

**•SUNDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023.**

**•FLOURISH PART 4**

**•GROWING**

**•ACTS 2:41-47.**

**•‘We can flourish’**

- **Jeremiah 17:7-8 NIV**

- But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him.
- 8 They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green.
- It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

The Birth of the Church was set on the day of Pentecost. Which we celebrate every year. This year it will be on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2023. (*50 days after Easter Sunday*).



- **Acts 2:41-47 NIV**

- 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 Fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

- 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.
- 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common.
- 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

- 46 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,
- 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.



- **Key to our spiritual growth**
- There are four key things we can borrow from the early Church.
- The followers of Jesus, who had been baptized by the Holy spirit, literally devoted themselves to communication and unity with God and with each other.

- In relationship with God, they “devoted themselves” in the apostles’ doctrine

(*The Word of God*) and in *Prayer*.

- In relationship to one another they devoted themselves to *Fellowship* and to *Breaking bread*.



**1) The first key to our spiritual growth is  
Our devotion to the word.**

*a) Verse 2*, “They devoted themselves to the word.”

- Think of your Bible as a handbook.
- Yes, they were filled with the Holy spirit, but they devoted themselves to the word.

There is more on how we can live our lives within the Bible than we may realize.

Books like Proverbs and the letters to the churches (*such as Ephesians and Philippians*) teach us how to live our Christian life.

The Bible is full of life lessons

If we truly believe in the Kingdom of God and want to pursue his ways and culture, we need to understand the important of God's word in our spiritual journey.



**2) Our second key is Prayer.** (*Verse 42 they devoted themselves to prayer.*)

a) How does prayer help us to grow spiritually?

b) Prayer helps us to develop the right view of God.

If you don't understand how God loves you, provides for you, or how God heals you, or even how He delivers you, you will struggle in your spiritual journey.

We can only grow spiritually when we understand the Biblical truth of God and develop the right view of Him.

One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

- He said to them, “When you pray, say: “Our Heavenly Father,
- hallowed be your name... (*Luke 1:1-2 NIV*).



Apostle Paul said, “we received the spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father’” (*Rom. 8:15*).

In Hebrew ‘Abba’ is a term for a father, much like ‘Papa’ in our culture; it indicates respect, but with affection and intimacy. The understanding of God as “Abba” and the knowledge of our identity as His children equips us to reject Satan’s accusations that we are hopeless.

**3) Our Third key is Fellowship.** (*Verse 42:*  
*“they devoted themselves to fellowship.”*)

- We need to understand how our growth can be strengthened through the Church, when we fellowship with other believers.

- There are many ways we can benefit from small groups or fellowship.

- a) Small groups help us to form strong relationships withing the body of Christ, and through these, we can build trust, and through trust we can support one another.



- Jesus Himself belonged to a small group (*His disciples*). Towards the end of His ministry, He told them that, “*I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.*” (John 15:5).

b) Fellowship or small groups help us to build unity in the body, as the body unites and starts to grow. Apostle Paul encouraged the Church in Ephesus by saying that, *“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1)*



- The writer of the Book of Hebrews reminds us that; *And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25).*



c) Fellowship helps us to expand the Kingdom. Act 2:42. Talks about how the early Christians devoted themselves to the fellowship.

In other words, the most significant outgrowth of their devotion to the fellowship was a sense of mission and the joy of seeing people come to Jesus. When we're all devoted to the fellowship, we have a concrete foundation for what God wants to do not just in us, but through us. What's your desire when you meet?

- Quote from (*Susan C Young*)
- “Connecting with others gives us a sense of inclusion, connection, interaction, safety, and community. Your vibe attracts your tribe, so if you want to attract positive and healthy relationships, be one! Staying connected and getting reconnected feeds the flow of goodness, which empowers our humanity.



- **Conclusion.**

- As a Church we grow in spiritually by engaging in the same kinds of activities as those of the early Church, so that we, too, may become the kind of people who can consistently announce, express and demonstrate the kingdom of God.



- I believe we can borrow from professional athletes who build muscle by doing thousands of repetitions appropriate to their sport.
- While we can never earn or merit anything from God, we can exert the same effort necessary to build spiritual muscle and maximize God's investment in us. Either through reading, praying or fellowship.