

**"Jesus Christ in the Church"**

**Part 1**

**Acts 2**

**Introduction:** Over the past couple of weeks we have been looking at Peter's sermon in Acts 2 as well as the results of his sermon.

**Notice Acts 2:37-42**

More than three thousand were saved after hearing Peter's sermon. They were then baptized, and they continued in 4 practices that each church should be engaged in if it is to be healthy.

1. The Apostle's Doctrine.
2. Fellowship.
3. The Lord's Table.
4. Prayer.

This now brings us to where we are in our study tonight.

**I. The Change**

**Part 2**

**Notice Acts 2:43**

"Every soul" mentioned here is pointing to the people in Jerusalem. Keep in mind that this group of people were those who had called out for Jesus to be crucified. Now they have heard Peter's sermon, they have heard of the resurrection. Keep in mind that there are more than five hundred witnesses of the resurrection in Jerusalem. The resurrection news was spreading rapidly. They have heard that Jesus was the Messiah that was promised by God, and they have witnessed all the events that have taken place. They are hearing the testimonies of the three thousand and they have watched them identify with Jesus Christ through baptism. They witnessed the signs and wonders done by the Apostles. They are realizing that His blood is on their hands. Is it any wonder they were fearful? They were fearing the wrath of Almighty God. This was a good thing. They needed to fear the wrath of God and they also needed to repent and receive forgiveness.

There are many in the world who need to fear the wrath of God. They are living under His wrath at the present time, but their hearts are so sinful and dark that they do not realize how dangerous the situation is.

**John 3:36**

<sup>36</sup> He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

**Romans 1:18-22**

<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

<sup>19</sup> Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

<sup>20</sup> For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

<sup>21</sup> Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

<sup>22</sup> Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

Notice what the writer of Hebrews recorded.

**Hebrews 10:31**

<sup>31</sup> It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

This is what the world needs to understand. But when unbelievers go so far even when they hear of the wrath of God and know of the wrath of God they will refuse to repent.

**Revelation 6:12-17**

<sup>12</sup> And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

<sup>13</sup> And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

<sup>14</sup> And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

<sup>15</sup> And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

<sup>16</sup> *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:*

<sup>17</sup> *For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*

### Notice Acts 2:44-45

There was a great need within the church. There were many who were possibly out of work because of their faith, others were cast out of their families because of their faith, still others just struggled to make a living because of their faith. Whatever the situations were there were many in that day who were needy and so those who had wealth were quick to sell what they had and to give it to the needy. Now there is several points here that we need to see.

#### A. This practice did not continue.

There is no evidence that this was practiced later in the church. It seems to have been at this time and then eventually ceased to be practiced. We read nothing about it later in the book of Acts. Neither does the New Testament command us who are believers to sell what we have and give to the poor.

#### B. This is NOT socialism.

This has been referred to by some teachers as "Christian Socialism." That is not what was happening here. This was the body of Jesus Christ caring for all the other members. This was not commanded by the government, but it was done by the motivation of love for one another.

Let us look at what Paul wrote to the believers at Thessalonica.

### 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12

<sup>7</sup> *For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;*

<sup>8</sup> *Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:*

<sup>9</sup> *Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us.*

<sup>10</sup> *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*

<sup>11</sup> For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.

<sup>12</sup> Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

Here in this church there were some who were living off the generosity of others. Paul made it very clear that if they did not work then neither should they eat. This means the church was not to support them because they were very capable of working. They had apparently made the choice not to work because they thought the Lord was coming soon. This passage helps us to see how God views socialism and it also helps us to see that socialism is not of God. Socialism comes out of communism, and we know that communism is straight from Satan himself because communism tries to completely do away with God. The two cannot exist together. Getting back to Acts; we can be sure this was not socialism.

There are some who believe these Christians sold their possessions because they believed the Lord was coming soon. It is important to know that the Doctrine of Imminency does not mean that the Lord will come soon but that He could come soon. He could come at any time, but there also could be a long delay.

#### **Notice Acts 2:46**

There were two meeting places for the New Testament church at Jerusalem. They met in the temple courtyard, and they met in different homes. They met in the temple courtyard because it provided the room needed for all of them to gather together and it also served the purpose of allowing those in Jerusalem who were not yet saved to hear the Truth the proclamation of the Truth and have an opportunity to get saved.

They also met in the homes of other believers where they would partake of the Lord's Table and also receive the food they needed for survival. This was done daily.

#### **Acts 5:42**

<sup>42</sup> And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

#### **Notice Acts 2:46 again.**

It is interesting to notice that they ate their food with GLADNESS. Their joy was not in circumstances because the believers in the early church were under persecution. Their joy was in the Lord. Being new in Jesus Christ these believers were able to find joy in all they did. As believers they just joyful people.

**Galatians 5:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, **joy**, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

<sup>23</sup> Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

**Romans 14:17**

<sup>17</sup> For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

When we get out of fellowship with the Lord and allow sin to come it will rob us of the joy that God intends for us to experience. I want to take you back to Deuteronomy 28 where we can see what happens when this happens.

**Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15, 45, 47-48**

*And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:*

<sup>2</sup> *And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.*

<sup>15</sup> *But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:*

<sup>45</sup> *Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed; because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to keep his commandments and his statutes which he commanded thee:*

<sup>47</sup> *Because thou servedst not the LORD thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things;*

<sup>48</sup> *Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the LORD shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee.*

Here we see that when Isarel would step into sin and out of fellowship with the Lord, they would lose the joy of serving the Lord. This is exactly what is happening in the lives of

many believers today. They are out of fellowship, and they are operating in the flesh and therefore there is no JOY in what they do.

Notice Acts 2:46 again.

These believers had "singleness of heart." I want to compare this to what Jesus said in Matthew 6 that will help us to see the heart of the early church.

**Matthew 6:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> *The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

<sup>23</sup> *But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*

The "single eye" is the opposite of an "evil eye." If we can define the evil eye, then we can know what it is to have a "single eye/heart."

**Proverbs 28:22**

<sup>22</sup> *He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.*

Here we see that a person with an evil eye is a greedy person. They desire to be rich so they will not be generous with what God has blessed them with. The single eye then is the opposite which means it is a person who is generous with what they have.

That is the meaning of the single heart in Acts 2:46.

Notice Acts 2:46 again.

**Conclusion:**

**Notice Acts 2:47**

I want you to notice that the believers had favor with all the people. These were the common people not the religious leaders for they will soon bring down persecution upon these people. Their gentleness, love and generosity allowed them to be people who found favor with others, and this was so important. This opened the door to be able to share the Gospel with the common people. Many times the common people would come and listen to the preaching and the teaching at their gatherings.

**Application:**

The way we conduct our lives can open or close doors into the lives of unsaved people.