

Sermon: **“The Spirit-Filled Church” (Acts 2:42-47)**

Date: **June 2, 2019**

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus promises to build his church that the gates of hell would not prevail against it. The will of God is for his church to grow. We have been tasked to make disciples of all the nations. Thus, we too should desire for the church to grow. But what does true church growth look like? Too many churches today equate church growth with the ability to draw a crowd or fill seats in an auditorium. Clearly this is not the biblical definition of church growth. Church growth has less to do with drawing a crowd of people and more to do with discipling a body of believers. The early church in Acts understood this and prioritized their activities accordingly. They devoted themselves to a few simple things: bible study, fellowship, observing the ordinances, and prayer. As they gave themselves fully to these tasks, the Spirit cultivated a community marked by awe, unity, love, and worship. As the early church was faithful to do what God had called them to do, the end result was that the church grew. Acts 2:47 tells us, *“And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”*

What you need for this study: Bible, Notebook, Pen

### **Individual Bible Study**

1. Please read Acts 2:42-47 and ensure that you’ve listened to Sunday’s sermon.
  - a. Is it possible to be a large church and still experience the kind of church community described in Acts 2:42-47? Explain.
  - b. Why do many churches in our culture today try to employ new methods and strategies to grow the church? How might this overcomplicate the mission that God has given to us?
  - c. What does it mean that they devoted themselves to “the apostles’ teaching,” (verse 42)? Why do you think this is the first thing listed in this verse?
  - d. Describe what is meant by the word “fellowship” in verse 42.
  - e. What does the phrase “breaking of bread” in verse 42 likely refer to? Explain. Why is it important that we regularly observe the ordinances as a church?
  - f. Describe the type of community that was produced as the church devoted themselves to the 4 tasks in verse 42.

- g. Verse 44 says that “all who believed were together.” Why must *believing* necessarily precede *belonging* in a local church context?
- h. How does this passage (especially verse 46) help to provide a biblical basis for small groups ministry?
- i. According to verse 47, who gives the growth in a church? Why is it important to remember this?

**Group Discussion Questions**

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the sermon and the Bible study this week?
2. Should we desire church growth? Why or why not?
3. What would you say to someone who doesn't like larger churches because they assume the community will be lacking?
4. Why must the proclamation, study, and application of the Word be one of the primary priorities in the church? What happens to a church when they compromise in this area?
5. The early church met together daily for corporate worship and smaller group gatherings. What does this tell us about their priorities? Why is it important to prioritize church and small group attendance?
6. How can we cultivate true Christian fellowship in this small group? What can we do to improve our fellowship with one another?