

Acts 2:41-47

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls. 42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. 44 And all that believed were together, and had all things common; 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and parted to all *men*, as every man had need. 46 And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, 47 praising God, and having favour with all people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

Introduction: The Birth Of The Church Set A Pattern For Coming Revivals

[audio version: <http://resources.ccphilly.org/SPM597>]

“We have come as far as the end of Peter’s sermon, **verse 40 of chapter 2**. **“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”** Literally, **“*be saved from this untoward generation, this twisted or crooked generation, a generation that’s warped.*”** “Untoward,” not toward God, that’s the generation that we live in. **“Then they that gladly received”** literally “to welcome” **“his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.” (verse 41)** [Comment: Apparently, as the New Testament church was starting out, baptism was one of the chief ways one accepted Christ and received salvation and the Holy Spirit into their lives. See <https://unityinchrist.com/misc/WhatIsBaptism%20.htm>] that’s a long baptism service. We’re going to have a baptism in a few weeks, and normally we see anywhere from 60 to 150 people baptized, depending on what’s been happening in the church,

imagine how long it took to baptize 3,000 souls that were added to the church, what a day that must have been. That's a long process, there were some tired apostles I think at the end of that day. Now look, as we head into these things, the rule at least here, we believe, for our faith and practice, if we see and hear Jesus demonstrate, teach something in the Gospels, we see it practiced in the Book of Acts, and then we see it expounded on in the Epistles, then we have Church faith and practice. Baptisms, we see it in the Gospels, we see it in the Book of Acts, we hear it taught on, so we baptize, we love to take you and dunk you, hold you under a little bit, and let you come up in newness of life, it should be part of church practice. The Lord's Supper, we see it in the Gospels, we see it constantly in the Book of Acts, it's expounded on in the Epistles, it's part of what we do. Foot washing, we see it in John 13, in the Gospels, we don't really see it anywhere in the Book of Acts [but you see the New Testament Passover being talked about and observed in 1st Corinthians, and it was part of Jesus' last Passover service, the Last Supper, with his disciples, and we see his instruction about doing it in John 13, so because of that the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God observe it once a year during their Passover Service, just a difference in doctrinal belief on this subject], we hear mention of it in Peter in regards to someone who served the Church, we're not sure if it's just idiom, ***'to wash the feet of the saints.'*** So foot-washing is not, we believe, enforced on the Church as part of what we do on a regular basis. I don't know if anybody here has been to a foot-washing? Have you ever been the victim of a foot-washing? It's very, it's weird, isn't it? Very uncomfortable, usually it's someone trying to be gracious, and in some way let you know they appreciate it, but you're thinking *'I should have changed my socks, I should have washed my feet, I should have put powder on my sneakers,'* to have to go through that whole process, you're glad to get your feet underwater when it finally starts, where everybody is safe. But we don't see that enforced on the Church. Again, if we see it with Jesus in the Gospels [and we do], we see it practiced in the Book of Acts, we hear it taught on, expounded on in the Epistles, then we're firmly safe, we're looking at something in regards to the Church, our church, which is the faith of the Church and practice of the Church. So, we're going to take note of these things as we move into this section. Here they are with 3,000 souls, in one day, that's quite a sermon [Acts 2:14-40] and that's quite a church growth program they have there. And, you know, it's the next day, what do they do now? Things have changed, this is still very Jewish

in it's background, we're going to look at that [for an excellent and very interesting historic research article on that see <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/earlychurch1.htm>], and we're going to see all of these folks who have come from different countries to the Feast of Pentecost in Jerusalem, and many of them are going to want to stay now, at least maybe for weeks, they're not going to want to leave right away, there's been a paradigm shift in what they believe and their approach to God, and they're going to want to hang on the apostles' words, they're going to want to understand, they're going to want to be tutored before they go back to the areas they came from.

Four Essential Things The Early Church Had That Guaranteed It's Health

First Thing, They Honoured The Word of God, Without Adding To It or Subtracting From It

And all of a sudden the apostles have this mass of people at their feet on a daily basis. **'What do we do with this, how do we manage that?'** Well, in verse 42 we're going to see that there's at least four essential things, and God has preserved them and given them to us in the Book of Acts, that were ingredients in that early fellowship, that we then believe, we're going to find these things throughout the New Testament, that are essential for spiritual health, they're necessary. So, it says here that they had baptized them, there were added about 3,000 souls. **"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."** (verse 42) **"And they continued"** they, the 3,000 souls, 1) in first **"stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine"** 2). Second, **"and fellowship,"** 3) thirdly, **"and in breaking of bread,"** 4) and fourth, **"and in prayers."** So those things at least were essential to this early Church, please notice "doctrine" first, doctrine first, "the apostles' doctrine." This, by the way, with the Old Testament as your main text [i.e. there was no New Testament, it hadn't been written yet, and it wasn't until well after the death of John the apostle, beyond 100 AD, before the whole New Testament writings would be put together as a complete text, what we know as "The New Testament."], and establishing the truth

of Christ and who he was, and of redemption, of forgiveness, of the presence of the Holy Spirit, [and let's not forget "the resurrection from the dead and eternal life"], all of these teachings being established and brought into the hearts and minds of this New Testament Church, **primarily from all of the Old Testament text.** But it was the apostles' teaching, doctrine, relative to these things. First step, look, the Word of God, central to the new Church, the basis of the new Church. If you read through Church history you understand the place that the Apostolic Church, the esteem they held the Word of God in was central to everything they did. If you want to read a great book on Church history, you want to read "The Pilgrim Church" by Broadband, "The Pilgrim Church," it's a single volume. [Comment: the research article I wrote was taken from many recent historic sources, three or four main and authoritative recent books on early Church history. So be sure to read <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/index3.htm> and <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/earlychurch1.htm> and read through that. Considering what Pastor Joe has said, that there was no written New Testament text put together in its entirety, for almost the entire period of time of this first era of the Church, and their main Biblical foundation was strictly the Old Testament, this research article makes a lot of sense, even though in practice, this early Church isn't what you'd expect, looking at Christian churches today, even the Calvary Chapels.] Again, you know, I asked some friends, I had a question and we were talking about, basically, we were talking about tithing, and I can't find it enforced in the Apostolic Church, in fact, Eusibius and some of the Church Fathers were saying "that was a law the Jews enforced, but we have not enforced, but we have not enforce on our congregations," and so forth, the principle he was giving, and just wanting to dig a little more I asked several friends, one of them said '*Let me send you Dave Hunt, it's one volume, it'll take you through the history of the Church, up through Billy Graham,*' and it just gives you a flow of revival, a flow of where the Church was embracing the Word of God, it's just a great, great read. Again, I asked some friends, I had a question and we were talking about basics, we were talking about tithing. [Again, we should look to the Word of God, and we find the apostle Paul wrote on this particular subject in Hebrews, see <https://unityinchrist.com/hebrews/Hebrews%207%201-28.htm> where the apostle Paul goes in-depth on this subject, showing where the authority to tithe was transferred, from the Levitical priesthood to the priesthood of Melchizedek, and that the

priesthood of Melchizedek has the right to either levy tithes or not to, as each individual denomination or fellowship wishes. Some in practice, continue to levy tithes, whereas others, like Pastor Joe's church, says "Give as you are able." It's an interesting study, and because it's the apostle Paul's writing, as Peter said, it's not always easy to understand or interpret.] And then I asked Steve Mays and then again he sent me the Anti-Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers, forty-one volumes, which is more than I wanted to know, and I'll be reading for the rest of my life, for sure. But of course there's a great index there, so I can kind of aim at some things when I want to use it as reference. [Comment: that is a Catholic history for the most part, although it does have some early church history of the true Church under John late in his life, and John's disciples, Polycarp and Policrates, from the 90s AD to around 150AD. But be careful with Catholic histories. Why? see <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/earlychurch3.htm>] But the Church, the early Church, what was it like? Certainly, at the center was the Word of God. Paul would exhort Timothy ***'Preach the Word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering. The days are coming when people are not going to hold onto sound teaching, sound doctrine, but with itching ears they're going to heap to themselves teachers, saying the kinds of things that they want to hear. But the Lord is coming, the one who is going to judge the quick and the dead,'*** in light of that, he says ***'Timothy, stay faithful to the Word, preach the Word of God.'*** Again, we hear Jude, so early, saying he's going to write to you about our common faith, he said ***'As I was moved by the Spirit I had to write that you would defend the faith that was once delivered unto the saints,'*** so early they were turning away from the central things in regards to doctrine. We hear about the church of Philadelphia in the Book of Revelation chapter 3, beginning in ***verse 7, 'You have kept my Word, you have not denied my name,'*** Lord, you've complimenting that church, one of the central things he's saying about that church, ***'you've kept my Word, you've not denied my name.'*** [see <https://unityinchrist.com/revelation/revelation3-1-22.html> for a description of who the Philadelphia church is, who and what it represents, both historically and prophetically.] And we see a tampering with Scripture, listen, it starts in the Book of Genesis, ***'Hath God said?'*** Satan's first attack is on the veracity of God's Word, he adds to it, he takes away from it, initially, immediately. As Israel's ready to come into the Land, in

Deuteronomy, the Law of God is reiterated for them before they go into the land, he says there ***“Thou shalt not add unto these words, thou shalt not diminish therefrom.”*** diminish, don’t even take a little bit from them, it was always the problem, adding to the Word of God or taking away from the Word of God, all the way up to the days of Jesus when he says ***‘Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees,’*** the Pharisees had added to the Word of God, to the point where the Law was burdensome, it was unable to be kept, they had burdened it down with ritual, tradition. The Sadducees had subtracted from the Word of God, they said they only believed in the first five books of [of Moses], they didn’t believe in the Prophets, the other portions of the Scripture, they didn’t believe in the resurrection, they didn’t believe in spirits [i.e. angels], they just believed in the things that Moses had to say. And Jesus of course argued with them...Exodus chapter 3, and put them in their place, they were the ones who were detracting from the Word of God. All the way to the end of the Bible, the last thing we’re told in the Book of Revelation, ***‘Anyone who adds to the things that are written in this Book the plagues will be added to them, anybody who takes away from it his place in the holy city and the tree of life will be taken from him.’*** So all the way from the beginning to the end, there is a constant attack on the Word of God, to add to it, to detract from it, to say it’s not what it is. And there is a huge battle in the Church [Body of Christ] today in regards to inerrancy, and is the Word of God true, I mean, we’ve lost a generation like Charles Fuller, Gleason Archer...some of the guys from Princeton, Robert Dick Wilson and some just remarkable people, Van Till, some great men, and certainly the Church is only going to be successful in making an impression on this generation where the Word of God is upheld as the Word of God. ***And if we see a revival, and if God pours out of his Spirit again in these last days, I think it’s going to be where the Word of God is honoured as the Word of God.*** [Comment: to see some articles about this potentially coming revival see <https://unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/REVIVAL.htm>]

1] The first thing, and the essential ingredient is, ***‘They abode, that means to be at home with, settled down in, stedfastly, continuing, stedfastly, not here and there, in the apostles’ doctrine, they were right in there, listening to the apostles expound the Scripture.’*** [Comment: these connective expository sermons are “expounded” versions of the Scripture, going verse by verse, chapter by chapter, book by book, through the whole Bible.]

The Second Thing The Early Church Had, Fellowship

Secondly, fellowship, Koinonia, and that was, the sense of it, they were abiding steadfastly also in Koine, no Lone Rangers, the early Church was not a Sunday-Go-To-Meeting [or Sabbath-Go-To-Meeting, since they worshipped on the Sabbath initially] church. Certainly they met on the Lord's day. But because Jerusalem and the religious system was antagonistic to them, they felt the necessity to see each other on a regular basis, and they continued in Koinonia regularly, it wasn't a once in the week thing, they depended on one another. And the idea of Koine meant they had all things in common, it was more than just fellowship talking, it was really a sharing of life. We're going to hear as we move down, they sold their possessions and they distributed to everyone. There was a beauty to what was happening in that early Church in its naivety, but the presence of the Holy Spirit. So there's the apostles' doctrine, fellowship, obviously, you're not a Sunday-go-to-meeting folks because you're here on Sunday night, people come on Wednesday night, come on Tuesday morning, it's wonderful to see the church busy 7 days a week, it's wonderful to see that.

Thirdly, The Breaking Of Bread

(but this section strongly relates to the previous one on fellowship)

Certainly that was eating together, but it was more than that, because the Lord's Supper was enjoined at the end of every one of those meals. [Comment: that belief is more based on later Church tradition than fact, it may be true, or it may not be. The Lord's Supper was initially the Christian Passover service which Paul referred to in 1st Corinthians 11:22-34, which would have been observed as a memorial on the actual day of Passover, on the evening of the 13th/14th Nisan, the same timing Jesus observed (see <https://unityinchrist.com/lamb/lastsix.htm>). How do I know that is true? There was a great controversy that shows up in the Post and Anti-Nicene Fathers (which Pastor Joe has a copy of), where it was preserved historically that the Apostle John, and then his disciple Polycarp, and then Policrates after him, had a standing and

running controversy about keeping the Christian Passover on the 14 Nisan as Jesus had, instead of the Easter service the early bishop in Rome was now observing. Talk about some of the Church giving up a Biblical practice and doctrine “that was once delivered to the saints” for something false. Polycarp as much as told this bishop that he was going to observe this Christian Passover on the 14th of Nisan, just as he had been taught by John the Apostle, who had been taught by Jesus Christ himself. This is preserved in this Catholic history, kind of damning them, interestingly enough. This truth is, understandably, not very popular with most of the Sunday-observing Christian denominations, but I’m an extreme history buff, so let the chips fall where they may.] So the taking of the Lord’s Supper was done on a regular basis there, and it was done in home fellowships house to house we’re going to read. Look, I would really encourage you to be involved in a home fellowship, I think it’s the backbone of our church [and this is very true, small groups, one-on-one fellowship can really strengthen believers]. We have about thirty home fellowships out there who are adults, the women now have a number of small groups going, and the ladies that are attending love them, ah, junior high, I don’t know how many, thirty small groups, and that’s a phenomenon, 30, 40 junior high kids involved in small groups to come to study the Bible and not to play basketball or sports, but to come to study the Bible. Senior high has a number of small groups, very important. College and Career has a number of small groups, and some of the single folks in our church have done that. I think the small groups are very important, very essential. We don’t know what’s happening in the world we’re living in. Take my word, please, this evening, our world could be completely different by next Sunday. It could be completely different by next Sunday. Again, gas is at, I filled up the other day for a \$1.74 a gallon, 25 bucks, it was wonderful, something I never thought I’d experience again. I remember when I was a kid, filling my dad’s car for two bucks. But still, this was wonderful. But I’m aggravated, thinking *‘Who are these people who can take the price of gas, remember 3 dollars a gallon, and take it back to \$1.74 a gallon?’* They say it’s going to go down twenty more dollars a barrel, it’s going to go down to about 85 cents a gallon, who are these people? And how can they just decide to open the spigots and close the spigots? Again, what they’re doing is they’re trying to save everything from falling apart [economically, avoiding a big 1930’s type crash]. But if that happens, if the Israelis go into Iran, or the Strait of Hormuz is going to close, prices are going to go back up to 7 or 10 dollars a

gallon [amazing as he was saying this, 11 or more years ago, the Iranians are now messing with the Strait of Hormuz, and enriching more uranium, which eventually will bring the Israelis against Iran, that whole area is destabilizing and heating up, this being the summer of 2019]. People won't be coming to church, some of you who live at a greater distance, well you're thinking either you're going to have to get a bike, I'm only four miles away, I could get a bike, or you're going to have to find the closest home fellowship, I think those are extremely important. We should know where the closest home fellowship is to your house, if you're in high school you should know where the closest home fellowship is where the high school groups meet, the women, you should know those things. Because it may end up more and more becoming the backbone of the church, we don't know what's going to happen in the world that we live in, we just know it's going to change quickly. So, they were abiding stedfastly in the apostles' teaching, that was first, fellowship, breaking of bread...[and if fellowship and breaking of bread were all one and the same thing in the early Church, then "prayer" is the third item.]

*The Fourth Thing The Early Church Had, Prayer,
Individual And Corporate*

and certainly in prayers, that was an essential part, both individual, and corporately. Imagine what it was like for these 3,000 souls who a day before had only been able to approach God, as it were, through a sacrifice in the Temple precincts, having to take a pigeon or a lamb or a bull. And now all of a sudden they've come to Christ, the Lamb of God, and been touched by him, and filled by his Spirit, and have this incredible new connection with God. Look, do you remember the way it was when you first got saved? I mean, I remember when I first got saved, my mind was blown, and so were the minds of people around me. Because my mind was blown in many ways before I was saved, LSD and other things had something to do about that. And I was out on the astroplains with Bobby Rondas and places where I was lost out there, so I was already a space-cadet. And then you get saved, I remember my parents saying, they just watched me because it's Jesus now, *'The only thing that's left is UFO's for this, I don't know where he's going after Jesus,'* they thought it was another fad. But my mom told me years later, 'As

we watched your life, as we watched, we saw it never went away, it began to speak to us, you were different.' And I appreciated that. I mean, I was still trying to figure out what the Bible meant, everything was brand new. But imagine coming from a religious background. You know, I came from the world and sin. Imagine coming from a very stringent religious background, and [from that background] you can't approach God except through the blood of an animal, and all of a sudden the next day Jesus is the Lamb of God. All of a sudden you have this tremendous freedom just to go to God without sacrifice, and to go into his presence. So prayer was a huge part of this early church, individually and corporately, they would come together for prayer. You know, we have men's prayer-meetings here, 6 O'clock in the morning, on Wednesdays we have prayer during the services, another part of the church does a prayer group on Saturdays once a month, I think it's important. But listen, Charles Spurgeon in his church, at any service, would have five to six hundred people in the basement on their knees, praying while he was preaching. People would come to visit the church, and at the beginning of the service, he would say *'Let me take you downstairs and show you our "heater,"* and they'd get down there and this whole floor would be covered with people on their knees praying. It's so important. You know, please, if it's on your heart, ever, feel free to go into that prayer-room during the services and be praying for me, and be praying for the church, and praying for what happens out here in the sanctuary. Prayer, certainly, in this sense. And we're asking, *"Lord, what should I do?"* I remember when we first got saved, I was saying *'Lord, would you want us to eat a steak sandwich today or a Hoagie today? Do you want us to study Bible today or turn on the 700 Club?'* You know, there was an immaturity about that, but there was also a beauty about it. And I think how much he must have enjoyed that. You know what it's like to have little children, *'Dad, can I have a cookie, can I have a cookie? Dad can I go here, Dad, can I go there?'* what warmth must have been in that for him. Sometimes I think, I bet someday he wishes I would go back to that, talking to him before I make a left, make a right, do you want me to sit on the sofa or sit on the chair, you never want that to be legalistic, but we didn't know any better, there was a wonder to it. And we see there's a wonder to this early church and the things they do. So, the ingredients we see here is 1) the Word of God continually, that's central, 2) we see genuine fellowship where they're actually willing to sacrifice for one another, not just talking. 3) [related to that] there is the breaking of bread, they're eating meals

together, taking the Lord's Supper together, and 4) there are prayers.
[see <https://unityinchrist.com/prayer/bibleway.htm>]

*Christianity Says 'What's Mine Is Yours' – The Spirit Of
Revival – What Revival Looks Like – Have You Seen One
Lately? – I Have*

And it says **“Fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.” (verse 43)** and if you have the King James like I do, it says **“were done by the apostles.”** the Greek says **“many signs and wonders were done through the apostles.”** The apostles were just vehicles, the Holy Spirit, it was the Lord administering by his Spirit through the apostles. They weren't at all doing the miracles, the Lord was doing them. So, **“many signs and wonders were done through the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common;” (verse 45)** notice, here's the koinonia, they had all things in common, and there was great need, if there were thousands that remained after Pentecost they were there without sustenance, they were there without jobs, they were meeting the needs of those who no doubt stayed. **“And [there were those that] sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.” (verse 46)** Now look, this is not communism, this is not mandated anywhere. They were excited, they were on fire, they sold things, they distributed things, this was driven by agape' love. You know, communism is this, communism says *'What's yours is mine,' [mandated by law]* that's communism. Capitalism says *'What's mine is mine' [mandated by law].* Christianity says *'What's mine is yours' [totally voluntary, not mandated].* Communism is *'What's yours is mine,'* that's communism. Capitalism is *'What's mine is mine.'* Christianity is *'What's mine is yours' [and this “heat” was generated by the Holy Spirit].* And that wasn't mandated. When we see Ananias and Sapphira in the 5th chapter, Peter says to them **‘When it was in your hand, wasn't it yours? We didn't ask for it, there was nothing required, you didn't have to bring it to the apostles' feet and lay it down. When it was in your hand it was yours. So why come and lie about it, there's no mandate here.’** So this was never mandated on the early church, that they had to sell everything they had and give it. But there was a great motivation, there was great heat in the

furnace of this early church, as it were. And by the way, some of what was produced then through this, as a famine came, God would use it, because then there was great difficulty in the church in Jerusalem, and the church in Jerusalem became supported by the Gentile churches around the Mediterranean world, and it knit together the Church family, Jew and Gentile, in a way that probably never would have happened. So, yes I think there was to some degree, a zealousness here. People were doing these things, they weren't mandated, they were excited. You know, Jesus had ascended, how many of them saw that. And the angels said **'This same Jesus is coming in like manner,'** they thought he was coming any day. I'm sure they did. You know, Paul, when he writes to the Corinthians, he says **'Look, you single guys, you'd be better off if you stayed single, if you get married then you got to worry about the things of your wife.'** Image that, what nerve our wives have, don't they. I'm just kidding. Paul says if you get married then you have to worry about taking care of your wife. If you stay single, you worry about Christ. He says **'I wish you were all as I am, because the Lord's coming.'** Well imagine if all the men in the early church had listened to Paul, the church would have died out 2,000 years ago. Paul says to the Thessalonians **'The Lord shall descend with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, then we which remain shall be caught up to heaven to meet the Lord in the air,'** he used the personal pronoun, he was expecting this to happen in his lifetime. So there's great expectancy in this early church too. And that expectancy determined part of the way they lived. Listen, if you and I believe Christ could come at any time, that should determine part of the way we live too, you know. Cathy and I, talking, we're going through Christmas, buying Christmas presents, *'Well this person got us a present, so then we gotta get them a present,'* you go through this, we're connected to so many people, we love so many people, but somewhere in the process I think, *'Lord, come quickly.'* Again, because it's not just about all that, I mean we get caught up in so many things in this world. And sometimes you sit back and you think, and this year for me, again, personally, has been a very hard year, for a number of reasons, you know, Robie, Celeste, Mary Barret, I could go down the list. You know, it's one of those years where you feel like the tears are filled up to the bottom of your eyelids, and somebody, if they tilt you, they're going to run out. That's how close they are. But it's been a very great year too. But as time goes on, you know, you learn what really is important, you

prioritize, and your priorities change. This is temporary, it's transient, this is a pilgrimage. I'm going to talk about that next Sunday morning. Here's the truth, everyone in this room will lose everything. It's a nice chipper message, isn't it? We lose our parents, somewhere along the line, some of us lose our spouses, sadly there are some who have lost their children. No parent should ever have to bury their child. As you get older you lose your hearing. You lose your teeth. You lose your figure. You lose your hair. You lose your memory, so you don't mind those other things. [he laughs]. The truth is, then we end up alone somewhere, and we transition through the veil, we breathe our last and have to let go of this world, and we do that completely alone. We come in with nothing, we leave with nothing, but head toward everything, an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, that fades not away. And it's there, and you know, I think as life goes on we learn to prioritize. I think it's easier to give to somebody else. I think it's easier to lose an argument. Is the most important thing whose right and whose wrong? You know, as time goes on you realize there are higher things in the Kingdom than just right and wrong. You know, I can win an argument with my wife, and it's just not worth it. You know those kind of arguments, I heard Vance Havner, he said one day "A bulldog can beat a skunk any day, but it's just not worth it." You know, as time goes on you prioritize, you learn what's more important. And in the zeal of this early Church, because of the centrality of Christ, because of the reality of Christ [and his resurrection from the dead], because of the power of his Spirit, the material was so less important, the material world and the things around them. And every day they hung on the truths of Scripture, the apostles' doctrine. Every day their fellowship, their Koinia was to sacrifice for one another, not just to talk. Every day their homes were open to fellowship and break bread and take the Lord's Supper together. Every day they gathered and held hands, and sat and prayed, individually, corporately. ***'And fear came on all of those in Jerusalem, many signs and wonders were done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common, and they sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need.'*** "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (verses 46-47) "singleness of heart," it's with "simplicity of heart,"

almost with a childlike heart. They were continually in the Temple, they were there, not just coming to the house of God, but coming to the God of the house, every day, there to hear the apostles' teaching, every day it says that they are breaking bread from house to house, eating their food with gladness, and with simplicity of heart, not complicated at all. [I remember, it was during the general revival that occurred following the Jubilee year of 1967, when the Israeli's took all of Jerusalem, this spiritual revival took place from then until the mid 1970s and then on into the early 1980s, and this was occurring in the Calvary Chapel revival, and the same revival was occurring within the Worldwide Church of God, when many new people were being born again. I remember specifically in the Boston church, members were coming into each other's homes, eating meals, you could just drop into the homes of members and fellowship on a moment's notice or without notice, and it wasn't viewed as strange or inappropriate. We were all excited, as we learned the Word of God and especially of the prophecies announcing the Lord's imminent 2nd coming, we lived with that expectation. I saw and witnessed this innocence and naivety of attitude within the Boston congregation, Springfield congregation, and everywhere I traveled to local congregations within New England. (The number of members within the Worldwide Church of God swelled to over 150,000 within five years, from 1967 to 1972.) At the same time the Messianic Jewish revival was going full-tilt (to where they now number around a million members, congregations were forming across the nation and around the world, and the Calvary Chapels were going through the same explosive growth, with this identical innocence and naivety of attitude I witnessed in the WCG congregations in New England. Calvary Chapels have their own stories to tell about this time of revival, as do the Messianic Jews (see <https://unityinchrist.com/history/smith.htm>). May the Lord Jesus restore this same spirit of revival within the greater Body of Christ, and bring a spirit of unity into the Body, as he's called for his end-time Church to do (see <https://unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/Zephaniah1.htm> and scroll to and read Zephaniah 2:1-3, as well as <https://unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/REVIVAL.htm> 1). And notice, this revival was happening across the board, so to speak, within the most on-fire parts of the Body of Christ, and it was Holy Spirit inspired, Holy Spirit fueled and driven, not a work of any one man. Also notice that God did not differentiate between Sabbath-keeping Churches of God, Sabbath-observing Messianic

Jewish congregations or Sunday-observing Calvary Chapels—God’s Holy Spirit was empowering this revival throughout all three groups to the same degree. **Since the Lord wasn’t beating up or making a difference between these three groups, neither should we.** Sunday-keepers tend to doctrinally beat up the Sabbath-keeping Churches of God (they don’t dare do this with the Jews, even though they’re strong Sabbath-observers), and the Sabbath-keepers tend to doctrinally beat up the Sunday-keepers. This must stop, if God isn’t doing it, neither should we, in our sermons, or in the articles or literature we write. Read that article about Zephaniah 2:1-3, God wants unity, not divisiveness, within his greater body of believers, regardless of which “days of worship” we sincerely believe in observing. We should notice that another Jubilee year just occurred in 2017, and I’m waiting and praying for that revival to come, perhaps our last before the Lord comes. But look for this pattern just described by Pastor Joe here in this section.] **“Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And”** notice, **“the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” (verse 47)** that’s the best evangelism program there is, **“the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”** You know, we have seen, over the years, we started in 1981 on a Wednesday night in November with a Bible study with about 20 of us, 25 of us, and we have watched what the Lord has done over the last, and in 1982 was our first service, and how he’s added. And we didn’t have any programs, we didn’t have an evangelism program, we were too busy, the church was growing. We didn’t have time for programs, we were just trying to keep up with everything. The people would come and say ‘*What’s the secret?*’ and we’d say ‘*I don’t know.*’ ‘*What are you doing?*’ ‘*Well, we’re teaching the Word, the secret is, you feed them, they come if you feed them, free food, healthy sheep reproduce, that’s our evangelistic program, they reproduce by themselves.*’ Shepherds don’t have sheep, sheep have sheep, and if you feed them and you care for them the flock grows by itself, it reproduces. I remember one time we had these guys coming in, I won’t mention their organization, but they came in and said ‘*We have this evangelistic program, we want to do this evangelistic program here,*’ so I like to say ‘*Talk to Jerry about that.*’ So then I say ‘*What’s your evangelistic program? Where have you been doing this? How long have you been doing it there?*’ ‘*Two years.*’ ‘*Well, how many people have gotten saved?*’ ‘*Well, we’re not sure.*’ I say ‘*What do you mean you’re not sure?*’ ‘*Well we don’t know.*’ ‘*How much has the church grown [where you’ve been doing this program]?*’ ‘*Well, we don’t know.*’ Then

I said ‘*Well, we’ve grown by a thousand people in the last two years.*’ But my question to them is, ‘*Why should I do what you’re doing, and your program, and you don’t know the results, when, why should I trade away what we’re doing, what I don’t know, which produces results?*’ ‘*This is a bad trade here, I don’t know what we’re doing, but we’ve seen results, you know what you’re doing, you haven’t seen any results. I’m not going to trade away for that.*’ They always get mad at me...that’s fine with me. Because the Lord adds to the church daily such as should be saved, that’s the best program. A.W. Tozier said this, he said “*Men are not attracted to a living church, because in a living church Jesus is the only attraction,*” and they want more, they want spice, or they want leaks and garlic, and the mixt multitude comes and they want entertainment and all kinds of other things. We’re not here to entertain, we’re here to feed the sheep. That’s our program, I’m so dumb, that’s all we had to do, so we’ll keep doing that program, it’s much easier. So, **“the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” (verse 47b)** What an interesting thing to watch. [see <https://unityinchrist.com/pom/>]

Acts 3:1-11

“Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, *being the ninth hour.* 2 And a certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; 3 who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple asked alms. 4 And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. 5 And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. 6 Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. 7 And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. 8 And leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God. 9 And all the people saw him walking and praising God: 10 and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which

had happened unto him. 11 And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering."

Peter & John, An Interesting Evangelistic Team

"Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour." It's interesting to watch these two together, Peter's older, John is younger. They were together at the tomb, running to the tomb, John outran Peter. After Peter's denial John seems to have taken hold of him, and John is the mystic in a way, John sees wonderful things, Peter's more pragmatic. Paul was caught up to the 3rd heaven and he said **'I saw things there that are unspeakable,'** he just said it would be a shame to try to tell you. That's why God didn't give the Revelation to Paul on Patmos, he'd have said *'No sense trying to write this,'* he was too pragmatic [like Peter]. John just wrote the whole thing down. And you can almost see these two together, sometimes Peter saying *'John, would you just get up, stop, you're spacing out, sitting there looking at the birds, the sky and the rainbow, come on we got things to do!'* Just an interesting combination, and God put these two together, and we watch them. Here they are coming into the Temple together, and it says **'it is at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.'** Now this is still all very Jewish, "where being the ninth hour" this is all still very Jewish, they would pray the third hour, sixth hour, ninth hour, if you lived in Jerusalem and you could, you would take time to walk up to the Temple, nine in the morning, 12 noon, 3 in the afternoon. The sacrifice was actually slaughtered about a half hour before that, and when prayer started at 3pm the bodies were put on the alter and the smoke began to ascend and the incense was lit, and it was a very interesting time of course to be there, and see the smoke rising, to smell the incense, to know it was the time of the evening sacrifice. [Comment: that sacrifice pictured Christ's sacrifice. Notice the lamb was sacrificed before prayer began. Jesus' sacrifice occurred before the New Testament believers had direct access to God in prayer, pictured by the incense and the hour of prayer beginning. Jesus' Passover sacrifice preceded the Day of Pentecost when now believers had direct access to God through prayer. This was pictured every day in the morning and evening sacrifice and hour of prayer which followed it.] There at nine

in the morning, the time of the morning sacrifice, and they go up to the Temple at that time. It was a habit, and there were many no doubt coming up to the Temple at that time. And it tells us **“A certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;”** (verse 2) now in *chapter 4, in verse 22*, you don’t have to turn there, it tells us there, **“for the man was above forty years old on whom this miracle was shown.”** So this man is over forty years old, he has a congenital defect, he has been crippled from birth. **“A certain man lame from his mother’s womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple;”** and no doubt this man had regular support, first it says they carried him there daily. You know, the beggars were smart. Now look, this is the gate called Beautiful, many confuse this, many think this is about what would be called the Golden Gate on the exterior wall of the Temple, or the East Gate. It isn’t that. Inside, more proper, around the Court of Women there were nine gates, there were four on the north side, four on the south side and one on the east side where everybody entered, and that was the Gate Beautiful. It was Corinthian bronze, it was covered in gold in certain places, and it was more valuable than the pure gold was, because of the workmanship involved. Listen, the doors, the two doors were forty-five foot high, we got a 16-foot ceiling here, so almost three times the height of this ceiling, they were forty-five foot high, the two doors, and they were twenty-two and a half foot wide, and when they were closed they basically made a huge square of Corinthian bronze work, intricately, part of it were overlaid with gold, it was called the Beautiful Gate, it was no doubt staggering. And those gates were open, and because you were crippled you were not allowed, you were allowed there in the Court of the Gentiles, they kind of had written that off, and Jesus was angry with them about that, he turned over the tables of the money changers there. But if you were crippled or maimed in some way, you were never allowed into the Temple proper, the first court being the Court of Women. So outside of this Beautiful gate, this man had for years it seems, been lain, it tells us some interesting things, listen, what that means is, this man had lain there and probably heard a number of Jesus’ teachings. Jesus was in those courts challenging the religious leaders. He may have seen Jesus heal other people in the Temple courts. It also means Jesus had walked past him probably numerous times. And this guy

probably thought *'Oh ya, Lord, the great healer, loves everybody, except me. Here I lay, he walks by me time after time.'* You can't relate to that, I'm sure, *'Lord, here I am, you take care of everybody else, you do miracles in everybody else's life, but you have no time for me. How am I supposed to believe in your love? How am I supposed to believe you care about me? Look how crippled I am, sometimes by one thing or another, and I've always been this way, and I can never change, you walk by me, and you don't care for me.'* And now this crippled man had heard that Jesus had been crucified, he was dead. Very interesting. I wonder what his thoughts of what Christ had been. He's laying there at the Gate called Beautiful, that went into the Temple proper, **"Who seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, asked alms. And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them."** (verses 4-5) *'Look at me,'* imagine that, old Peter, burly, and the guy probably wasn't paying attention, he was probably going *'Alms for the poor, alms for the poor [imagine that scene in Monty Python],'* probably just wanted to hear *'Kuchink, kuchink,* the money being thrown down, you know, that was his routine, he probably wasn't even looking, *'Alms for the poor, alms...'* and he hears **'Hey, look at me,'** and he looks up and there's Peter and John standing there. **"And Peter, fastening his eyes upon him with John, said, Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God."** (verses 4-8) Lucky for this guy that Peter and John didn't have any gold, they might have thrown it down. Peter and John said to him, **'Look, Silver and gold have I not, but I'll tell you what I do have, I have faith in a risen Saviour, I have a keen awareness of the filling of his Spirit, I have a reality that the God I serve is a miracle-working God.'** That's incumbent upon each of us, look, especially on me, especially on me. Do we really believe. There are lots of people crippled by sin, laying outside of the Beautiful Gates as it were of heaven. And are we able to say to them in such a way, again, that would change their lives, *'Look, this is what I do have, I know him, I spend time with him, I know he loves you because he loves me,'* are we able to bring to bear on them that which is life-changing? It's

said that Thomas Aquinas in a conversation with the pope, as the coffers were being gathered in and the money was being counted, that the pope said to Thomas Aquinas *'Isn't it funny that we can no longer say 'Silver and gold have I not?'* and Thomas Aquinas thought for a moment and said to the pope, *'No, it's tragic that we can no longer say 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, take up thy bed and walk.'* He said that, *'that's what we don't have.'*

Understanding The Miracle That Just Took Place

“Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength.” (verses 6-7) now doctor Luke does some interesting things in the grammar, **“*immediately his feet and his ankle bones received strength.*”** Doctor Luke communicates several of these things, it seems in medical terms. **“And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God.” (verse 8)** he is walking, doesn't know what to do with himself, he's walking and leaping, and praising God. Look, this is a congenital problem, there's no rehab here. You know, it would be very interesting for me to have an orthopedic doctor, orthopedic surgeon to describe to you, and Luke tries to do that, part of the word he used has to do with the bones going into socket. You know, here's a guy, no muscle tone, no nerve connections, all of that had been atrophied. This is a guy who had a congenital disease and for over forty years had been crippled and had never used his legs. You have to understand the power of what takes place here, because instantaneously Luke says his bones are going into joints, we're hearing the snap, crackly, and pop of all of that, the sound effects must have been interesting. Immediately there are tendons, muscle tone, but within that there are nerve connections that had never been there before, the guy stands up immediately, after never standing, never in his life. And he's leaping and walking immediately. I would be too, wouldn't you? If all of a sudden you had complete ability. And look, at this point, as he stands up, all of Jerusalem is before him. All of Israel, there's no boundaries. But of course what he does, is he goes with Peter and John into the Temple. Where else would he go? Where else would he go? He had

been crippled, and he's healed in such a remarkable, powerful way, with no rehab. My son a number of years ago, blew out his ACL and had to have surgery, you know the whole process, the machine to bend your leg, going to rehab for months to stretch out the tendon they put in there, the whole process, just I'm amazed when I see this, for over 40 years, born crippled, never using any of this, **snap!** and like that, muscle tone, nerves, everything, he stands up. He doesn't know what to do with himself, that's why it says he's leaping, he's walking, he's hopping one minute, then he's walking, he's praising God, he's got all kinds of stuff he's never had before. And he's acting out on all of that stuff.

A Divine Purpose For The Delay In God's Healing Of This Man

“And all the people saw him walking and praising God:” (verse 9) and he was well-known, he had been there for years. That's why Jesus just left him there, he had to be there till the proper moment. The Lord hadn't forsaken him, the Lord hadn't forgotten about him, the Lord had walked by him, but the Lord hadn't done that without love, because there was a day, there was an hour, there was a time that was appointed for his encounter with God, for his healing. All of that had been set aside in God's sovereignty. And he was waiting for his healing, but he was waiting for what it would do, for what it would do in the early Church, the thousands again that will hear Peter speak now, and that will come, in God's wisdom and in God's design. There was a much bigger picture than he ever thought that there was. So now he's walking, he's leaping, he's praising God. Doctor Luke amazed with these things, of course. **“And all the people saw him walking and praising God: and they knew that it was he which sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John,”** he's not going to let go of them, he's holding onto them, **“all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.” (verses 9-11)** Now, the Solomon's portico is not in the Temple, evidently it seems they were headed up the steps into the Court of Women, as the healing takes place, and this guy is holding onto them, they must back off, and the crowds are running together. And right behind the East

Gate on the inside of the Temple was all these colonnades and that was Solomon's Portico. That's where, in John chapter 10, verse 22 it tells us Jesus, at the Feast of Dedication [Hanukah, which by Jesus being there shows he was observing this Feast of Dedication, also known by the Jews as Hanukah], in the winter, six months before, or less than that, before his crucifixion and resurrection, was walking alone in Solomon's Portico, looking, thinking, *'This place will soon be filled with thousands who know my name, who cling to the teaching of the truth.'* Jesus had wandered there in Solomon's Portico several months before this, alone, it says, in the winter. And now they come together into this porch which is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. **“And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man walk?” (verse 12)** Isn't that refreshing? Can you imagine if this happened today? There'd be advertisements in the newspaper, there'd be a new TV show, there'd be a new hairdo, a new permanent, new gold watches, Rolex's, a brand new Bentley to ride around it, they'd be walking around swinging their sports jacket, knocking people down, imagine what would be going on. [Pastor Joe is poking fun at the wacko *blab-it, grab-it* type of Pentecostals who would be taking advantage of a miracle of God for the sake of their own financial gain. The sicker parts of the Body of Christ dwell alongside the healthier parts, like the Calvary Chapels, the Messianic Jews, and Sabbath-keeping Churches of God, and when a miracle, a major public miracle takes place, even in one of the healthy churches, those unhealthy Christian groups will try to claim the miracle as their own, riding on the PR they can get, for their own financial gain. That is probably why God doesn't do much healing in public like this anymore.] You know, sometimes as I see these advertisements for some of these ministries, *'Come, See, Healings, Signs & Wonders'* what do you need a newspaper advertisement for, radio advertisement for? if it's really going on people would be flocking, you wouldn't be able to get rid of them. And I watch some of it, it's so sad, because sometimes I see people bring their child with leukemia or whose crippled, and sometimes, in a last-ditch effort, almost hopeless, they'll drive a hundred miles, 200 miles, to come to one of these things, and they leave disappointed. But there is the genuine, that's the only reason there's the counterfeit. Would there be any sense in there being counterfeit if there wasn't the genuine? And I believe Jesus still heals today, and he does here occasionally. We don't talk about it

in front of the pulpit, we don't advertise it here, we don't want the elders and the pastors to ever get the credit for it. If somebody in our church is healed we know they tell their friends and their family and their relatives, and Jesus gets glorified, but we see some wonderful things from time to time. Do we see it all the time? No. Do we see it as much as I'd like to see it? No. Do I wonder why he does it so seldom? Yes. But he does do it. He still heals. He still touches. It's the exception, it's not the rule. But we don't see it to the degree we see it in the Book of Acts. And of course we don't see the commitment to the Lord, you know, the Book of Acts is an interesting environment. Ananias and Sapphira were not genuine and they fell down dead. Do we really want to see the power we saw in the Book of Acts? What if you're a single guy and you're here singing during worship, you're singing *'Lord you're all I need,'* and you're looking at some girl at the same time, you see guys falling down dead, *'Boomp!'* during worship, you know. What if insincerity here, you were slain in the Spirit, and I mean slain. Do we want that kind of purity, that kind of power? We wonder about this, if he brings it. It says here there was fear upon every soul, there was a reverence, it's a healthy thing. Sometimes when I think of the Church [greater Body of Christ] today, about my life, we lose the fear of God. The problem with America is not just the entertainment industry or the media or our morals, the problem is there is no fear of God, we've lost our fear of God. And that will come back to bite us.

*This Was A Divine Miracle – Not Something Done By
Humans*

But he says ***'Why do you look on us as though by some power or holiness of our own we have made this man to walk?'*** (We'll pick up there next week) It's not the human instrument. If you go and have to see a good surgeon, and there's some good ones, if you ever want to see a surgeon, see a good one. And he does a great brain surgery and removes a tumor, prolongs your life. You don't go back to the hospital and say *'Where's that scalpel? Where's the saw? I want to thank that scalpel, that scalpel did a great job,'* no, no, no, where's the man that had the instrument in his hand? Where's the surgeon? Peter's saying ***'Why are you looking on us as though we've done something by some holiness or power of our own,'***

I'm just the scalpel, you want to bring your glory and your thanks to the surgeon, we're just an instrument in his hand, he's the one who does the work.' Billy Graham said, "We're never more like Satan than when we touch the Glory," isn't that a challenge for us? "Never more like Satan than when we touch the Glory." Peter and John not willing to do that at all, they had walked with the risen Lord. They had walked with him, they had listened to him teach for 40 days, they understood that it was his Spirit that had fallen, they knew it well that he was the one that was still...you know, Luke said **"The former treatise, O Theopolis have I written to you of all that Jesus began to do and to teach,"** inferring that the Book of Acts is the record of what Jesus is continuing to do and to teach. And they say **'Why are you looking on us as though this miracle had something to do with human agency.'** What a great, great challenge, because I see so much, especially on television, built around human agency and human personality, some of it drives me wild, drives me wild. So I don't turn it on, when I think bad thoughts. Sometimes I actually turn it on and don't put the sound on, just watch them, because the one guy I think this guy could have been the Joker in Batman without makeup, this guy's perfect. But sometimes I just watch some of it and think 'This is so bazar,' and I think 'if I didn't know this was Christian tv, I'd think this is a Country & Western Show,' with the sound off, looking at some of the stuff that goes on, I'd think this was maybe a Halloween program, a few of them. Sorry, I've gone way across the line. Look, read ahead, if you're here Sunday evening, we're going to pick up here, we're going to journey on through this chapter, we're going to hear the sermon that Peter preaches, how he addresses the multitudes, and thousands are going to respond. And listen, Peter then is going to be brought before the religious leaders, who he was terrified of not long before this. Remember that night, in the palace, and the house of Caiaphas, and he denied the Lord three times? **'I don't know him,' 'Certainly you know him.'** Now you're going to see the same man, in front of the same religious leaders, and it says **'Standing up, filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter opened his mouth without fear, addresses them directly,'** what a difference being filled with the Holy Spirit makes. So, read through, as we move on, these verses, I hope you guys Wednesday night, we need help, if you could sign up there, church office, lots of folks come on Christmas, Easter, that don't normally come the rest of the year, we welcome them, we're glad they're here, we want them to be comfortable, we want them to hear the Gospel, we want to see them saved, so we're glad

that they come, but we need extra help with the kids. So if you can do that, and lay down your life in that way, and have all things in common, practice Koinonia in that way, feel free to sign up at one of the exits to help out on Christmas Eve. Let's stand, and let's pray together...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Acts 2:41-47 and Acts 3:1-12, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

related links:

For a good research article tapping into some of the most recent history books on the early Church and that time period, see <https://unityinchrist.com/history2/index3.htm> and

<https://unityinchrist.com/history2/earlychurch1.htm>

The early Church was a praying church. What really is prayer? See the section of this site on prayer at: <https://unityinchrist.com/prayer/bibleway.htm>

Audio version: <http://resources.ccp Philly.org/SPM597>