

“The Church Which Was At Jerusalem”

Acts 8:1

Introduction:

- A. “The church which was at Jerusalem” was the first church of Christ ever.
- B. “The church which was at Jerusalem” had several *marks* worthy of our study.
 - 1. Strong points among her membership.
 - 2. Weak points among her membership.

Discussion:

I. The *Composition* Of Her Membership.

- A. Baptized believers.(Acts 2:36-38, 41, 47)
 - 1. Baptism did not automatically make the members of local church.
 - 2. Jerusalem was unique — only local church — every member on earth in it.
- B. Apostles—had benefits of direct apostolic oversight.
- C. Jews from many countries in Jerusalem for passover. (Acts 2:5-13)
 - 1. These likely remained there for sometime before going home.
 - 2. This likely explains extra-ordinary needy for benevolence and hospitality.

II. The *Steadfastness* Of her Membership.

- A. Steadfast in worship. (Acts 2:42).
- B. Steadfastly in evangelism. (Acts 4:13-20; 5:42; 8:4).

III. The *Courage* Of Her Membership.

- A. Their boldness required courage. (Acts 2:36; 4:13-31)
- B. Their sacrifices required courage.

IV. The *Unity* Of Her Membership.

- A. “One accord” (Acts 2:46;4:24;5:12).
 - 1. Being of one accord did not make them right. (cf. Acts 7:57)
 - 2. Being of one accord in the right made them right.
- B. “Together” (Acts 2:44)
- C. “One heart and one soul” (Acts 4:32).

V. The *Generosity* Of Her Membership.

- A. They had “all things common” (Acts 2:44,45; 4:32).
 - 1. Not communism — voluntary benevolence (Acts 4:32; 5:4).
 - 2. Only because extreme circumstances demanded it.
- B. They ate their food “from house to house” (KJV) or “at home” (ASV). (Acts 2:45,46).
 - 1. Many away from home needed food, lodging — not merely socializing.
 - 2. Biblically, “hospitality” met the needs of guests (lodging—food).
 - a. PHILONEXIA (philo=love xenos=guest, host, stranger. Cf. Rom. 12:13; Heb.13:2)
 - b. XENIZO— “entertained”, “lodged”. (cf. 1 Tim. 5:10).
- C. Generosity and even love of hospitality is an attitude of heart.
 - 1. Expressed in keeping with ability and opportunity. (Gal. 6:10; Phil 4:10)
 - a. Do what can in keeping with physical, financial and circumstantial abilities..
 - b. Be careful about judging others — only God know’s another’s abilities and circumstances.

VI. The *Problems* Of Her Membership.

- A. External persecution.
- B. Internal problems.
 - 1. Lying. (Acts 5:1-11)
 - 2. Discrimination and Murmuring. (Acts 6:1-7).
- C. Problems solved.
 - 1. First by direct divine discipline.
 - 2. Second by apostolic direction.

Conclusion:

- A. “The church which was at Jerusalem” can teach us a lot.
- B. How well are we learning the lessons — we need to work at it.