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(Continuation from last week 01/29/14)

# The First Church: Worthy Traits

## THE BIRTH AND GROWTH OF THE CHURCH, [Acts 2:1-7:60](#)

### The First Church: Worthy Traits, [Acts 2:41-47](#)

2. ([Acts 2:42](#)) **Steadfastness**: the early believers were a people who “continued steadfastly” in four things.

[Acts 2:42 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>42</sup>“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

#### Spiritual Duties

It Was a Saved Church

It Was a Scriptural Church

It Was a Fellowshiping Church

It Was a Christ-Centered Church

[Acts 2:42 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>42</sup>“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Their fellowship was symbolized by obedience to the spiritual duty of **the breaking of bread**, a reference to the celebration of the Lord's Supper, or Communion. This duty is not optional, since our Lord commanded it of every believer (cf. [1 Corinthians 11:24-29](#)).

[1 Corinthians 11:24-29 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>24</sup>“And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

<sup>25</sup> In the same way *He took* the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me.”

<sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

<sup>27</sup> Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

<sup>28</sup> **But a man must examine himself, and in so doing he is to eat of the bread and drink of the cup.**

<sup>29</sup> **For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly.”**

In Communion, all believers meet on common ground at the foot of the cross ([Ephesians 2:16](#); [Colossians 1:20](#)), since all are sinners saved by the grace of God in Christ.

[Ephesians 2:16 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>16</sup> **“And might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.”**

[Colossians 1:20 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>20</sup> **“And through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven.”**

Communion acknowledges the wondrous work of the Lord Jesus on the cross. Communion further exemplifies the unity of believers, since in it all partake together symbolically of the same Lord ([Ephesians 4:5](#)).

[Ephesians 4:5 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> **“One Lord, one faith, one baptism.”**

Paul wrote in [1 Corinthians 10:16-17](#), **“Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.”**

Communion calls for self-examination and purging of sin, thus purifying the church. Nothing is more vital to the church’s ongoing, regular confrontation of sins in the lives of its people than the thoughtful expression of devotion to the remembrance of the cross.

## **DEEPER STUDY # 6**

[Acts 2:42 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>42</sup> **“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”**

([Acts 2:42](#)) **Lord’s Supper**: the phrase **“breaking of bread”** means the early believers observed and remembered the Lord’s death. They set aside some time to observe what churches call communion, or the Lord’s Supper, or the Eucharist.

Note they observed the Lord’s Supper daily ([Acts 2:46](#)).

[Acts 2:46 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>46</sup> **“Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart.”**

**Why did they observe it so often?**

1. The Lord's Supper was the one ordinance Christ had given to symbolize His death. And it was His death that had saved them.

**Because of His death, they were now.....**

- a. reconciled to God.
- b. in fellowship with God.
- c. made new creatures in God.
- d. infilled with the Spirit of God.
- e. bearing all the fruit of God ([Galatians 5:22-23](#)).

[Galatians 5:22-23 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>22</sup> **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**

<sup>23</sup> **gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.**

All they now were and had was due to the death of Christ. They wanted to remember and thank God for His great love demonstrated in the death of His Son, and to do it often.

2. The Lord had commanded His followers to observe the Lord's Supper often.

**Thought 1.** What an indictment against so many of us who observe the Lord's Supper so little! We can, of course, remember and concentrate upon the death of Christ without the symbol of the Supper. *But* Christ gave us the ordinance and commanded that we use it as the primary symbol to show His death until He comes ([1 Corinthians 11:26](#)).

[1 Corinthians 11:26 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>26</sup> **"For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."**

[1 Corinthians 11:24-25 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>24</sup> **"And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me."**

<sup>25</sup> **In the same way *He took* the cup also after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."**

[Luke 22:19 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> **"And when He had taken *some* bread *and* given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."**

[Mark 14:22-24 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>22</sup> **"While they were eating, He took *some* bread, and after a blessing He broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is My body."**

<sup>23</sup> **And when He had taken a cup *and* given thanks, He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.**

<sup>24</sup> **And He said to them, "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."**