

A SUPERNATURAL COMMUNITY

³² God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.

³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. ³⁴ For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“The Lord said to my Lord:

“Sit at my right hand

³⁵ until I make your enemies
a footstool for your feet.” ’

³⁶ “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

³⁸ Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

⁴⁰ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” ⁴¹ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. (Acts 2:34-43)

- What must it have been like to be one of the early Christians?
- Image the excitement swirling all about them!
- Their hearts would have been filled with expectations!
- Their minds would have been wondering what God was going to do with them.
- Verse 43 simply says,

⁴³ *Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.*

- “Filled with awe,” they were.
- Respect
- Godly honor
- We need to understand that this life is God time.
- God meets us here.
- This is not wasted time.
- This is not just ritual.
- This is God time!
- This is when God binds us together and leads us to victory!

⁴⁴ *All the believers were **together**, and had everything in common;*

- Together: the ones that believed...not the ones that came to gawk or watch from a distance...
- The CORE.
- The Members
- The Regulars
- They were **TOGETHER!!!**
- They were like a family.
- They cared for one another!
- They loved one another.
- They helped one another.
- They encouraged one another.
- They blessed one another.
- They prayed with one another.
- There were no big “I’s” and “Little You’s”
- They carried one another’s burdens.
- When one fell down, the others picked him up!!!
- They were together!
- Like the fingers on your hand...tied to the same purpose.
- A church that is “Together” will touch its generation.

- **One that knows how to show love will *turn its world upside down with the gospel!!!***
- **Would you like to turn this world upside down?**
- **If you do, you'll have to do some things.**
- **You'll have to do some Christian things.**
- **You have to do some things that will be seen as odd by some.**

⁴⁵ *Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.*

- They did what???
- They sold their possessions?!?!
- Why many people today are too busy buying and going into debt to even think about selling some things off!!!
- Do we see the extent to which we have to change to be like the early Christians!
- Many people would rather go into debt than to sell some things to help someone in need.
- Here is a mentality that our American wealthy rationale cannot understand and simply will not accept.
- But what about the church? Will we accept it?
- Will we be a supernatural community?
- Will we slow down enough to show others how God fills our emptiness?
- Listen: Almost everything today is directed toward self;
- one's own ego determines the value of everything.

- But here is the thinking of the church that turned its world upside down for Jesus Christ.
- They weren't bound up by money!
- They weren't in bondage to the religion of self.
- They knew how to GIVE.
- They knew that when it came time for the offering, it was time to **PART with something, it was a time for sacrifice.**

David said to Araunah,²⁴ "No, I insist on paying you for [the threshing floor]. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing."

- Don't get me wrong....
- A church can exist with simple offerings....
- But if it is going to prosper...
- If it is going to be a blessing to those in need...
- If it is going to adequately and properly spread the gospel of Jesus Christ,
- it is going to take a people who knows how to give up the goods and **GIVE to the Work of God.**

⁴⁶ *Everyday they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,*

THEY CONTINUED!!!

- They didn't loose interest after a couple of weeks.
- They continued the prayer.
- They continued the worship.

- They continued the fellowship.
- They continued the work of ministry.
- They continued bringing people to church.
- They continued teaching the lost.
- They continued...

THEY CONTINUED EVERYDAY!!!

Everyday – Now that's fellowship and togetherness.

- That's all some people's burden lasts, one day!
- But these people kept it going....
- Day after day after day.
- They knew what it was going to take...
- and they weren't constantly looking for some new program to change their direction.
- They didn't loose interest after a week or two.
- It became a constant way of life for them.
- They did the same thing today that worked for them yesterday.
- And so daily they continued...

To MEET TOGETHER

- Together.
- Intertwined with one another
- Each one's life rapped around the other's.
- Holding each other up:
 - In fellowship.

- In prayer.
- In brotherly love.
- How is that done?
- How can the church as a whole minister to each other like that?

⁴⁶ *They broke bread in their homes and ate together.*

- They didn't mind opening their homes to others for dinner.
- These people loved to fellowship with each other in each other's homes.
- Their houses became portals of the Church.
- Their homes became places of Bible study.
- Their homes became places of Fellowship.
- Their homes became places of Worship!!!
- **These Christians teach us that we cannot sow the gospel in shallowness if we want to reap deep discipleship.**
- **There's no room for a weakening of our spiritual conviction**
- **if we want to sustain a vigorous communal life that stimulates soul growth.**
- Our closeness, our togetherness, provides a compelling answer to the question: "*What's so special about Christianity?*"
- Jesus said, ³⁵ *By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.*" (John 13:35)

⁴⁶ *[They] ate together with glad and sincere hearts.*

- BE Glad!!!
- Be Happy!!!
- Be Joyful
- Not a prune face
- Not stick in the mud

- But someone who is truly glad to be a part of the family of God!!!

- This kind of personal attitude is attractive to the saved and to one who is lost!!!

- Be joyful that the church of God, the pillar and foundation of the truth, wants to be the church ⁴⁷*Praising God!*

⁴⁷ *Praising God,*

- They were a people who knew how to worship God!!!
- They were not ashamed for the world to see them praise the Lord.
- They sang with all their hearts.
- They stood to their feet.
- They worshipped!!!

⁴⁷ *and enjoying the favor of all the people.*

- People liked them!!!

- They were kind to the man on the street.

- They didn't get mad at the waitress.

- They talked kindly to people at the grocery store.

- They visited their sick neighbors.

- They were "LIKABLE" and all the people had favor towards them.

- We've got to ask ourselves...do people like me???

- Do I act in a way that would cause people to like me?

⁴⁷ *And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

- We need to understand that when it's all said and done...
- It's God that convicts the hungry heart.
- You might have taught the Bible study, but it was Jesus that died on Calvary.
- These people understood that it was not their organization that caused the growth.
- **It was God!**

CONCLUSION

**Since we are the church,
Since Jesus died for us,
Since we have been called to live peculiar lives,**

Let's be a supernatural community!

Let's be like the early Christians who:

⁴² *Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, [they] never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ. (Acts 5:42)*

Like them, let's be a supernatural community:

that devotes themselves to the apostles teaching...

that devotes themselves to fellowship...

that devotes themselves to the breaking of bread...

that devotes themselves to prayer...

Let's be a supernatural community that is filled with awe!

Let's put ourselves on display!

Let's let our lives answer the question, "What makes Christianity so special?"

Life Groups are the means by which we can meet in each other's homes and recover and continually ignite our "togetherness."

If you don't think you want participate, that is your decision.

But for those who want to meet in each other's homes to:

to devote themselves to the apostles teaching...

to devote themselves to fellowship...

to devote themselves to prayer...

Please encourage them to grow their souls!

Let's do this together and be a united church for Christ's sake...

By the grace of God,

the witness of Jesus

and the transforming power of the Holy Spirit,

I pray that we will see God's vision for what church is called to be.