

Destiny – Disciplines – Displayed

The destiny of the church is declared in [Eph 5:25-27](#) ... Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, (26) that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, (27) that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

The Disciplines of the Church are described in [Act 2:42](#) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

These Disciplines are Displayed in [Act 2:43-47](#) A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. (44) And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. (45) They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. (46) They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— (47) all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

You reach you destiny by living your disciplines. Or your disciplines determine your destiny. How you live day be day SHAPES your future.

- If you work out every day you'll be fit
- If you pig out every day you'll be fat
- But I'm not here to talk about personal fitness – Ron and Kim are more qualified to do that than I!!!!
- I'm here to talk about spiritual fitness, and cast a vision for the Church to be all that Christ's desires her to be.
- To reach Christ's destiny for the church and for each of us as individuals, we must live the disciplines He has commanded us to live
- What does it look like to live Biblical Christianity? What is the depiction of the early Church?

The Display:

[Act 2:43-47](#) A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. (44) And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. (45) They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. (46) They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— (47) all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

1. “A deep sense of awe”
 - a) Awe: worship, reverence bordering on terror
 - b) Saying “wow” not “why”
 - c) The church should be constantly saying, “Wow, did you see” and “Wow, did hear about ...”
 - d) Not “Why do they play music so loud?” or “Why don't they do it like so and so?” or “Why doesn't anyone notice me?” or “Why are my needs not met?”

- e) Saying, “Wow” and having a “deep sense of awe” is the result of focusing on:
 - Who God is – His character and attributes
 - What God is doing – His acts
- 2. “Many signs and wonders were taking place.”
 - a) Church should be a place where the supernatural is natural
 - b) We are the body of Christ
 - Jesus said that we would do greater works than He did
 - We are the representation of Jesus in our communities, and Jesus lived a supernatural life – therefore we should as well
 - c) A genuine, biblical, Christ-centered Church should consistently see “many signs and wonders taking place.”
- 3. NKJV [Act 2:44-45](#) Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, [\(45\)](#) and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.
 - a) NLT: “And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had.”
 - b) “Together constantly”
 - They liked one another
 - Not institutional gatherings
 - Rather more like parties, friends and family gathering out of relationship
 - c) “Shared everything”
 - “One for all, and all for one” attitude
 - Not communism but generosity
 - Each individual willingly identified themselves as part of the group.
 - To the point where they were willing to sell their stuff, to meet needs in the body.
 - WOW!!!!
- 4. NLT, [\(46\)](#) They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity
 - a) They had public meetings and worshiped together
 - The Temple could hold over 10,000 people
 - b) And they met in small groups, in people's homes
 - c) Their lives were integrated with each other's lives
 - d) They celebrated the “Lord's Supper” or communion, as you do here
 - e) They had “great joy and generosity”
- 5. NKJV, verse 47, “Praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”
 - a) Final depiction = Daily Salvations
 - b) A biblical church is not only about growing believers it is about making disciples
 - c) I don't believe a church has to choose between being “seeker sensitive” and having signs and wonders.
 - The early church had both
 - And I believe that we can create a church that allows the Spirit to move mightily and ALSO attracts those who are seeking God for the very first

time.

- Like “signs and wonders” a genuine, biblical, Christ-centered Church should consistently see the Lord adding to the church those being saved.

What Disciplines of the early church led to this vibrant DEPICTION or display of Christianity?

[Act 2:42](#) And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

1. NASB, “They were continually devoting themselves to...”
 - a) The Apostles teaching – discipleship, training, study of God's word
 - b) Fellowship – Friendship, joint participation – everyone involved
 - c) Breaking of bread – Eating together, celebrating the Lord's Supper
 - d) Prayer – Communication with God, in all it's varied forms.
2. Devoted
 - a) “Attend constantly”
 - b) With a sense of respect, love, commitment and affection
 - c) If we want to see Church as it was depicted in Acts 2:43-47 then we must be devoted to the disciplines described in Acts 2:42
 - d) This applies individually in each of our personal lives and corporately in the life of the church.
 - e) A vibrant healthy growing church (just like a vibrant healthy growing individual) doesn't happen by accident ...
 - It requires discipline
 - It requires devotion

The Destiny of the Church

The disciplines described in Acts 2:42 practiced with devotion by the disciples and depicted by the early church as displayed in Acts 2:43-47 produce the DESTINY God declares for the Church in Ephesians 5:25-27, NASB, “Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her. So that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.”

1. Our Destiny:
 - a) Sanctified
 - b) Cleansed
 - c) Presented to Himself
 - d) In all her glory
 - e) No spot or wrinkle
 - f) Holy & blameless
2. What does this look like? Exactly as we saw it depicted in Acts!
3. When Jesus sees a church like that He says:
 - a) Wow – what a babe!
 - b) It causes Him to swoon...
 - c) It makes the Father dance

- d) It gives Jesus Joy
- e) It makes heaven break out in celebration
- f) It catches the attention of Angels, who draw near to see what's up
- g) It releases blessing and favor
- h) It brings us, individually, and corporately, into our eternal destiny!
- i) The the crowds in Lakeland chant during worship, "Go church go, Go church go, Go church go!!!!!"