



### **Acts 2:42-47 The DNA of the Church**

<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. <sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup> They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. <sup>46</sup> Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

### **The DNA of the Church**



#### **The Significance of DNA**

It determines who you are.

It is inescapable.

Here is the catch, the church is a form of human DNA therapy.

It is God's way of resequencing our DNA.

The toxicity of sin damages our created identity so we cannot become fully formed.

Just as gene therapy repairs us at the physical DNA level,

The work of Christ and the intention of God is to restore us spiritually.

So we are talking about the DNA of humanity being repaired.

Death was not a part of our DNA. Life is.

Pollution was not a part of our DNA. Wholeness is.

Greed & Avarice was not a part of our DNA. Generosity & Contentment is.

Selfishness was not part of our DNA. Love is.

All nature is corrupted by sin and frankly, although we know the actions and attitudes of sin,

The depths of its insidiousness is enormous and hard to fathom.

The existence of the Church is to be a primary avenue by which the world can be restored.  
To continue this hyperbole,

God repairs broken people so that they in turn  
become a part of his endeavour of transformation.

When a church loses sight of it's mission and purpose, it reverts to corruption.

This is why throughout church history we have examples of corruption.

And yet God continues to preserve, reform and redeem the in and through the church.

The purpose of today's sermon is to examine the formation of the church and it's DNA.

More specifically, the visible actions and practices of the church from it's inception  
so we can compare it to what it has become today.

### **The Conception of the Church**

The Conception of the Church has been God's idea from Genesis.

The Proto-Gospel

Israel is the conception of the people of God leading towards the Messiah.

In the Old Testament they were simply the people of God.

"Israel" in Hebrew means "Struggle with God" in English.

The term Church which is "Ekklesia" in Greek means "The Gathered" in English.

### **The Birth of the Church**

The central person, the cornerstone, is Jesus - God incarnate.

Second person of the Trinity.

God himself re-infuses the divine spark into human history  
to disrupt and heal our broken DNA.



Life - Teaching, Healing, Casting out Demons

Crucifixion - Death to atone for all sin

Resurrection - Victory over Sin & Death

Ascension - His Current Physical Space at the Right hand of the Father

Pentecost - The Sending of the Holy Spirit and Birth of the Church

The Mission of the Church is embedded in the commands of Jesus:

Love God.

Love your Neighbour.

Love One Another.

Make Disciples - Teaching Obedience to Jesus' Commands & Baptizing.

This is the Mission of the church.

The reason for being and existing.

It is expressed in a myriad of ways - family, community, work.

There is no place where the Kingdom is not to be brought.

No part of your life, no part of your mind, no part of your heart.

## Being the Church

We know the theory, the mission, the commands now we turn to the earliest applications.

Why?

Because we need to compare how we did it in the first place.

We didn't always do it right, but we want to know how it was done from the start.

Descriptive becoming Prescriptive

Example by Action.



### <sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching

How do we do this today?

Where do we find the teaching of the apostles?

What are they teaching?

JESUS.

How well do you know your Bible?

It is not enough to only know parts of it, you need to know the whole of it.

The movement of the Protestant Reformation is one in which the desire was to open the Bible to all people beyond the Latin, beyond stained glass.

The Good and great ideal was to open the Scriptures to everyone.

But here is the catch - not everyone wants to know the Bible.

Some prefer it pre-digested and codified.

They want Drive-Through Religion rather than a faith of their own.

My encouragement to you is that you read the Bible for yourself - the whole Bible.

We have a lectionary which will get you through in 3 years.

Moreover, Study the Bible.

Our small groups have been moving through the text slowly and methodically.

It is hard work and it should raise more questions than sometimes answers.

One can only learn by constantly asking questions.

If you have the time and inclination, we have 2 fantastic seminaries literally down the street.

You don't have to take a full degree, but these seminaries have all kinds of seminars.

One day seminars, retreats, weekend courses, evening courses.

Know what you believe.

Know the teachings of Jesus, the Bible.

The Bible has been compared to the ocean.

It is shallow enough for a child to play in but deep enough for an elephant to drown in.  
Don't settle for child's play when it comes to knowing God.

You will become prey to heresy, cults and disillusionment.

Go deep and you will discover the true treasure, Christ himself and the Transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

[Photos of preaching through the years at F3C]



**They Devoted Themselves to fellowship,**

This is about relationships with other believers.

The curse of the church is that we become so big we become a commodity.

We become a service centre where we dispense salvation or good feelings.

NO! The church is meant to be a place where we learn to love one another.

To love one another is to love someone despite their faults.

to not only wish but act in the best interest of others.

How often do we visit one another?

How often do we pray with or for one another?

Do you understand why we have small groups?

Well, more on this will come in the passage because this becomes one of the key things.

Love One Another.

Spend time with each other.

This is why the mega church struggles.

They are the IKEA of churches - it looks like a home but know one really lives there.

Be the pub of churches (okay, in the right context!)

Be the home church.

Remember, the Church isn't a place - it is the people.

[Photos of F3C in the "Temple Courts" of the community Centre, on Retreat & in Real Life Outside - Every Day!]



<sup>44</sup> *All the believers were together and had everything in common.*

<sup>45</sup> *They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.*

[Photos of F3C Sharing]



<sup>46</sup> *Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.*

[Photos of F3C Fellowshiping]



### **They Devoted Themselves to the breaking of bread**

Eating together is a cultural act of hospitality & friendship.

Lunches together.

Family meals.

[Photos of F3C Food]

But also the Lords supper.

[Photo of F3C Serving Communion]

We separate the ritual from real life too often.

"Every time you do this, Remember me!"

Do you know why we say grace at the table?

We remember. Every time.

But not just in service, at the community centre or retreat.

Everywhere!



*They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,  
47 praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.*

[Photos of F3C Food & Fellowship]



### **They Devoted Themselves to prayer.**

How often do you pray?

Alone or with others?

Prayer is the central act of the spiritual life.

Not just how often but how deep?

How real, vulnerable, authentic, honest?

The depth of relationship and trust is revealed in the manner by which you pray.

With God and with others.

We pray in Service, when we sign in worship, on retreats

[Photos of F3C at Prayer]



**43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 47b And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.**

The Result of these things is the work of the Holy Spirit among them and the witness they bore. The signs and wonders.

What are signs and wonders?

Yes, likely the same miracles of Jesus, casting our demons, healing the sick, blind and lame.

But more than that.

Jesus asked, "Is it easier to forgive sins or to to heal a person?"

He did both.

How about the raising up of the poor?

Advocating for the marginalized, the aged, the young, the refugee,  
the addicted, the oppressed, the starving?

Being good stewards of our resources and money in personal and corporate ways?

How about transformation of not just peoples' circumstances but outlook on life?

We do not do this individually, but as God's people, as the Church as a whole.

It is impossible to do alone.



**Questions:**

But where has God called you?

And what has he called you to?

What passion of his is he aligning you to?