

Series: Sound Doctrine

SOUND DOCTRINE AND A SOUND CHURCH

TITUS 2; ACTS 2:42-44

Text: Titus 2:1, 7, 10

Titus 2:1

¹ But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

Titus 2:7

⁷ In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,

Titus 2:10

¹⁰ Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

Introduction:

In this chapter we see the connection of doctrine and our way of life.

We see in these verses in Titus directions.

In Acts we see a demonstration of these directions.

I would like for us to consider today the connection of Sound Doctrine and a Sound Church.

Let's turn to Acts 2 and read verses 41-44.

Acts 2:41-44

⁴¹ Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. ⁴² And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

Note verse 42: They continued in the apostles' doctrine.

At this moment, the church was in its infant stage. The church had been established by the Lord with His disciples and the church was empowered on the day of Pentecost.

Although the church was very young, the church was very pure.

At this point, the preferences and stigmas of men had not yet influenced the church.

The pressures of modern culture had yet to make their mark on the church.

Sadly today very few, if any, local congregations closely resemble that of the early church.

Too often pastors are acting like CEO's and churches are trying to imitate what seems to be worldly success.

We need to pattern our lives and actions after the biblical model.

If the church is to possess the power of God, and impact our modern culture, we must seek to resemble the early church. We need to adopt the New Testament model rather than the popular, contemporary model.

There are several things that made this a great and powerful church some of which were:

- It Had the Right Message

The message was right about the Saviour (vs. 22-37), about Sin (vs. 23, 36), about Salvation (vs. 38-40).

- It Had the Right Membership

The membership was saved (vs. 37, 40-41), separated (vs. 42), steadfast (vs. 42), serving (vs. 44-45).

- It Had the Right Methodology

They worshiped together (vs. 42, 46-47), they worked together (vs. 44-45), they walked together, (vs. 42, 46), they witnessed together (vs. 47).

It Had the Right Master

He is powerful (vs. 41, 42, 47), He is personal (vs. 47).

These are just a few things that made this church what it was a Powerful and Pure church.

Let's look consider again the connection between Sound Doctrine and a Sound Church.

Note:

Sermon Content:

1. THEIR COMMITMENT TO DOCTRINE (VS. 42)

Acts 2:42

⁴² And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Immediately following the empowering of the church or the day of Pentecost we find they come together in steadfast commitment to the apostles' doctrine.

This speaks of the teaching and preaching of the Word of God by the Apostles.

The early church placed a premium on the Word of God. It was viewed as the priority among them.

The Word of God must be the priority of any church that is going to be a great church.

We must continue to guard our commitment to the Word, and never allow anything to replace its preeminence among us.

Far too many congregations have given the preaching and teaching of the Word a lower place of emphasis within their services and activities.

Many have replaced an emphasis on the Word with music, drama, and entertainment.

Sometimes we used hear folks say, “We had a great service today. The preacher didn’t even get to preach.”

Our culture today would have us to believe that God does His best work among the church during song services or some sort of entertainment. That may generate a sense of excitement and appeal to the flesh, but it certainly doesn’t fit the New Testament model.

Many congregations have raised a generation of anemic Christians, ignorant of the Word of God, because there was no emphasis on teaching sound doctrine!

Note the words of our Saviour:

John 8:31

³¹ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

We note not only Their Commitment to Doctrine but also:

2. THEIR COMMUNION THROUGH FELLOWSHIP (VS. 42)

Acts 2:42

⁴² And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Following their commitment to sound doctrine, we find their communion through fellowship.

This speaks of much more than gathering under the same roof, or sitting on the same pew.

This has the idea of “fellowship that involves participation.”

It speaks of “partnership and sharing.” They enjoyed one another’s company and fellowshipped together.

There was a sense of community among the early church.

They benefited from one another and helped each other grow and mature in the faith.

We too must continue our commitment to fellowship with one another. We face much in life that is impossible to bear alone. We all need the strength and benefit of the church.

It is encouraging to me when we close a service, as it appears that many are in no hurry to leave, enjoying the fellowship with fellow believers.

Strong, stable churches are made up of those who desire fellowship with one another. When churches experience division, lacking genuine fellowship, they are vulnerable to attack, and often weak in the faith.

Hebrews 10:24-25

²⁴ And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: ²⁵ Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but

exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

This was a sound church because of its Commitment to Doctrine and Communion Through Fellowship.

Note also this was a strong church because of:

3. THEIR CONFIDENCE IN PRAYER (VS. 42)

Acts 2:42

⁴² And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The church possessed a strong commitment to prayer, being confident of the power available through earnest prayer.

This does not refer to a few individuals who sought the Lord in prayer, but a unified, concerted effort through prayer.

The church body recognized the urgency of their time, and understood the necessity of fervent, corporate prayer.

The church in Jerusalem was built upon sound doctrine and prayer! They well understood the necessity of these essential elements.

I know that we are a praying church, but I am convinced we could be more diligent in our praying. We need the commitment and resolve of the early church.

Our church desperately needs the prayers of God's people, interceding for one another and pleading for the power and presence of God to move among us, transforming lives for His glory!

Prayer is the strongest tool we have access to, and yet is likely the least utilized tool of the average Christian.

My prayer life could use improvement.

Every born again believer has access to the throne of grace.

The Lord, Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father, interceding on our behalf.

We have the privilege of making our requests known to Him.

He stands ready and able to assist us through every need and burden we have.

We must make consistent, confident prayer a priority!

Pray for those in places of leadership; pray for those who are weary and burdened; pray for those who have yet to be saved by grace; pray that we will remain a Christ-centered church, where the truth is proclaimed and lived out before others; pray for God to work among us in mighty ways, using us for His glory!

This church was sound and strong because of their Commitment to Doctrine, Communion Through Fellowship and Confidence in Prayer but also because of:

4. THEIR CONFORMITY TO CHRIST (VS. 43A)

Acts 2:43

⁴³ **And fear came upon every soul:** and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

The church in Jerusalem not only experienced miraculous numerical growth, they also experienced radical spiritual growth.

The lives of believers were completely transformed in Christ.

Every one within the church possessed a holy and reverent fear of the Lord.

This speaks of “reverence and respect while being amazed and astonished.”

The church was filled with those who were living daily in reverent fear of the Lord as they were being conformed to the image of Christ.

Their lives had been changed and they were growing in faith.

The aspect of Christian living has largely been lost in our modern day.

The cares of life and complacency have generated a casual approach to the church and our service to the Lord.

The truth is, today most do not stand in amazement of the Lord.

Most spend little, if any time preparing for our services.

There is little communion with the Lord throughout the week.

We attend services on a regular basis, without any expectation of a move of God, and we typically receive what we expect.

We need for God to work among us in ways we have never experienced.

We need to see the Lord, high and lifted up.

We need to spend time in communion with Him and in His Word each day.

We need to draw nigh to Him, and earnestly desire Him to conform our lives into His image.

A church that fears the Lord will see evidence of His favor and blessing.

Those who fear the Lord will experience the power of God in their lives.

This church was sound and strong because of their Commitment to Doctrine, Communion Through Fellowship; Confidence in Prayer and Conformity to Christ but also because of:

5. THEIR CREDIBILITY AMONG SOCIETY (VS. 43B)

Acts 2:43

⁴³ And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

As the church lived in fear of the Lord, they experienced His power among them.

The apostles were enabled to perform great miracles within society.

Even those outside the faith had to admit that something supernatural was happening in their midst.

God was at work and it was evident for all to see.

Though many of the miracles the apostles performed were temporary there is a principle here we need to embrace.

Although we are limited, our Lord is not. He still possesses the power to move in our midst and reveal His presence in undeniable ways.

A strong and stable church will be recognized within the community. All will not believe, but word will get out that the Lord is working among strong churches.

The evidence will be undeniable.

The believers will live in such a way that others recognize their authentic faith.

The church will have a testimony among the community that cannot be denied.

That is what I desire for us; not for our glory, but for the Lord's.

I want us to be known as a people who love God, one another, and our fellow man.

I want us to have a solid, convicting testimony within our community.

This church was sound and strong because of their Commitment to Doctrine; Communion through Fellowship; Confidence in Prayer; Conformity to Christ; and their Credibility among Society but also because of:

6. THEIR COOPERATION IN UNITY (VS. 44)

Acts 2:44

⁴⁴ And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

The early church possessed great unity.

Their unity was built and based on doctrine.

They were together and had all things common.

There was no division or hindrances among them.

The church was not made up of cliques or mini-congregations.

They embraced a common faith and vision.

They stood together, united in Christ.

They possessed a compelling purpose and were committed to move forward together.

I have seen individuals grow spiritually in the midst of a divided congregation, but it is rare.

If we are to be a strong, vibrant church, we must possess unity.

We must be willing to stand doctrinally sound, embrace a common vision, and pursue a common purpose.

We must be willing to lay aside anything that would hinder us becoming what God desires of us.

United we can see miraculous blessing, but divided we will fall. Unity is essential to stability!

Close:

This is a powerful and convicting passage.

I think that Temple Baptist is a good church, we have room for improvement.

Has the Lord brought some things to your attention today?

What do you desire for the future?

Are you willing to conform to the Will of God in order to accomplish His purpose for your life?

May we be obedient to that which God is leading us to do.