

October 3, 2021

THE MODEL CHURCH

To find clear and authoritative information and instruction regarding the model church today, we turn to the early church of the Book of Acts. There are several characteristics found therein which are in severe contrast to the present level of church life.

1. They were a *praying church*. Throughout the book from the first chapter (1:20) and on, we see a church on its knees. This is the secret to their effectiveness in turning the world upside down.

2. They were a *Spirit-filled church*. In 2:4, we read they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and from that prayer meeting went forth winning souls. Peter was transformed from the spineless coward at the trial of Christ to the flaming evangelist and missionary through whom multitudes were turned to Christ. This change? The power of the Holy Spirit.

3. They were a *unified church*. Again and again, we read they gathered in “one accord.” They are also described as being of “one heart,” “one mind,” and “one soul” in the cause of Christ. When sin disrupted the unity, it was dealt with immediately (Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5).

4. They were a *giving church*. Not only had they given themselves to God but with themselves came their purses. They shared with one another so none knew financial crisis. They gave to every man as he had a need.

5. They were a *continuing church*. They continued in the Apostles’ doctrine, breaking of bread, prayers, and fellowship (2:46–47). Not only did they start well, but they persevered even when persecuted and afflicted.

6. They were a *missionary church*. They went everywhere preaching the Gospel. In their dispersion because of persecution they witnessed for Christ. Philip went to Samaria—then to the Gaza desert. They also sent out missionaries (3:1). Paul and Silas went forth having either riot or revival wherever they went. And God blessed the seed sown. We read that the Lord added unto the church daily such as should be saved.

7. They were *bold in witnessing and preaching*. Sin was sin, and Peter, Paul, and Stephen didn’t beat around the bush. They fearlessly spoke the truth in love at Pentecost, at Lystra, etc.

Quite a church! Can God do it again? He can as we comply with Romans 12:1–2 and Ephesians 5:18.

—Dr. Francis W. Monseth, excerpt from recently published *One Thing I Seek: Selected Writings of Francis W. Monseth*, AFLC Heritage Series Volume V (Minneapolis: Ambassador Publications, 2021), 88–89.

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