

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A BASE CHURCH?

DATE: SUNDAY, 18TH OF OCTOBER 2020 | FRONTLINE: PART 1

TALK
IT OVER

ACTS 2:42,46,47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer... Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

ACTS 2:41

... about three thousand were added to their number that day.

ACTS 2:47

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

ACTS 5:14

... more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.

ACTS 6:7

So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly ...

NOTE TO LEADERS:

We are so excited to host Grant Crawford this Sunday, the 25th of October. Please encourage your group to book a seat at one of the services.

START TALKING

1. What is one thing in Sunday's message that stuck out to you?
2. If you were only allowed to use one word to describe yourself, what would it be?

START THINKING

1. Read Acts 2:42. Luke describes the people of this church as "devoted". What does the word "devoted" mean to you? What would you describe yourself as being devoted to?
2. Read Acts 2:41, Acts 2:47, Acts 5:14, Acts 6:7. We see how God kept adding to the church while they kept doing what God told them to do. Do you look at those people in your circle who are connected to a church, are you also seeing those that aren't connected to a church? When last did you share the Gospel with someone or invite them to church?

START SHARING

1. On Sunday, Steve spoke about the danger that the people of the church in Jerusalem faced, e.g. beatings, prison and even death. There are still countries around the world today where the Church is persecuted. We are blessed to be able to worship freely in South Africa, but two very real dangers that we face today are complacency and comfort. What area of your faith have you become complacent or comfortable in? What is one step you need to take to move out of that area of complacency/comfort zone?
2. Steve described the people of the church in Jerusalem as God-glorifying, Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered, having a sense of community, with a global heart and

a red-hot purpose! What words would other people use to describe your faith currently? What words would you like others to use to describe your faith in the future?!

START PRAYING

God, I'm all in - not just my relationship with You, but Your church. I choose to live for You every day. I want to follow You whole-heartedly and be devoted to Your church. Use me I pray this week to reach out to someone, somewhere. Amen!

START DOING

1. What one thing are you going to do this week in response to Sunday's message?
2. Who can you share Sunday's message with or invite to church next week?

SUMMARY

OF SUNDAY'S MESSAGE

D-Day. 6 June 1944. After nearly five years of intense fighting (and mostly defeat in Europe), the Allied forces landed on the beaches of Normandy in France after they had evacuated in great disarray in 1940 from Dunkirk. It was the largest seaborne invasion in history. The invasion was in many ways the beginning of the end for Adolf Hitler and the Nazis.

160 000 ground troops were landed. 24 000 airborne troops were landed that day, growing to over 2 million soldiers in the coming months. V-Day (in Europe) was only a year later on May 8 1945. But D-Day was the start of the final major offensive!

Two thousand years ago, a much more important spiritual beachhead happened! A church of approximately 120 scared believers was started (Acts 1:15). It was a pretty unimpressive start to what would become the most influential group of people on the history of the world – the church of Jesus Christ!

An intense warfare for the souls of men and women has been raging between then and now! Thankfully we know how the story ends, but V-Day is still in our future.

The church of Jesus Christ is seriously important. It's not a club. Nor is it primarily a self-help centre. It's not just a 'match, hatch & despatch' service (weddings, baby dedications and funerals). It's a matter of life and death!

In the book of Acts, we find the idea of a base church.

- Acts 1-10 – Jerusalem
- Acts 11-18 – Antioch
- Acts 19 – Ephesus

A base church is involved with impacting more than just the local neighbourhood. It reaches the nation and nations of the world.

This week we looked at the church in Jerusalem. Then we will spend four weeks looking at Antioch, and in the final week of this series, we'll look at the church Ephesus.

What can we learn from these churches? We believe God has designed this church (CityHill) to be a base to reach people in the Upper Highway area, the city of Durban, the nation of South Africa and nations of the World.

The church in Jerusalem was characterised by many things: miracles, generosity, people added, as well as severe persecution (leaders were flogged and imprisoned; some of them were even killed). They were God-glorifying, Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered, had a sense of community, with a global heart and a red-hot purpose!

Nearly 40 years ago, Eric and Jill Tocknell planted Hillcrest Christian Fellowship (CityHill Church). Over the years, many people have been reached. God has provided. We've seen miracles, generosity, people added (and thankfully not a lot of persecution). Several churches have been planted out from here. CityHill is a base church.

Three things we can learn from the church in Jerusalem.

1. Devotion

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer...

Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:42,46,47

Devoted is a strong word and has a different meaning to the word attended. Devotion involves the loving investment of our time, energy and resources! Let's devote ourselves to:

- The Word (both privately and corporately).
- To connecting with each other – this is especially precious in light of lockdown!
- To prayer. Our prayer meeting should not be the last thing to go into our calendar!

2. Danger

- Peter and John arrested and locked in jail overnight (Acts 4:3)
- All 12 leaders (the apostles) arrested and flogged (Acts 5:18,40)
- Stephen stoned to death (Acts 7:58)
- Many men and women put in prison (Acts 8:3)
- James put to death with the sword (Acts 12:2)

If you were part of the Jerusalem base church, it could really cost you - even your life! This church had real men and real women with real kids; being thrown into real prisons simply because they belonged to this local church. Many places around the world are like this today - China, North Korea, northern Nigeria, and parts of the Middle East, to name a few.

Our danger is complacency and comfort - of vision, heart and love for God cooling off. Which is more dangerous - getting flogged and beaten or becoming complacent? Young people shouldn't ride on their parents' faith - that's not sustainable. There's a point where each of us needs to decide for ourselves!

3. The Lord added...

Acts 2:41 ... *about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

Acts 2:47 *And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

Acts 5:14 ... *more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.*

Acts 6:7 *So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly ...*

The first base church in the Bible was characterised by people being reached! It is really important to note that it is God who makes things grow (1 Corinthians 3:7).

People who join CityHill often say down the line about the church: "We thought it was too big." What they are most likely meaning is, "we didn't feel comfortable." What is interesting is that the church in Jerusalem was made up of multiple thousands and continued to grow, and the Bible mentions it. In other words, a big church is not a bad thing!

We also see God adding to the number of local churches in the Hillcrest area:

- Vision church – building extension project
- Presby church – full meetings
- Baptist church – extra meetings
- GraceHill church – in the process of purchasing a property

But let's not look at those connected to churches in the Upper Highway area, but rather make our focus those who aren't connected to a church yet.

Last year, CityHill was given a prophetic word about our church being like an aircraft carrier. Let's not get comfortable and complacent or allow our faith to cool down. Jesus didn't die for that kind of church! We need to be laser focussed on being a church that reaches the world.