

## Acts Chapter 2:42 “The Life of the Church”

Acts 2:42 is a foundational verse for the church. When these four things are happening, the church will prosper. When they are lacking, the church will be weak. This is also a lesson on the life of believers. These things should be part of our lives after we get saved. They should continue until the Lord comes back. These activities in the church are like the four legs of a table—we need them all!

### I. They Continued Steadfastly

#### 1. It was a continued practice and a Godly habit

- a) One of the greatest problems with those who are newly saved is they quickly depart from regular practice of the word, fellowship, communion, and prayer.
  - 📖 *Hebrews 3:12-13* “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”
  - (i) Paderewski, the great pianist, once said, “If I don't practice for one day, I notice it. If I don't practice for two days, my friends know it; and if I don't practice for three days, the whole world notices it.”
- b) Church attendance is especially important. It was in the church gathering together that these things happened.
  - 📖 *Hebrews 10:25* “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”
  - (i) A woman asked her neighbor, “Is your husband a regular church attender?” “Oh yes, absolutely!” said the neighbor. “He hasn't missed a Christmas service since 1982!”

#### 2. It was a desire of the heart “steadfastly”

- a) Continuing in these things can not be a matter of legalistic observance. It must be inspired by the Holy Spirit in our hearts.
  - The law is ineffective to help us continue but Grace, by the Holy Spirit, is effective
    - 📖 *Romans 7:5-6* “For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. 6 But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.”
  - God is the one who must work these things into us
    - 📖 *Philippians 2:13* “for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.”
    - 📖 *Hebrews 13:20-21* “Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, 21 make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”
- b) When God gives us the grace and the willingness to do these things they will be a joy and a privilege. If not, it will be miserable. Being miserable is a sure sign of legalism.
  - (i) A pastor discovered one Sunday morning that the roads were blocked and the only way he could reach church was to skate on the river which he did. When he arrived the elders of the church were horrified that their preacher should skate on the Sabbath. After service they had a meeting and he explained that it was either to skate or not to get there. Finally one asked: “Did you enjoy it?” When the young man said no, they decided it was all right.

## **II. In the Apostles Doctrine**

### 1. We need to read, study, and hear the Word of God

- a) This is the greatest lack in churches today—true understanding of God’s Word
  - (i) A candidate for church membership was asked, “What part of the Bible do you like best?” He said: “I like the New Testament best. Then he was asked, “What Book in the New Testament is your favorite?” He answered, the Book of the Parables, Sir.” They then asked him to relate one of the parables to the membership committee. And a bit uncertain, he began... “Once upon a time a man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves; and the thorns grew up and choked the man. And he went on and met the Queen of Sheba, and she gave that man, Sir, a thousand talents of silver, and a hundred changes of raiment. And he got in his chariot and drove furiously, and as he was driving along under a big tree, his hair got caught in a limb and left him hanging here! And he hung there many days and many nights. The ravens brought him food to eat and water to drink. And one night while he was hanging there asleep, his wife Delilah came along and cut off his hair, and he fell on stony ground. And it begin to rain, and rained forty days and forty nights. And he hid himself in a cave. Later he went on and met a man who said, “Come in and take supper with me.” But he said, “I can’t come in, for I have married a wife.” And the man went out into the highways and hedges and compelled him to come in! He then came to Jerusalem, and saw Queen Jezebel sitting high and lifted up in a window of the wall. When she saw him she laughed, and he said, “Throw her down out of there,” and they threw her down. And he said “Throw her down again,” and they threw her down seventy-times-seven. And the fragments which they picked up filled twelve baskets full! NOW, whose wife will she be in the day of the Judgment?” The membership committee agreed that this was indeed a knowledgeable candidate!
- b) The Word of God Instructs Us
  - 📖 *2 Timothy 3:16-17* “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
- c) The Word of God Helps us Grow
  - 📖 *1 Peter 2:2* “as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby”
- d) The Word of God Cleanses Us
  - 📖 *Ephesians 5:26* “that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word”
- e) The Word of God is Our Weapon
  - 📖 *Ephesians 6:17* “And take... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”
    - (i) "The Devil is not afraid of the Bible that has dust on it"

## **III. And Fellowship**

### 1. What is fellowship?

- a) The Greek word for fellowship comes from a root meaning common or shared. So fellowship means common participation in something either by giving what you have to the other person or receiving what he or she has. Give and take is the essence of fellowship, and give and take must be the way of fellowship in the common life of the body of Christ.
  - (i) In a certain mountain village in Europe several centuries ago, a nobleman wondered what legacy he should leave to his townspeople. At last he decided to build them a church. No one saw the complete plans for the church until it was finished. When the people gathered, they marveled at

its beauty and completeness. Then someone asked, "But where are the lamps? How will it be lighted?" The nobleman pointed to some brackets in the walls. Then he gave to each family a lamp which they were to bring with them each time they came to worship. "Each time you are here the area where you are seated will be lighted," the nobleman said. "Each time you are not here, that area will be dark. This is to remind you that whenever you fail to come to church, some part of God's house will be dark."

- It's more than just talking about football or the weather. Our fellowship ship—our common union—is Christ.

📖 *See Acts 2:42-47*

📖 *1 John 1:3 "that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."*

## **IV. In the Breaking of Bread**

### **1. Communion is Remembering**

📖 *Luke 22:19 "And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."*

### **2. Communion is Proclaiming**

- a) Jesus' death for our sins

📖 *1 Corinthians 11:26 "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes."*

- b) Our union together in the body of Christ

📖 *1 Corinthians 10:16-17 "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread."*

## **V. And In Prayers**

### **1. The true source of power in the church is prayer**

📖 *James 5:16 "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much."*

📖 *Colossians 4:2 "Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving"*

📖 *Ephesians 6:18 "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints"*

(i) **"A Church that prays together stays together!"**

May God continue to bless Calvary Chapel as we continue in the Word, Fellowship, Communion, and Prayer.