

Growth Of The Church (2)

Acts 4:1-4

Early Church Grew

In less than a year number of disciples increased from 3,000 to 5,000 and as we see several reasons for this phenomenal growth

Last lesson five reasons: Conviction in regard to truth; Diligence in teaching; Courage in persecution; Purity in life; Concern for others.

This lesson we look at five more reasons for this phenomenal growth

Unity In Practice

John 17:20-21

That they might be one as He and the Father are one - in: (a) purpose (b) deed (c) word - **Acts 4:32**

Persecution did not divide them from their purpose - **Ecclesiastes 4:12; 1Corinthians 1:10**

Faithfulness In Worship

Acts 2:42-47

Apostles doctrine (teaching)

Fellowship (joint participation, sharing in the teachings and benefits of being in Christ)

Breaking of bread (Lord's Supper - bread same word used when Jesus instituted the supper) -

Matthew 26:26

Prayers (talking to God)

Commanded not to forsake assembly (abandon - desert gathering together in one place) - **Hebrews 10:24-25**

People who love God and meet regularly to honor Him in worship will make a good impression on the community

Charity In Misunderstanding

Needed by church possibly more than any other one thing

Not talking about compromising the Truth - **Acts 5:29**

The church made up of human beings each having their own opinions

Some thought their widows were being neglected **Acts 6**

A sympathetic attitude displayed, misunderstanding was worked out

Yet Apostles didn't leave word and serve tables

Paul expresses the attitude we ought to have - **2Timothy 2:24-26**

Do we see anything here that would indicate we ought to "rake our brother over the coals" when there is a misunderstanding of some sort

Generosity In Giving

Notice attitude of early Christians concerning giving, cannot tell one a definite amount that they ought to give to the Lord - **Acts 2:44; 4:32**

Didn't say "this is mine and you can't have it"

They didn't even consider it to be theirs

Realize this was a special case and special need, but it does display their attitude toward giving -

2Corinthians 8:1-5

Begged Paul to take their gift, first gave themselves - **2Corinthians 9:7**

They were willing to spend and be spent for the cause of Christ

This not only enabled them to care for brethren in need - **2Corinthians 11:8**

Satisfaction With Divine Authority

Were willing to humble themselves to divine authority

Did not devise creeds, have conventions, nor synods in order to establish authority - **Romans 1:16;**

2Timothy 3:16-17; Jeremiah 10:23; Isaiah 55:8-9

We must be satisfied with God's way

Are We Striving To Grow?

Efforts of early disciples in humble submission to divine authority, resulted in great, almost unbelievable growth of church in 1st century

In the same manner the church today can have similar kind of growth

If we will: be satisfied with divine authority; Give ourselves and everything we have to the Lord; Have love for brethren when there is a misunderstanding; Be faithful in worship; Unify on God's teaching; Be concerned about others; Exhibit purity; Have courage in persecution, be diligent in our teaching; and have strong convictions in regard to truth.

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