

“With Gladness And Singleness Of Heart”

Introduction. Everyone who loves the Lord and His people is interested in church growth. It is not that numbers alone are so important – it is because a number represents a soul. For what other reason would the Holy Spirit direct Luke to record the numbers for all of history to read (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 6:7)?

The growth of the early church, especially in Jerusalem, is indeed nothing short of phenomenal. It has never been duplicated anywhere. But what made the Jerusalem church grow so rapidly? Perhaps there are many reasons, but one of these, no doubt, centered around the attitude of the people (Acts 2:46).

Two attitudes were prominent among the family of God in Jerusalem that need to be in each of us here at the Loop: They were of one mind or accord and they had sincerity or singleness of heart. They were filled with gladness. There was a joy about them as they went about their service. They were glad to be in one another’s presence.

We are going to consider for a moment what united them and created the joy in their hearts. The question will be whether we can duplicate it in our congregation now.

I. ***They Were Committed To The Person Of Christ***

- A. Peter used five arguments to prove the Lordship of Jesus:
 - 1. His miracles (2:22).
 - 2. His resurrection (2:24).
 - 3. Fulfilled prophecy (2:25-31).
 - 4. The witnesses (2:32).
 - 5. The descent of the Holy Spirit (2:33).
- B. Upon the basis of these arguments Peter could say, “let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ” (2:36).
- C. Upon this basis, these 3,000 people committed themselves to follow Jesus as their Lord and King (Luke 9:23).

II. ***They Were Committed To The Gospel Of Christ***

- A. Jesus commanded the gospel to be preached (Mark 16:15).
- B. On that day, 3,000 people gladly received his word (2:41).
- C. They continually devoted themselves to the “apostles’ doctrine” (2:42; cf. John 14:25-26; 16:12-14).
 - 1. False teachers bring in their doctrine secretly to influence brethren (2 Peter 2:1; Acts 20:28-29).

2. Do not let yourself be influenced by them. Contend earnestly for the true gospel of Christ (Jude 3; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Titus 3:10-11).

III. ***They Were Committed To Each Other***

- A. To each other's spiritual needs (2:42).
- B. To each other's physical needs (2:44-45; 4:32-35).
- C. To each other's social needs (2:46).
 1. If you want to destroy unity, just gossip and backbite against your brethren. If you love unity, make peace with your brethren, treat them as you should and be committed to loving them and fulfilling their needs.
 2. God hates those who sow discord among brethren (Proverbs 6:19). Do not let yourself be influenced them. You tell them to go to the brother or sister as the Bible instructs us in Matthew 18:15-17.

IV. ***They Were Committed To Saving Others***

- A. The Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved (2:47). How was it that people were being saved daily? The people continued preaching Christ daily.
- B. When driven from Jerusalem because of persecution, the early disciples went everywhere preaching Christ (Acts 8:4-5).
- C. We must be committed to inviting and talking to people about the gospel (John 1:40-42, 45-46).

V. ***They Were Committed To Praising God***

- A. I am reminded of Paul's later admonition in Romans 15:5-6.
- B. I am convinced that both individual spiritual growth and congregational numerical growth are directly related to our quality of worship.
 1. As individuals, we must bring to worship:
 - a) An exalted view of God.
 - b) A sense of dependence upon His Sovereign rule.
 - c) A genuine desire to honor God.
 - d) A spirit of enthusiastic participation.
 2. This type of worship is infectious:
 - a) It encourages your brethren.
 - b) It draws honest unbelievers who are looking for the truth.

Conclusion. It is my conviction that we can grow, but only unless and until we share the attitudes of our Jerusalem brethren. We need a greater commitment to the person of Christ, the gospel of Christ, to each other (spiritually, physically, socially), to the lost and to worship.

Like Jerusalem, we must be of one mind and have a spirit of gladness as we assemble and as we involve ourselves daily in one another's lives.