread.**” The common ground upon which all believers stand is the cross. Every time we “**break bread**” we’re acknowledging that the cross is the symbol of our unity. A unity with Christ and a unity with each other.

What a blessed command and privilege it is to remember our Lord and Saviour with the bread and the cup! Weekly, I might add (Acts 20:7).

It was a praying church

It says, “**And they continued steadfastly in prayers.**” It’s been said: prayer is the slender nerve that moves the muscles of omnipotence and if you can get enough people praying then you’re going to activate God’s power.

Jesus told them in John 14:13-14, *that from now on people, anything you ask in My name, I’ll do it.* The early church, they were taking Him at His word. And they were activating God’s power all day long, every day they were in prayers.

Prayer was the atmosphere in which the early Christians lived. When the Christian prayed God worked. Search out all the miraculous acts God performed in the Book of Acts, on account of their praying, earnestly with faith, and you will be astounded.

Soli Deo Gloria