

Sermon Title: The 10 Hallmarks of a Healthy Church

Text: Acts 2:37-47

By: Dr. Alvarez

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Introduction:

In our journey of faith, it is important to understand what constitutes a healthy church. The book of Acts provides us with a blueprint of the early church, highlighting important characteristics that resulted in its growth and impact. **Acts 2:37-47** presents us with ten hallmarks of a healthy church that are still relevant to us today. Through this passage, we will explore these hallmarks and seek to apply them to our lives and our local church.

Act 2:41-47

“Those who accepted his message were **baptized**, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the **apostles’ teaching** and to **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread**, and to **prayer**. Everyone was filled with awe at the many **wonders and signs performed** by the apostles. **All the believers were together** and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions **to give to anyone who had need**. 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 favor of all the people**. **And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.**”

10 Hallmarks of a Healthy Church Acts 2:37-47

- 1- Gospel Planting. **V37.**
- 2- Teaching of the Word of God. **V42.**
- 3- Fellowship. **V42**
- 4- Sacraments: Baptisms and Braking of the Bread. **V38, V41-42**
- 5- Prayer. **V42**
- 6- The movement of the Holy Spirit in the local church. **V38; 43**
- 7- Unity or, better said, **CommUNITY. V44**
- 8- Radical generosity. **V45**
- 9- Continual Worship in the temple and in the houses. **V46**
- 10- Favor: Good testimony and reputation with the outsiders. **V47**

I. Gospel Planting & Generational Planting (v. 37, v. 39)

- The first hallmark of a healthy church is its commitment to gospel planting, both among those who have yet to hear the message and within successive generations.
- **Thomas Aquinas once said**, "The Church is sent into the world to continue that same mission entrusted to the apostles: to manifest the Kingdom of God here on earth."
- Let us pray: Heavenly Father, empower our church to be faithful in proclaiming the gospel and passing on the torch of faith to future generations.

II. Teaching of the Word of God (v. 42)

- A healthy church places a high value on teaching the Word of God.
- Sound biblical teaching nourishes the congregation, equips believers for their calling, and ensures doctrinal integrity.
- Let us pray: Lord, grant us passionate and dedicated teachers who accurately proclaim your Word, helping us grow in knowledge and understanding.

III. Fellowship (v. 42)

- Fellowship within the church is essential for fostering love, support, and encouragement among believers.
- Genuine fellowship strengthens relationships, promotes unity, and creates an atmosphere conducive to spiritual growth.
- Let us pray: Heavenly Father, enable our church to be a place where meaningful relationships are formed, fostering unity and love among your people.

IV. Sacraments: Baptisms and Breaking of the Bread (v. 38, v. 41-42)

- A healthy church actively practices the sacraments of baptism and the breaking of the bread, symbolizing initiation into the family of God and the remembrance of Christ's sacrifice.
- Through these practices, believers publicly identify with Christ, enter into covenant community, and experience His presence.
- Let us pray: Lord, may our participation in baptism and the Lord's Supper continually remind us of our union with Christ and deepen our sense of community.

V. Prayer (v. 42, v. 46)

- A healthy church prioritizes prayer, recognizing its vital role in acknowledging God's sovereignty, seeking His guidance, and expressing dependence on Him.

- Prayer cultivates intimacy with God and aligns our hearts with His purposes.

- Let us pray: Gracious God, teach us to be a church characterized by fervent prayer, constantly seeking your presence, guidance, and empowerment.

VI. The movement of the Holy Spirit in the local church (v. 38, v. 43)

- A healthy church experiences the active presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit convicts, empowers, and equips believers for witnessing, spiritual growth, and the manifestation of spiritual gifts.

- Let us pray: Holy Spirit, move within our church, filling us afresh and empowering us to bear witness to Christ's love and truth.

VII. Unity or better said CommUnity (v. 44)

- A healthy church places a high value on unity, recognizing that it is instrumental in reflecting the love and unity of the Triune God.

- Unity facilitates effectiveness in mission, empowers corporate worship, and testifies to the transforming power of the gospel.

- Let us pray: Heavenly Father, bind our church together in genuine unity, that we may reflect your love and become a beacon of hope in our community.

VIII. Radical Generosity (v. 45)

- A healthy church displays radical generosity, sacrificially giving to meet the needs of others, both within the church and in the broader community.

- Radical generosity reflects God's character, demonstrates love in action, and opens doors for further gospel impact.

- Let us pray: Lord, grant us hearts of generosity, that we may be vessels of your love, reaching out with compassion to those in need.

IX. Continual Worship in the temple and in the houses (v. 46)

- A healthy church engages in authentic and continuous worship, both in corporate gatherings and through daily living.

- True worship involves acknowledging God's supremacy, surrendering to His will, and offering every aspect of life as an act of worship.

- Let us pray: Father, ignite a passion for worship within our hearts, both in communal gatherings and in the everyday moments of our lives.

X. Favor: Good testimony and reputation with the outsiders (v. 47)

- A healthy church bears a good reputation among those outside the faith, reflecting Christ's impact on its members and community.

- This favor testifies to the gospel's transforming power and attracts others to seek Christ.

- Let us pray: Heavenly Father, may our church be known for its love, integrity, and genuine faith, drawing others to you through our words and actions.

Conclusion:

May we, as the church, embody these hallmarks of a healthy church, nurturing our faith, living in fellowship, practicing the sacraments, dedicating ourselves to prayer and the teaching of the Word, and allowing the Holy Spirit to move powerfully within and through us. May our church be a place of radical generosity, continual worship, and exemplary testimony, proclaiming the hope and transforming love found in Christ.

1 Corinthians 3:10–11 Hopes for the Church to Reach the Unreached

And God, even as we pray for this. We pray for places in the world where there is no church, where no foundation in Jesus has even been laid. Oh, millions of them, God, and there is no known church among this people group. God, please change that. Please cause the foundation of Jesus Christ to be proclaimed and laid in the USA. Please raise up churches in the USA according to your word for the display of your glory among that people group. God, please, we pray for the establishment of your church with the foundation in Jesus in the Prospect, La Grange, and the Crestwood area.

May it be so and send out people from our churches to do it, we pray.

Send out people from the work being done in our fields, buildings, and churches.

Send out people to make the gospel known among Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, North and Latin America. God, we pray that you'd help us build your church and expand and spread it where it hasn't gone. All are based on your word, your ways, with the foundation of Jesus in it all. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Closing Prayer:

Gracious Heavenly Father, we come before you with grateful hearts, having explored the hallmarks of a healthy church as outlined in Acts 2:37-47. We thank you for the wisdom and guidance found in your Word. As we seek to apply these principles to our lives and our local church, we humbly ask for your continued presence and guidance.

Fill us with your Holy Spirit that we may faithfully and passionately live out these hallmarks, transforming our church into a beacon of light and love in our community. Strengthen our commitment to gospel planting, teaching your Word, fostering fellowship, practicing the sacraments, engaging in prayer, and embodying your Spirit.

Enable us to be a unified and radically generous community, continuously worshiping you and bearing a good testimony to those around us.

May your grace, love, and peace abide with us always. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen. _

Benediction:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit rest upon us as we go forth from this gathering.

May we, as a healthy church, embrace the hallmarks laid out in Acts 2:37-47.

May our commitment to gospel planting, teaching your Word, fostering fellowship, practicing the sacraments, engaging in prayer, and embodying your Spirit move us to be a unified and radically generous community.

May our worship be continuous, both within the walls of this church and in the homes we inhabit.

And may our lives, filled with the favor of a good testimony, truly reflect your love, and impact the lives of those we encounter. In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen. _