

## 20220731 – CHURCH ACTS BEFORE PENTECOST

Sunday AM – Acts 1:12-26

### I. THE FIRST CHURCH EXISTED

- A. It is a VERY important question – When did Jesus establish the first church?
1. Many people, even Baptists will answer this without thinking
    - a. They say: “Had to start on the day of Pentecost”
    - b. If no church in Acts 1:8, then the Great Commission died
    - c. No good reason articulated – but Universal Churchism demands it
    - d. There are NOT two churches.
      - i. A church is either local only or it is universal but not both
      - ii. A called out ASSEMBLY must ASSEMBLE
      - iii. It must be like the three metaphors the bible uses
      - iv. It must be local, visible, organized, and constituted
      - v. It has Orders, Officers, and Ordinances
    - e. It must be “joined”
      - i. The only way is by BAPTISM
      - ii. EPH. 4:5 – “One Lord, one faith, one baptism,”
      - iii. Which is it? Holy Spirit baptism to a universal church?
      - iv. Or water baptism to a local visible assembly?
  2. 1 COR. 12:13 – “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”
    - a. Universal church people love to quote that verse
    - b. It says “one” which means a “single” body (meaning church)
    - c. Let me just point out – it doesn’t say TWO! (universal and local)
  3. MATT. 16:18 – “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”
    - a. The common reading is that He meant “future tense” will build
    - b. But the word means builded, building, builder, build up, etc.
    - c. A house half done, the owner can still go “build” their house
    - d. He will GROW/STRENGTHEN His institution not START it!
- B. When DID Jesus start the first church?
1. John 1 – First disciples: Andrew, Peter, James, John, Philip, Nathanael
    - a. They were called OUT!
    - b. JOHN 1:43 – “The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.”
    - c. They assembled!
    - d. They had a pastor – the BEST pastor, Jesus Himself
  2. They were all BAPTIZED BELIEVERS!
    - a. All these men had baptism from John the Baptist

- b. NO RECORD is ever found of later getting “church baptism”
  - 3. Some call this the “embryonic church” or “proto-church”
    - a. Why? In what way does it differ from a church today?
    - b. They even had church finances – Judas held the bag
- C. Language is important
  - 1. The word “church” is used about 80 times in the NT
    - a. Usually with location (church at Corinth, church in his house)
    - b. Sometimes Paul referring to his persecution of a church
    - c. ACTS 8:3 – “As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.”
      - i. ACTS 8:1 defines that as the church at Jerusalem
      - ii. He later says the same giving his Salvation testimony
      - iii. 1 COR. 15:9 – “For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.”
  - 2. There are less than 30 times the Bible uses the word without a location
    - a. Many in Ephesians and obviously speaking generally
    - b. There are a few times
  - 3. I generally try to avoid saying “the” church (instead “churches” etc.)
    - a. It’s a Catholic concept that wormed its way into Baptist churches
    - b. And it’s DANGEROUS
    - c. Why do people think they can drift in and drift out of church?
  - 4. If Christians were taught that there is NO UNIVERSAL CHURCH
    - a. Christians would live differently
    - b. Would church ever be optional?
    - c. Would they transplant themselves without the Great Physician?

## II. THE FIRST CHURCH MET

- A. Ten days of prayerful waiting (vs. 12-14)
  - 1. Met in an upper room (vs. 13)
    - a. Many things had happened in upper rooms after all
    - b. They had the last supper in an upper room
    - c. An upper room, ABOVE the filth and stench of the world
  - 2. Notice that they were all THERE
    - a. No one missed and no one made an excuse
    - b. No staying home to watch the big game
    - c. No live streaming for convenience
    - d. Praise God for live streaming (sick, injured, hindered)
  - 3. HEB. 10:25 – “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”
- B. They were in ONE Accord! (vs. 14)

1. More than just a joke about what kind of cars are in the Bible
    - a. They were DRAWN together by their mutual trust in God
    - b. We should be as well! Drawn together by our Love for Jesus
    - c. Drawn together when one of us suffers
  2. Drawn together as fellow-believers with LIKE PRECIOUS FAITH
  3. 2 PETER 1:1 – “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:”
  4. There’s not that many of us out there...
- C. They PRAYED (vs. 14)
1. How churches need this today
    - a. Once upon a time more churches had prayer meetings
    - b. Now they pass out a little piece of paper
    - c. The problem is not the method of communication
    - d. The problem is the lack of EMPHASIS on prayer
  2. We can do nothing without prayer
  3. It’s good to read the Bible...but that’s a one-sided conversation!

### III. THE FIRST CHURCH RECORD

- A. A church roll was kept (vs. 15)
1. The Bible does not say the number of people together was 120
  2. But the number of the NAMES (they had written them down)
  3. Church membership is important – the first church demonstrates that
- B. How does one become a church member?
1. Well, it doesn’t happen through osmosis I’m afraid
  2. The only way to join a church after salvation is by baptism
  3. If joining oneself to a NEW church body, then by letter
    - a. What does the letter say?
    - b. From another Baptist church of like faith, order, and practice
    - c. This person has scriptural baptism
    - d. This person is not under church discipline
  4. In other words, by baptism or another church’s TESTIMONY of baptism
- C. We will soon see this membership roll EXPLODE with new members
- D. ACTS 2:41 – “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”

### IV. THE FIRST CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING

- A. Their new pastor moderated the meeting (vs. 15)
1. Jesus had been the pastor, but left Peter in charge
  2. Someone HAS to be in charge – God is not the author of confusion
  3. We are ALL under authority (family, church, civil authorities)
- B. The matter of business concerned the replacement of Judas

1. He was numbered with them (vs. 17) – church member but LOST
  2. He betrayed Jesus (vs. 16b) and they referenced the Bible in the meeting
  3. PSA. 41:9 – “Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.”
  4. They discussed the particulars – the Death and Burial of Judas (vs. 18-20)
  5. And that he fell from his APOSTLESHIP (vs. 25) – not GRACE (never saved)
- C. They need a man to fill his spot
1. They discussed the qualifications of an apostle (vs. 21-22)
    - a. Baptism of John
    - b. Eyewitness of the Resurrection
    - c. Impossible for someone today, btw
  2. They set out a procedure and then followed it
  3. They VOTED (one member, one vote)

## V. THE FIRST CHURCH WOULD BE EMPOWERED

- A. None of these church activities waited for the day of Pentecost
1. They would be empowered to fulfill the Great Commission
  2. And they were obedient to wait as Jesus had commanded them
  3. We are waiting for nothing this morning!
- B. We are to spread the Gospel – the GOOD NEWS
1. The death, the burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ
  2. To every creature, here and to the uttermost part of the Earth
  3. We have our marching orders
- C. What about you today?
1. Do you know Jesus in the free pardon of your sins?
  2. Are you saved? “Well, I got baptized...” Not the same thing!
  3. Be Saved Today!