

REVIEW

- Many have a hard time believing in God and the things of God
 - His Unbelievable Creation, Unbelievable Word & Unbelievable Resurrection

TODAY WE DISCUSS AN UNBELIEVABLE CHURCH

- The disciples were completely transformed after the resurrection and spent the rest of their lives teaching what God wanted them to pass on. They did that through preaching, writing and teaching groups of believers. These groups of people, not buildings, became the Church.
- Why would the disciples go start churches? Jesus told them to go make disciples and teach them to do what Jesus had taught them (Matthew 28:19-20) The disciples did their very best to live this out and we try to follow their example. As they did this, people gathered together to form local groups which became known as churches.
- From the earliest times, there were those that tried to steer people away from what the disciples had been passed on from Jesus. The apostles warned Christians against straying from the true Faith (2 Peter 3:15-17, Romans 12:2, Galatians 1:6-9)
 - We hold to the Word that was given us instead of trying to make the Word say what we want.
- The reason we do the things we do at Real Life, is because we are trying to live out things we saw the church in the Bible do.
- I think a valid question is, “WHY have horrible things been done in the name of the church over the centuries?”
 - People got away from what the church was supposed to be.
 - People walked away from scripture and used the church for their own gain or to promote their own broken worldview.
- We find a great list of things the early church did in Acts 2:42-48

THINGS THE CHURCH DID IN ACTS 2 (This list is confirmed in other parts of scripture)

- **They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching**
 - Notice this says, “devoted themselves to”, not just “read periodically”
- **To fellowship**
 - Church was more than just attending a service a couple times a month
 - God wants us to be changed through a new life in Him (2 Corinthians 5:17). This involves our whole life and learning from others who are more spiritually mature than us.
- **The Lord’s Supper – Communion**
 - We celebrate that Jesus freed all of humanity from slavery to sin and death
- **Prayer**
 - Prayer isn’t about changing God’s mind and getting Him to do what we want. It’s far more about getting our hearts right and wanting what God wants, even if it isn’t what we would choose.
- **Generosity**
 - The church has been generous since the very beginning. Over and over we see in scripture that we are supposed to use our resources for the kingdom of God rather than the kingdom of us.
- **Mobilized to meet needs**
 - We not only meet needs with finances, but with service – to the family of God first, and then to those around us that we engage with
- There are other things we do that don’t appear in this short passage but appear other places in scripture
 - Baptism (Acts 2:38)

- o Worship through music (Colossians 3:16)

MANY HAVE GIVEN UP ON CHURCH FOR A FEW REASONS

1. They see Christians as hypocrites

- Oftentimes they mean people who still sin, even though we say we are against sinful behavior
- A hypocrite isn't someone who still sins; it is someone who sins and pretends they don't
 - o We value transparency and vulnerability. We have people we can be open with.
 - o Having said that, there are some hypocrites in church that give Christians a bad name.
 - o There are people who have been hurt by ungodly people in the church that has caused them to lack trust in all Christians or churches. This grieves the heart of God.

2. They weren't a part of a Bible-believing church

- God is under no obligation to bless a church other than the one He describes. The Gates of Hell cannot stand against God's church, but God doesn't say any version of church will prevail. (Matthew 16:15-18)

3. They attended a church but weren't actually a part of the church in the way the Bible describes.

- Being a part of a church means more than just showing up a couple Sundays a month.

WHAT GOD SAYS THE CHURCH IS SUPPOSED TO BE

- A family
- A place of healing, especially spiritually
- A place to be on mission
- A place where we encourage others to become more like Jesus
- A place to pass on our faith to the next generation

The Church is God's plan A, and only plan to win the world to Him. It's why Jesus gave the disciples the mission to go into all the world and make more disciples.

- When the church actually looks like what God's Word describes, amazing things happen!

Ephesians 3:20 (NLT) Now all glory to God, who is able through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.



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