



BIBLE CLASS: NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES

Wednesday nights at 7:00PM | July 7 – September 29, 2021

Lesson 1: The Church at Jerusalem, A Powerful Beginning

Excerpt from the workbook, “New Testament Churches: Their Strengths and Weaknesses” by Carl McMurray:

“The preaching that those devout followers of the Old Covenant heard that day, recorded for us in Acts 2, was of Christ. They heard of His life (Verse 22), His death (23), and His exaltation (32-33). They heard that He was now beyond the carpenter/teacher Jesus. He was the Lord/Messiah Jesus (36) and the Savior (37-40). When the powerful plan of God is revealed to men who have their hearts prepared, great things can happen. And they did here on the day.

“The preaching didn’t stop when the sun went down in Jerusalem that day, however. It didn’t stop when 3,000 received it and were baptized in faith. In the early verses of chapter two, the preaching was to a gathered crowd. However, by verse 42 the new Christians are “continually devoting” themselves to the apostles’ teaching. It is going on and being received regularly and consistently. We are probably covering some number of weeks in these verses. And it doesn’t stop here. In Acts 3:11, they are at the temple. Chapter 4:1-21 records the arrest of Peter and John and still the preaching doesn’t stop. In fact, by 4:29 the Christians have gathered and are praying, not for trouble to cease, but for boldness to keep on speaking. By chapter 5:17-40, the arrests have begun; however, verse 42 assures us that the preaching went on, privately and publicly.”

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 10:12
- Philippians 4:8-9
- Acts 2
- Acts 5:12-16
- Acts 6:1-7

Questions:

1. Instead of social commentary, recreation, or social missions, what did the preaching consist of that formed this model first church?
2. What does "continually devoting" mean, in your own words?
3. What were these early Christians continually devoting to?
4. How do we show this same trait in our congregation today?
5. How can Christians today demonstrate fellowship, i.e., partnership?
6. Christians cannot always be liked, but they can be respected. What is the difference?
7. Why were the early Christians respected?
8. What things contributed to the establishment and growth of this first step in the earthly kingdom?