

What Makes A Strong Church?

Acts 2:41-47

Introduction

1. All who are members of the church should have an interest in the strength of the church.
2. A strong church is of maximum benefit to the Lord.
3. There is a regular theme of strength and productivity in the New Testament.

1 Cor. 16:13; Eph. 6:10; 2 Tim. 2:1; Rom. 7:4; Col. 1:6; Luke 13:9

- I. Strength Comes From Separation.
 - A. In order to be strong “in the Lord” (Eph. 6:10), we must come out of the world (2 Cor. 6:17).
 - B. Separation from the world should serve to strengthen our Christian ties.
 1. We should all have in common our dislike and disdain of the world.
 2. Sadly, too many Christians have a strong attraction to the world.
- II. Strength Comes From Unity.
 - A. Anyone involved in a team knows the importance of unity.
 1. In sports, teamwork is required in football or basketball
 2. In farming, horses or mules in a team must work together.
 - B. The first Century church understood this!
 1. In Acts 2, things went well because they had all things in common.
 2. In Corinth, they encountered problems because of disharmony.
 3. Philippians 2:2: “Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind”
 4. Philippians 4:2: “I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.”
Can you imagine if we publicly named persons who needed to get along?
 5. Galatians 5:15: “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.”
- III. Strength Comes From Prayer.
 - A. It was one of the first things they did.
 1. They listened to the apostles teaching.

2. They fellowshiped one another.
 3. They communed with God and each other.
 4. They prayed.
- B. Here's what they did:
1. Acts 1:14 When Jesus left, they prayed
 2. Acts 1:24 When they chose an apostle to replace Judas, they prayed
 3. Acts 2:42 When the church began, they prayed
 4. Acts 4:31 When they encountered persecution, they prayed
 5. Acts 6:6 When they encountered internal problems, they prayed.
- C. What would happen to the church without prayer?
1. We are at the mercy of our problems without the help of our God.
 2. Without prayer, we struggle with our worries all alone. (We get the opposite of 1 Peter 5:7!)
 3. We are weakened by the burdens we bear each day without prayer.

IV. Strength Comes From Sacrifice.

- A. Notice what they did.
1. *They sold their goods:* They sacrificed their possessions.
 2. *They had all things in common:* They sacrificed their arrogance.
 3. *They ate together:* They sacrificed their food.
 4. *With gladness and singleness of heart:* They sacrificed themselves.
- B. What about our sacrifice?
1. How much do we really care about our spiritual growth?
 2. How much do we really care about spiritual benefit of others?
 3. How much do we really care about spiritual strength of the church?
 4. Romans 12:1 "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."

V. Strength Comes From Optimism.

- A. Don't we believe what Jesus had taught Matthew 5-7?
- B. Don't we believe 1 Corinthians 15:58?
- C. Don't we believe Romans 1:16?
- D. Don't we believe Philippians 4:13?