

Foundations of the Church - a study of Acts

Jerusalem - Structures Established

Acts 2 - 7

A skeleton is not seen but is essential to life. Structures had to be established for the church Established as needed and led by the Spirit

Review : The Foundation

I. Essentials of the Foundation

- A. Resurrection of Christ**
- B. The Kingdom of God**
- C. Repentance for the Forgiveness of sin**
- D. The Baptism of the Spirit**
- E. The Second Coming of Christ**

II. Elements of the Foundation

- A. Power of Holy Spirit**
- B. Witnesses**

I. The Events

- 2:14-47** Peter's Sermon - 3000 Repent and are baptised
Community was established
- 3:1-4:4** Healing of lame man - teaching and opposition
Believing men numbered at 5000
- 4:5-37** Apostles arrested, threatened and released
Prayer and deepening of the believers
- 5:1-16** Corruption and greed faced in the congregation
Reverance and growth continued
- 5:17-42** Apostles arrested, beaten and released
Rejoicing over suffering and continual evangelism
- 6:1-7** Divisions and complaint faced
Organization and division of duties established
- 6:8-7:60** Martyrdom of Stephen
Truth revealed and rejected- Saul was witness

II. Patterns Established

A. Miraculous Growth

1. Communication of the Gospel
 - Sermons - calling for repentance and faith
 - Interaction among believers - daily, weekly
2. Community developed by deep devotion
 - a. Apostles teaching - the words of Christ
 - b. Fellowship - the sharing of their lives
 - c. Breaking of bread - communion in Christ
 - d. Prayer - connection with God
 - e. Sharing with those who had needs

3. Compassionate care for all
 - Always with a redemptive focus
 - Praise always given to God
4. Concerns addressed
 - Persecutions - shared and prayed over
 - Purity of congregation protected
 - Physical needs met with organization

B. Growing Opposition

1. Threats from without
 - Speak no more in the name of Jesus **Acts 4:19-20**
Acts 5:29 But Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than any human authority."
2. Compromise and Hypocrisy from world
 - Seeking the favor of men - not God **Acts 5:3**
3. Critical spirit and divisions within
 - Focus on desire for comfort for self **Acts 6:1**

III. Principles of the structure

- A. Clear proclamation of the Gospel
 - Repentance - **Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. & Acts 3:19**
 - Salvation - **Acts 4:12 There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved."**
- B. Community - common unity
 - Both spiritual and financial **Acts 2:44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. Also Acts 2:46**
- C. Compassion -for those in and out of the fellowship
 - Acts 3:6, Acts 4:32**
- D. Courteous and bold handling of opposition
 - Acts 4:19 But Peter and John replied, "Do you think God wants us to obey you rather than him? Also 5:29-32 & Acts 7:2**

All in the Power of the Holy Spirit!

Acts 4:31 After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness.

Acts 5:32 We are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit, who is given by God to those who obey him."

Acts 7:55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed steadily into heaven and saw the glory of God, and he saw Jesus standing in the place of honor at God's right hand.