

South Bay Church Plant Sabbath School

2 – The First Church

Connecting

What have you appreciated about churches you have attended?

If you could describe an ideal church, what would that look like?

Practices of the First Church

Acts 2:41

Why do you think so many were baptized at Pentecost?

“Under the training of Christ the disciples had been led to feel their need of the Spirit. Under the Spirit's teaching they received the final qualification, and went forth to their lifework. No longer were they ignorant and uncultured. No longer were they a collection of independent units or discordant, conflicting elements. No longer were their hopes set on worldly greatness. They were of “one accord,” “of **one heart and of one soul.**” [Acts 2:46](#); [4:32](#). **Christ filled their thoughts**; the advancement of His kingdom was their aim. In mind and character they had become like their Master, and men “took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” [Acts 4:13](#).”

How could Pentecost happen today?

Acts 2:42

What four activities did this first church earnestly pursue?

How is this similar to or different from the way churches are run today?

Of these four activities, which one do you think is the most neglected?

These four activities serve as a summary of the next five verses.

Acts 2:43

The word for “fear” here can also mean reverence or awe. What caused people to be amazed? Could this happen today? What are the potential dangers to a church of “wonders and signs”?

What are other ways in which a community can be impacted by the gospel today?

What would this look like in the area surrounding a church plant?

Acts 2:44-45

This unusual practice of communal property ownership does not seem to have continued long-term. However, the principle of it – freely sharing one’s wealth to help others in need – was very common in the New Testament. Read also Acts 2:32-36.

What would this principle look like today?

How might this principle apply to a new church plant?

Acts 2:46

What two kinds of gatherings are indicated here? How were they different?

Why do we need both kinds of gatherings?

What happened in the home gathering? Why was food important to this gathering?

Do you believe that the church needs small groups? What would that look like in a church plant?

Early Adventists practiced a unique kind of gathering called a “social meeting” (a concept borrowed from Methodism).

Uriah Smith describes a social meeting in which there was “spirited and soul searching testimony, the beaming eye, the voice of praise, the earnest and stirring exhortation and often the falling tear.” From research on social meetings, it appears that there were often short testimonies, singing, prayers, confession, and encouragement of others. The social meeting was characterized by a social and spiritual connection rather than a program. However, the social meeting gradually faded as Adventism grew and it was largely replaced by the prayer meeting.

What might a “social meeting” look like today? What are the pros and cons of this approach?

Acts 2:47

Why do you think praising God comes before having the favor of the people?

How can a church plant gain the favor of the people?

Why is it important that people were “added to the church” rather than just coming to faith in Christ?

How would you match the four summary practices with the five verses we just read (43-47)?

Many people today are busy. How could a church effectively incorporate these practices without burning out the church members? How does a church become seven-day Adventists rather than just a group that only meets for a program on Sabbath mornings?