

What Did the First Generation Christians Practice?

by Victor Choudhrie

The first generation Christians practiced apostolic teaching, fellowship and family, breaking bread and eating together, and prayer and worship, which are essential for the growth and development of the church.

Duration: 1:00:52

Scripture: Genesis 22:5-7, Psalm 51:17, Acts 2:42-47, Romans 15:16, Ephesians 6:17, Hebrews 13:16

Topics: "Early Church", "Apostolic Practices"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the practices of the first generation Christians, focusing on Apostolic teaching, fellowship as a family of God, the importance of sharing and caring, and the significance of prayer after offering sacrifice. It highlights the impact of these practices, including instilling fear of the Lord, experiencing signs and wonders, promoting sharing and caring, engaging in evangelism by 'sheep stealing' in the temple, and the church growing daily with new believers being added consistently.

Transcript

What did the first generation Christians practice? They had been trained by Jesus, the disciples, and now they had to practice and Jesus is no longer with them. He's gone away somewhere. And they are stranded.

So what did they do? Pray to the Holy Spirit. Yeah, that's right. Very good.

And then Holy Spirit came and what happened then? Pardon me? Something happened. Pentecost, right. What does the word Pentecost mean? Fifty.

Pentecost means fifty. Period. In Greek.

It's fifty days after the Passover that this festival comes. So what happened after the Passover? Lots of important things happened. And three days after the Passover there is the Feast of First Fruits.

So Jesus died on the Pentecost because the lamb was offered on the Passover in Egypt. And three days later Jesus resurrects. This is the First Fruits.

Risen Christ. And fifty days later we have the Passover when the Holy Spirit comes. And the church begins.

That's the birthday of the church. So in Chapter 2 Acts they have... What do you think they were doing when the Holy Spirit came? Pray. Pray? That was... Yeah, fasting.

Fasting? No, Jesus said to these 500 people who came for his ascension and he said, Wait in Jerusalem. Go and wait in Jerusalem for the power to come on from high. Not everybody came.

Out of 500 how many came? 120. Only 120 came to the upper room. The rest did not obey.

Even though they had seen the ascension. Amazing. You think everybody would have gone there.

And then the Holy Spirit comes and it came like fire. Tongues of fire. And suddenly they were speaking in tongues.

Not strange tongues but understandable tongues. There are people it says in 114 Acts that people from every nation under heaven was in Jerusalem. And they all heard it in their own mother tongue.

Amazing. A different kind of tongue. So the gospel went out from day one in their own tongues.

So there we are and they are baptized. They are baptized. People come.

Peter gets up and gives a sermon. And I tried to give that sermon and it did not even last three minutes. If you stretch it, mine finishes in 30 seconds.

The same sermon if I repeat it. And he gave and people came at the end of his 30 second sermon. And said, What shall we do? They were touched to the heart and they said, What shall we do? And he said, Repent and be baptized.

Straight message. And be baptized and you and your family will receive Holy Spirit and power. And so, how many people got baptized? How many people got baptized? Acts 2.41. Now read it so you know.

I thought you are all Pentecostal so you would know the figure. 3,000 men. So how many people got baptized? Hungarian people can tell me.

I am pretty sure. No. No.

No. It is 3,000 men it says. Nine what? See, the Jewish family was large family.

Not large, very large. And each fellow had more than one wife, two wives, three wives. And nobody had less than a dozen children.

They were sometimes 15, 20. So these people, Peter said at the end of the day, Hey Luke, Mark, go and count how many people we baptized. So they said we can't count women and children because there are too many of those.

And women had gone out cooking anyway. So they just counted the men and said 3,000 men. Which means 3,000 families.

And each family has large number of people. So how many is that? If each family has say an average of 10 children. One wife has 10 children.

It is huge numbers. 3,000 men. The Jews had very bad habit.

What does it say? Yeah, men. Yeah, because no, the Jewish system, they didn't count the women. There are so many good wives like wives of Noah, wives of those three sons.

And a whole lot of good wives are not mentioned by name, just not mentioned. That was not their system. So huge numbers got baptized the first day.

Did Peter baptize them all? Obviously not. Peter was sitting there up in the upper room talking to people. And everybody else was baptizing everybody else.

Men were baptizing men and women were baptizing women. Can you imagine the scene? And Peter's sermon is remarkable because it is the day of Pentecost. And all the Jews would have appeared with their goats and lambs and cows and bulls.

And there is huge noise in the streets of Jerusalem. Narrow streets, very narrow streets of Jerusalem. Going to the temple.

So there is the cows are making a noise, the bulls are making a noise, the goats are making a noise, and the sheep are saying Baba, whatever they say. And in the midst of this they can hear Peter talking. Without the mic.

And they can hear it in their language. Well I can understand, this is South Korean. How come Peter learned, when did he learn South Korean language? So something very amazing happened there.

Now these 3,000 families, oh let's see, next week something else happened, Acts 4.4. Yeah, now this time we have better translation. So now there is another 5,000 families added. So very rapid multiplication is going on.

Very rapid, extremely rapid. Okay, so we go back to Acts 2.42. 2.41 is 3,000 families. 2.42 is the 4 things they do now as first Christians.

What are those 4 things? So these people did 4 simple things. Number 1, not teaching. That you have every Sunday.

No change. Apostolic teaching is very different from pastoral teaching. You know, what's the difference? I give an example, the difference between pastoral teaching and apostolic teaching is, you go next Sunday to your church and find out what the pastor teaches.

And don't listen to his sermon. If you want to listen, you can listen. Or you can have a Pentecostal map, whatever you want to do.

You do. But listen to the announcements. When he says announcements, you get your antennae right there.

What's he going to say? Because this is what he is going to decide whether this is an apostolic church or a pastoral church. He will say, Monday, brothers meeting, come. Tuesday, sisters meeting, come.

Wednesday, youth meeting, come. Thursday, cottage meeting, come. Friday, pastoral committee meeting, come.

Saturday, choir practice, come. Sunday, of course you come, but don't forget to bring your offerings. That's a come church.

Got it? Where an apostle will say, go make disciples. So, it's a difference between come church and a go church. Pastoral church is a come church.

Apostolic teaching is go, make disciples. The very very fundamental essential difference. So, it's not just teaching.

The pastor is not going to give you wrong teaching. He is going to give you good teaching. But at no point you will have the challenge, go, make disciples.

He will say, come. Next week is a busy church program we have. So, you have no time to go and do any apostolic work.

Because the church is busy. You are from mega church, so I don't have to tell you about this. About the church, busy church program you have.

Okay? So, apostolic teaching. Number two, what is that, Acts 2, 42? Fellowship. Fellowship is what kind of fellowship? What do you mean by fellowship? The food is next item.

If you have Ephesians 2, 19. You have to read a little bit aloud. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens of Portugal and also members of his household.

So, we are members of the household. The church is a fellowship of the members of the household of God. So, we are all related to each other.

Uncle, aunties, cousins, brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, you know. Yeah, it's a family. So, relationship, this fellowship is a family relationship.

So, again there is a difference in apostolic church and a pastoral church. Pastoral church, you are a member of the church. In good standing, because you give your good money.

If you don't give good money, then you are not in good standing. And if you give good money, then you are a VIP member. You get an award, yeah, right.

And you have to make a commitment, what you are going to contribute this day. There is an apostolic church, we are a family member. We are related to each other, we care for each other.

Once we are a family member, we care for each other. It's not just that we meet on Sundays. Family relationship, whether we are together or not, husband-wife together or not, but they are husband-wife wherever they are.

It's a relationship. So, fellowship is about family fellowship, family relationship. Number three, 242, what is that? Breaking bread.

Whatever the family does, it breaks bread together, eats together. If you know, if your mother knows you are coming home for the weekend, she is not thinking of arranging a meeting for you. No, no, she is

arranging eating for you.

You know what this guy likes. That's what she is going to cook for you. Right? So, family get-together is very much eating first, meeting afterwards.

And God chose the dining table to reach the ends of the earth. We will get to that when we get to the end of this chapter. So, up to 47 we will do 242 to 47.

How to reach to the ends of the earth? Sitting on your dining table. In Melbourne, it's easy. Because you have all nations represented in that setting.

They will never be disciples in the church. They will be disciples on the dining table. Yeah? Easy.

Easy, so easy to reach. Judea, Jessamaria, wherever you want to reach, on your dining table. So, there is no mention anywhere in the Bible where they didn't get together and have food.

Food was very important part of evangelizing the world. Jesus' ministry consisted wherever you go. Finally, he was condemned and told that this fellow is, what's the word? A drunkard and a glutton.

Because all his meetings were centered around food. If he was not being fed, then he was feeding the 5,000. He was inviting himself.

Zach, oh, Zach, come down from the tree. We are going to have a meal at your house. Pharisee's house, this house.

Everywhere he was eating. And that was, he was using the occasion for transforming people. Every meal transformed people.

It's a transformation meal. So, food fellowship is very important part of evangelizing the world. Number four? Prayer.

We always emphasize prayer and that's good. But now, I have to clarify this prayer. We are very sentimental about it.

What are you going to do? Pray. What are you going to do? Pray. No, it didn't work that way in the Jewish mind.

Prayer was always the last item. Here, of the four items, it's the last item. We would start with prayer.

Yeah? Not them. The system I was telling you, when they came to the Pentecost or Passover, whichever festival they came to, Jerusalem, they would first go and make confession. Repentance.

This is the first step. Second step was bath of purification or baptism. Third step was offering a sacrifice at the altar.

Fourth step was praying in front of the Holy of Holies, standing there. Fifth step was sharing the teaching. When you went back to the base, elders were teaching.

And the next step was eating meals together. Food fellowship. So, God... David wanted to build a temple for God.

He said, I live in a palace and God lives in that little tent house. That's no good. They used big word like tabernacle and all, but basically just a tent house, you know, made of skins.

So, God said, no, no, no, you are not going to build it. Your hands are too messed up with blood. So, your son will build.

So, Solomon did a good job. What do you think the temple was for? What was the purpose of building the temple? Worship. Any problem? No.

Worship. What does worship mean? How did they worship? Okay, we'll get to it. Yeah, yeah.

That's not it. Now, you read 2 Chronicles 7.12. What was this temple meant for? What did God say to Solomon? This is what the temple is all about. 2 Chronicles.

See if you can find it, if it's in your Bible. You know, sometimes missing from good Christian Bibles. 2 Chronicles 7.12. 2 Chronicles 7.12. The Lord appeared to him at night and said, I have heard your prayer and have chosen this place for myself as a temple for sacrifices.

I have chosen this place to be? Yeah. A place of? A temple for sacrifices. What is your translation? Is it the same translation? Same translation.

Nobody has standard translation? I've chosen this place to be a place of sacrifice. Basically, that's what it means. He doesn't use the word, I've chosen this place for worship.

Because in Jewish mind, he could not worship God without offering a sacrifice. To him, when he said worship, it didn't mean praise and worship service with music. It meant offering a sacrifice.

And God has specified here that this house is a house in their language is called That's what it means, a slaughterhouse. The literal translation is a slaughterhouse. Two verses later in 2 Chronicles 7.14, what are they doing? 2.12 is a house of sacrifice.

2 Chronicles 7.14, you know the verse. The problem is not with the heathen. The problem is with his people.

If we repent and we confess our sins, that we have not done what we ought to have done and we are doing something that we ought not to be doing. We know that. The problem is not with the Gentiles.

The problem is not with the heathen. The problem is with us. So the Jews did not pray until they had first offered a sacrifice.

Prayer was not the first item. Prayer was not the last item. It was in the middle.

After you offer sacrifice, you pray. And we read earlier in 1 Corinthians 14.24, if an unbeliever is present over there, so you work on the unbeliever until he confesses, until he repents, until he is baptized and incorporated into the church and then he becomes a participant member of the church. So the primary function of the church is to offer sacrifice as worship.

If you just pray, and the Jewish mind, if you just prayed, you would think this is arrogant, that you are praying to God without having offered a sacrifice. And the prayer he prayed was for the healing of the nation. He knew if I walk with God, my nation will be healed.

So first offer sacrifice, first confess we are not doing what we should be doing. Get baptized, we are all baptized already, so you cannot be baptized. Then you offer a sacrifice and then you pray.

Then your worship is complete. So we are taking off somewhere in the middle, we sing some songs. And we go to David.

And David says, come into my temple with thanksgiving in your heart. We don't understand what that thanksgiving is. It's sacrifice.

In their language it's sacrifice. You bring sacrifice and you worship God, he says. Psalm 96, 8 and Psalm 100 verse 4. Worship is you bring sacrifice and it's not one goat or one lamb.

It's abundant sacrifice. How many bulls do you think King Solomon offered on the day of the inauguration of the temple? Any idea? It's in the same chapter. It's 22,000 bulls.

And then he offered some sheep. How many? That's a few more than the bulls. 100,000 more.

120,000 sheep. 22,000 bulls. And the birds and pigeons and doves were not counted.

Read it aloud so they can hear it. So don't think of baptizing two people, three people. I usually ask people, you know, how many baptized? Have you got up with Peter? Have you baptized 3,000 yet? 3,000? No, you're thinking of three.

No, you've got a vision like this. You believe in a big God? Yeah, I believe in a big God. You believe in a God of impossibles? Yes, I believe in a God of impossible.

How many baptisms? Three. We've got six billion people waiting to be baptized, man. What are you doing? So when we're talking about the larger picture, here's Peter baptizing 3,000 families in day one, opening his account on day one.

The church opened with 3,000 families. Week later, 5,000 more families added. Samaritan woman, within minutes she has the whole village as sacrifice.

Enlarge your vision. Amen. Enlarge your vision.

And you have to do four simple things to get there. What are they? Number one? Apostolic teaching. Don't do just teaching.

The Bible is a huge repertoire of knowledge. You get lost here, there, everywhere. And then you pick up the tail of the elephant and say, what does the elephant feel like? Why, it's a little hairy at the end.

Well, that's not an elephant, that's just the tail. Get the whole perspective. That vision picture is big.

And think big. And try the impossible. So that requires four simple things.

Apostolic teaching, what else next? Fellowship, family. You must remember this is, we are a fellowship, we are a family of God, together. We are not just some lay people that meets on Sunday somewhere and then we have no relationship with each other the rest of the week.

No. Number three, you must eat together, because a family will eat together. And eating is not just for food.

It's transformational meal. Must change people. Zaki has changed, so many people changed.

Number four? Then pray. After you offer the sacrifice. Let's stretch that one a little bit, the worship part.

You said the worship part. We take out Genesis 22, 5 to 7. Not 25, 22. 5 to 7. Genesis.

22, 5 to 7. Stay here with the donkey. Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.

Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac. And he himself carried the fire and the donkey. As the two of them went on together, Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, Father? Yes, my son.

Abraham replied. The fire and the wood are here, Isaac said, but where is the land for the burnt offering? Abraham answered. I myself will provide the land for the burnt offering of my son.

And the two of them went on together. So here we are. Abraham is taking his son to offer the sacrifice.

Abraham says to the servant, stay here with the donkeys. We are going to worship. First time the word worship comes to the Bible is here.

22, 5. And we are going to worship. And then his faith is incredible because he says to the servant, we are going to come back. Well, if you are going to offer Isaac the sacrifice, how do we come back? But his faith is there that God will do something.

But then Isaac asks the question, we are going to worship God, so we need three things. We need the fire, we need the sword and we need the sacrifice. He knows that.

He is 10 years, 12 years, 14 years. He says we need three things. The fire, the sword and the sacrifice.

So he says we got the fire, we got the sword, where is the sacrifice? That's worship. So Abraham says, son, don't worry, God will provide. Okay.

So then, in the New Testament, this model of worship continued. For worship. What is fire? The Holy Spirit.

It came on the day we read in the Pentecost. So we have the Holy Spirit. The sword, what is the sword? The? Word.

Word, yeah. The sword of the Spirit. Ephesians 6, 17.

And read Hebrew for 12. So the word of God is double-edged sword. You cut this way, it will cut.

You cut this way, it will cut. Both ways. And what is the offering? In the Old Testament it was? Four-legged thing.

In the New Testament? Two-legged thing. Romans 15, 16. Romans 15, 16.

Yep. So Paul is saying, it's a very complicated English there. Paul is a Pharisee, so sometimes he writes, we've tangled up stuff.

What he's saying, I'm a minister of God, a priest of God, and my business is to offer Gentiles as living sacrifice. That's what he's saying. As a minister of God, I offer Gentiles, sanctify Gentiles, a sacrifice.

So, offering sacrifice, not old hat. That was four-legged thing. All that has changed from four-legged to? Two-legged.

So worship is, requires three things. What are the first thing? Fire, the sword, and the sacrifice. That's worship.

Not what we call worship. Get the guitar out and we are now, excuse us. We're going to praise and worship for the next 15 minutes and the pastor will suddenly decide this time is up for Holy Spirit to go away, so he starts something else.

And that's not worship. Worship is offering Gentiles a sacrifice. That pleases God.

So God wants us to offer Psalms 51, 17. You know that one? A broken and a contrite heart? That's what God wants. He will not refuse.

As part of worship, we offer broken and contrite hearts. That's worship. Which pleases God.

So completely you need to redefine what is worship. Otherwise, if you go by man-made system, first thing you have to do is buy a guitar because you can't worship God without a guitar. You need the sword.

Double-edged. So the sequence was, in the Old Testament, God has said, that was the shadow of things to come. But each one had a meaning.

You repent, confess your sins, get baptized, offer your sacrifice at the altar, go and pray in front of the Holy of Holies, which is in front of God. Then go and share what great things God has done in your life and eat a meal together as a family. That's the sequence of things, which is what he had described in different words.

And if you do these things, then we start off with verse 43, 2-43, Acts 2-47. You read it now. Acts 2-43-47.

If you do these four things. Every day they continued to eat together in the temple courts. They broke bread at their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

And the Lord added to their number daily those who had been saved. Hallelujah. So they are doing a few things here.

These four things. See things happen when you do those four things. First thing is what? Apostolic teaching.

Number two. Fellowship. Number three.

Table fellowship. Number four. Prayer.

Number one, there will be awe. People will get frightened all around you. These people.

Don't tangle up with them. Because they will put you off the map. Some people came to attack one Christian.

The Hindus and their leader. They brought sticks and things in the middle of the night. And they made some noise.

And the leader went halfway close to the house. And then he said, Let's go back. I don't feel well, he said.

And then he came back to this Christian. He said, Brother, please don't pray against me. I know your prayers are too powerful.

I might get wiped out. I'm scared, he said, of your prayers. So there will be awe.

Fear among people. These are different. The Jewish people.

Everybody was afraid of the Jewish people. When they were coming. They were nobodies.

They were like slaves. But everybody was afraid because they were together. So first there will be awe.

Fear of the Lord will come upon people. Number two, what will happen? Forty-three, what will happen? Science and wonders. If you do these four things, science and wonders.

It's not very complicated. If you complicate the church, and put too many Gregorian programs, a lot of noise, and no power. And the only power will be noise power.

Then what will happen in verse 44 and 45? What Sunil was talking about? Sharing and caring model. You share what you have. I have two shirts.

You have no shirt. I give you one shirt. You have two pieces of bread.

I have none. You give me one. We start sharing what we have.

We don't say, unless some charity, organization gives me so much money, I can't help you. No, I'll share what I have. And then there is this dangerous statement over there, they went and sold everything.

So that's a bit worrisome. But if you read in Acts 4, 34, 35, it clarifies what he means by what you have to sell, what you don't have to sell. Acts 4, 34, 35.

Those who had houses, it's in plural. And those who had lands. So if you have more than one house, you've got a summer house and a winter house, you can sell one of them.

Many people have. You didn't sell if you only had one house. Like the upper room, you know, Mary owned that house.

She didn't sell that. She used it for God's purpose. Extra lands, extra houses, anything extra? Go and look at your garage, how much stuff is just rotting there.

Go and open up your suitcase, your cupboard and see how many clothes are, you know, you haven't worn them for a whole year. Give it away. Don't wait for Christmas.

So sharing, caring and sharing. Back to Acts 2. Then we read the verse 46. Now they're going out.

They're going. They're going two by two. Okay, they're going to the temple court.

They're not all going together. They're going two by two because dangerous place to go to the temple. They were punished severely over there.

What were they going to? To the temple. Now Jesus is not there and every time Jesus went to the temple, there was problem. There was argument, there was discussion, you know, debates and huge problem.

And final time when Jesus went there, he went there with a whip. So why should they go to the temple now? Why should they go? They know they can pray anywhere now. They learned from the Samaritan woman that not over there, not over there, but anywhere in truth and spirit you can worship.

Anyplace, anytime, anywhere. They went fishing. Jesus told them, I'll make you fishes of men.

So they said, where is the maximum number of fish? Where is it? They said, three times a day in the temple are all the fish gathering there. So let's go fishing there. So two by two, they would go there.

They didn't go together. Peter and John going, next chapter, chapter three, Peter and John going there and there is this man sitting there and this miracle takes place. He's been blamed for his life.

So they go to the temple and it's very easy to fish there. Fishermen, they were fishermen. By profession.

So they knew when to catch fish, where to catch fish. So temple is a place. So they would go there and come and meet you and say, hello brother, what are you doing? So you'd say, what do you mean, what am I doing? I've come here to pray? Yes, yes, it's very good, very good.

Then they would say, what are you praying? What do you mean, what am I praying? I pray the same prayer every time I come here. Messiah, come. That's what I'm praying.

Oh, very good. But brother Messiah has already come. Messiah has come? When did he come? Nobody told me.

Come with me. We'll tell you. So they took them home and the next scene is they went to the temple and from there you see they are eating.

Yes, 46? Yes. Can you read it again? They were eating at home. Yes.

That's right. They got people from there, stole sheep from the temple, brought them home and gave them the bait which is sandwiches. And they would say, now I'm going to prove you that the Messiah that you're praying for has already come.

And then they would say, this Messiah, this Jesus is the Messiah. He was born a virgin. He was born in Bethlehem.

He was born in the family of Judah. And he would do signs and wonders and he would do miracles and he would die hung upon a cross. All these things they showed from the scriptures.

I said, oh, well I saw Jesus myself but I hadn't quite realized that we've been waiting for. So he'd become a convert. And verse 47 says? Christ the God joined the family of all the people and the Lord answered their number daily.

Daily. So that's the challenge before you that your church must grow daily. Not three people once a year.

That too will recycle Christians. Thank you. Make sense? So this is between 241 when 3,000 people are baptized and the first church is established and this is what the first church did.

Four things they did in 242. What are the four things? Apostolic teaching. Go, make disciples.

Number two, fellowship. We are a family of God. Number three, we eat together and eating was a powerful time of evangelism.

To reaching the ends of the earth you're going to do on your dining table. And as I said, it's dead easy in Melbourne because you have people from Africa, you have people from India, you've got people from so many countries. You can disciple the ends of the earth right there.

The Jews called their dining table Benshem. They have a word there, Benshem. B-E-N-S-H-E-M.

Benshem is not just a dining table. It has a connotation of being an altar. Because all the Jewish feasts were celebrated on the dining table.

The Passover, the Pentecost, everything had something to do with eating. So it was an altar. Every Sabbath the dining table became the altar.

And so when the Sabbath starts as soon as the sun sets at 6pm on Friday evening the woman of the house she lights the menorah the seven lamps and then she closes her eyes and she sings a prayer. And when she sings the prayer the whole family knows Sabbath has started. She announces the Sabbath and the Jewish sister.

And then they would all gather and all the food is there meal is there and the whole family gathers there even today. You go to Jerusalem at 6pm on Friday everything comes to a dead halt. No buses, no trains, no planes, no nothing.

All the shops are shut. The roads are empty. It's fantastic.

Suddenly it happens. So you know this the Sabbath festival would start then. So the dining table is the family altar.

And the husband is the priest of the family. But it's the woman who announces the Sabbath. And she sets up the whole thing that Sabbath is celebrated properly.

All the traditions she has to teach the children. You do this, you don't do this. You do this, you don't do this.

You sit here, you don't sit here. Even the seating is arranged in such a way on Sabbath where the priest of the family sits. And the husband has to function as the priest of the family.

Because if he is not priest of the family how can we be priest to the nations? And Jews are called to be priest to the nations. We are called to be priest to the nations. So the dining place has extreme importance.

It's an altar. And then you know how to use the altar for bringing people to Christ. Reaching the ends of the earth.

This is the Lord's Supper. Because when Jesus served the Lord's Supper we come from a mindset that you only get bread and wine. And that too a wafer.

You don't even get proper bread nowadays. And I don't know about your church but my Lutheran pastor when we go there he won't even hand over the cup to me. He holds the cup and opens your mouth.

First he doesn't even hand over. I sit there like this with my hand hoping to get the wafer. He says open your mouth.

He puts it there. And then he gives me one sip and pulls the cup back. So this is not it.

Jesus served the Passover meal. And what does the Passover meal consist of? What? What food? Specific items. Land.

Roast land. Bread. What else? Wine.

What else? Bitter herbs. Why bitter herbs? Yeah, they were slaves. The bitter experience they had.

Number one. And the lamb. So what Jesus served his Lord's Supper was very different from what my pastor gives me.

It was a meal. It was a full meal. And the wine is not served once.

If you study the Jewish system four times they serve the wine. Same wine goes. And there are lots of other things that happen there.

And quietly, somberly like, I don't know about your church but in my church we all go as if somebody is dead, you know. It's too somber. But in Jewish system the youngest person sat on the right hand side of the leader.

So when Jesus is sitting there it's John, the youngest one, little fellow, who is sitting on the right hand of Jesus. Because he has a very important function to do. During the meal.

When Jesus breaks the bread it's John, the little fellow who says, what's the meaning of this? Breaking of bread. Everything that happens there is a function of this young man to ask, why are you drinking wine? What is the meaning of this? What is this bitter herb? What does it mean? So when Jesus says one of you is going to ditch me tonight. Peter picks it up and doesn't ask Jesus who is going to do it.

He says John. John asks who is going to do it. So John has to ask who is going to do it.

Then Jesus answers that John, that somebody who dips his bread into my cup he is the one. Any question that anybody wanted to ask has to go through this young person. So young person grows very quickly because he is growing very quickly.

In our system we say oh, young fellow keep quiet you don't know anything. So how will he grow? Can't grow. The whole system was designed by God in such a way that everybody had an opportunity even the youngest had the opportunity to grow and say.

Lots of questions during the meal. So I don't know why I worked in Nazareth for 15 years asking questions. The Jewish people, I worked as a doctor there they asked so many questions you know you will give you a headache by the time you finish with one patient.

Hundreds of questions they would ask. In that period I could treat 10 British patients which took me one. They grow up with this personality of asking questions.

There were 1 million people and we only got 4 Nobel Prize so far. And the Jews 15-20 million people they got 200 Nobel Prize. We got 400 200 well about 180 to be exact.

Brilliant people but it comes out of asking questions. Synagogue 7 elders will sit in the front not one pastor and each one has an opportunity to say something. The ruler of the synagogue will say now sir would you like to say something? Paul you look like a pharisee would you like to say something? So everybody got an opportunity.

Jesus came and said would you like to say something? It's not dominated the pulpit is not dominated by one person but everybody spoke in Nazareth. A lot of interaction between the people and the people up front. So their knowledge and understanding of their faith is tremendous compared to us.

Plus the stories during the feast of what the thing is. A lot of communication. Ours is a Greek method we or Roman method you know order is coming from the cathedral, ex-cathedral which means the throne.

And he had to keep quiet. He said stand up, we stand up. He said sit down, we sit down.

He said praise the Lord, we praise the Lord. He said shut up, we shut up. So this is what the first church practiced.

Four things. Number one Apostolic teaching. Number two fellowship, family fellowship.

The church was a household of God and not this external membership. Not Sunday, hello, hi, hi Jim, see you later. I think there's a little bit better church outside in the car park than it is inside.

At least you can stand and talk for a few minutes. Number three food. Table fellowship.

Number four pray. When do you pray? After you offer the sacrifice. Not before that.

Okay, if you do these four things, what will happen? Seven things will happen. Number one fear of the Lord will come upon the people. Everybody will get frightened.

No, these people are united. Satan has divided us into denominations, etc., etc., and some are Pentecostals, some are Anticostals. Okay, there are only two denominations.

Number two no, signs and wonders, power of manifestation. Number three sharing and caring. Whatever you have, you share.

So, it's in that house church thing, they didn't come with cash, they didn't always have cash. But I said, this shirt is lying, I am going to wear it, I don't need it, or these dresses, or this, your children are going to go to school and I have some school uniform you can have, you can fit your children, I have some books lying for the children, my children have finished that, so you get a whole lot of things that you can share other than cash in the house church. Or somebody will take it and say, I know exactly somebody who can use this, I don't need myself, but I know somebody who will fit into this.

So, you can share a whole lot of things that are being wasted in a house. Next thing, what's the number now? Or, signs and wonders, sharing and caring, number four. Go, start going, sheep stealing.

Sheep stealing is official, legal, biblical, because the disciples are going into the temple now, that's where all the fish is. Within a very short time, the temple was empty. Because these twelve disciples went, they went and disciplined somebody, so next day there were 24 people in the temple who were stealing sheep, and next day there were 50 people, 100 people, within weeks, the temple authority was sitting there, scratching there, where has everybody gone? And so, go sheep stealing.

And then, when you bring the sheep, what do you do? Where do you take them? Take them on a bench to your dining table. That's the discipling center. International, global, discipling center is your dining table.

To disciple the world, all you need is a cup of coffee, a sandwich, and a bible. Or as I say it in my writing, eat meat and gossip the gospel. That's all you do.

That's church, where two or three gather together. And what, how do we measure this, that this thing is working? It grows every day. And the new believers, I did every day, that's your measurement.

I get phone calls, this phone call I got, I must be, you know, we baptized so many people today, or this week, or this month, every day, otherwise I feel incomplete. Got no phone calls today, what, nobody baptizing, nobody, what happened? No, no, we did baptize, but we told you a week later. Your church must grow every day.

Amen?

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