

I. Introduction: The church is central in God's plan for this age. Mt. 16:18 I Ti. 2

II. A true church consists of people converted by the power of the gospel. v. 22-41

- A. The biggest problem with some churches is that their members and leaders are not converted.**
- B. The church is built when the gospel of Christ is faithfully preached. v. 22-36**
- 1. Jesus entered human history and worked miracles which attest to his unique identity as the Messiah. v. 22 I John 4:1-3**
 - 2. Jesus died for our sins according to God's eternal plan. v. 23 Isa. 53:4-6,10-12 Eph. 1:3ff I Cor. 15:3 I Pe. 3:18 II Co. 5:21**
 - 3. God raised Jesus from the dead in fulfillment of the Scriptures. v. 24-32 Ps. 16:8ff I Co. 15:4-8 Isa. 53:10b**
 - 4. Jesus has ascended to heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. v. 33-35**
 - 5. The verdict: God has made Jesus, Whom you rejected, Lord and Christ. v. 36**
- C. People must be told of their need of salvation.**
- 1. The hearers were told that they are great sinners. v. 23,36 Rom. 3:23 Isa. 53:6**
 - 2. They were told of their need to be saved from God's wrath which is coming upon this wicked world. v. 40 Ro. 6:23**
- D. The faithful preaching of the gospel produces a response. Isa. 55:11**
- 1. God works through His Word to give people spiritual life. James 1:18 I Pet. 1:23**
 - 2. The people come under great conviction of their sin. v. 37**
 - 3. They repent of their sin. v. 38**
 - 4. They believe, receiving the word about Christ. v. 41**
 - 5. They are immediately baptized as an expression of their faith in Christ. v. 38,41**
 - a. Who should be baptized?**
 - b. Is baptism necessary for salvation? Acts 16:30-31 Eph. 2:8-10**
 - c. When should you be baptized?**
 - 6. They receive the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. v. 38**
- E. Have you heard and believed this gospel?**
- F. God calls us to bring this message to the world in evangelism. 2:41,47**
- 1. Evangelism takes place when believers take the gospel out into the world.**
 - 2. What is wrong with making evangelism the focus of the weekly worship service?**
 - 3. Proclaim the whole gospel with boldness and authority.**
 - 4. It is God who adds to our number. v. 47 13:48 16:14 Isa. 55:11**

III. Those saved by God are devoted to gathering together for fellowship and worship. 2:42

- A. We are devoted to the apostolic teaching of God's Word. v. 42a II Ti. 3:16-4:5**
- 1. Preaching the Word was central in the early church. 6:4 20:7,20 I Ti. 4:13
II Ti. 4:1-5 Lu. 4:17-19 Neh. 8:5-6**
 - 2. Our source of authority is the infallible and sufficient Scripture. II Ti. 3:16-17**
 - 3. Our leaders expound the Scriptures. II Ti. 4:1-2.**
 - 4. Those who preach must proclaim the Word fearlessly. II Ti. 4:3-5**
 - 5. The congregation listens eagerly and attentively.**
 - 6. Are you devoted to the ministry of the Word of God?**

- B. We are devoted to fellowship (*koinonia* - sharing). v. 42b**
1. Our fellowship is a *sharing* in Christ. I Jo. 1:3,7 I Co. 1:9 10:16
 2. Those whom God saves are brought into community with one another.
 3. We are lovingly involved in one another's lives. v. 46 Ga. 2:9 6:2 II Co. 1:7
 4. We *share* by meeting one another's needs. v. 44-45 4:32-35 6:1 I Jo. 3:17 Js. 1:27 Ga. 2:10 6:10 II Co. 8:4 9:13 He. 13:16 I Ti. 6:18 I Co. 16:2 Ro. 12:13 15:26
 5. We share together by contributing to the ministry of the church. Phil. 1:5 4:15 I Co. 9:14 16:1-2 I Ti. 5:17-18 Gal. 6:6
- C. We are devoted to the breaking of bread (The Lord's Supper). v. 42c**
1. Why do we practice weekly communion?
 2. We follow the practice of the early church in which communion was an integral part of their weekly worship. 20:7 I Co. 4:16-17 11:17-31 10:16-17
 3. Jesus commanded us to do this in remembrance of Him. Lu. 22:19 I Co. 11:24-25
 4. Would communion be more special if we had it once a month or once a quarter?
 5. Who should partake of the Lord's Supper? (See hymnal insert). I Co. 11:27-30
 6. We are very concerned that many of you frequently miss communion.
- D. We are devoted to (corporate) prayer. v. 42d Rom. 12:12 Col. 4:2**
1. The early church was a church at prayer. Acts 2:42 1:14 4:24-31 6:4 12:5,12 13:2f I Ti. 2:1-2 Ro. 12:12 Col. 4:2 Eph. 6:18 I Co. 11:4-5 I Th. 5:17
 2. What elements should be included in prayer (ACTS)?
 - a. Adoration. Mt. 6:9b Acts 4:25f:
 - b. Confession. Mt. 6:12 I Jo. 1:8-10 Ps. 32 51 Lu. 18:10-14
 - c. Thanksgiving. Col. 4:2 Phil. 1:3-5 4:6 Ro. 1:8 I Th. 1:3f I Ti. 2:1
 - d. Supplication (requests). Mt. 6:10-11,13 Acts 4:29-30
 3. For what should we pray?
 - a. For the advancement of God's kingdom. Mt. 6:10 Acts 13:3 12:5 Eph. 6:19-20 Rom. 15:30-31 10:1 1:9
 - b. For the spiritual needs of the church body. Eph. 6:18 3:16-19 Js. 5:16 Mt. 6:13 For our physical and material needs. Mt. 6:11 Js. 2:14f
 - c. For our nation and its leaders. I Tim. 2:1-4 Jer. 29:7
 - d. For our church leaders. Eph. 6:19
 4. Who should participate in corporate prayer? I Ti. 2:8
 - a. When one prays aloud, everyone else should pray silently with him.
 - b. The men are responsible to lead out in prayer. I Ti. 2:8
 - c. The women also *may* pray. Acts 1:14 I Cor. 11:5,13
 5. How can you learn to pray publicly?
 6. Why pray? Js. 5:16 Mt. 21:22 Eph. 3:20 Rev. 5:8 8:3-4
 7. How much should we pray together? I Th. 5:17 Col. 4:2

IV. Conclusion.

Discussion questions for family worship.

1. Why must people be converted before they can be part of the church?
2. What are the characteristics of a healthy church, according to Acts 2:42?
3. Are there other important attributes of a healthy church taught elsewhere in the Bible?
4. What kind of teaching should be taking place in the church?
5. What does *fellowship* mean? What are some biblical expressions of fellowship?
6. Why does Grace Bible Church celebrate communion every week?
7. What are some essential elements of prayer (ACTS)?
8. What are some important subjects for corporate prayer?
9. Who should participate in corporate prayer?