

The Glorious Church

Ephesians 5:25-27

First Century Church Grew

- Acts 2:41 Three thousand
- Acts 4:4 Five thousand
- Acts 6:7 *"Number of disciples multiplied ... exceedingly."*
- Acts 9:31 *"So the church throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied."*
- Acts 11:24 *"... and much people was added unto the Lord."*
- Acts 18:10 *"... I have much people in this city"*
cf. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11

How Did The Church Grow And Maintain Its Distinctiveness?

Note: The 7 churches of Asia Minor.

- Writer: **Revelation 1:5-8; 17-19**
- Recipients:
 - Two churches received only commendation. Smyrna and Philadelphia.
 - One church received only condemnation. Laodicea.
 - Four churches received a mixed report of commendation and condemnation.
- **"I know"** is found in all seven. Revelation 2:1; 2:9; 2:12; 2:19; 3:1; 3:8; 3:15.

Qualities That Must Be Present

Works ... Revelation 2:19

Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them."

- The word of God was taught BY EVERY CHRISTIAN (Acts 8:4; cf. Matthew 28:18-19; 2 Timothy 2:2)

Qualities That Must Be Present

Keep the church morally pure.

- Ephesus. Revelation 2:2
- Thyatira. Revelation 2:20
- Sardis. Revelation 3:4
- We do not withdraw from people because they sin (cf. Romans 3:23; 1 John 2:1)
- We withdraw from people because they sin and refuse to repent. cf. 1 Corinthians 5; especially verse 6

Qualities That Must Be Present

Keep the church morally pure.

- Discipline Must Be Practiced:
 - To save the erring Christian, 1 Corinthians 5:5 (2 Corinthians 2:6).
 - To prevent shame & reproach. 1 Corinthians 5:6
 - Upholds Christ's church in the eyes of the world.
 - Helps us consider ourselves (Galatians 6:1).

Qualities That Must Be Present

Identify And Correct False Teachers.

- Examples:
 - Ephesus. Revelation 2:2
 - Pergamum. (compromise) Revelation 2:14
 - Philadelphia. Revelation 3:8

Qualities That Must Be Present

Identify And Correct False Teachers.

- Divine standard of truth. John 17:17; John 7:24; 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- Need for godly elders. Acts 20:29, 30; Titus 1:9
- Note the shepherds of Israel. Ezekiel 34

Qualities That Must Be Present

Perseverance.

- Examples:
 - Ephesus. Revelation 2:2-3
 - Pergamum. Revelation 2:13
- Devil makes life difficult.
 - Worthy adversary. 1 Peter 5:8
 - Must count the cost. Luke 14:25-28
 - Opposition may be from our own family. Matthew 10:34-39
- NOTE: The heroes of faith. Hebrews 11

Qualities That Must Be Present

Keeping the passion.

Example.

- Ephesus. Revelation 2:4-5
“Thou dost leave thy first love.”

Background.

- Faith in Christ. Ephesians 1:15
- Endured with boldness the teaching of the gospel. Acts. 19:8

Qualities That Must Be Present

Background.

- Publicly and from house to house. Acts 20:20
- Heard Paul daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years. Acts 19:9-10
- Investigated and exposed false teachers. Acts 19:13-20; Revelation 2:2
- Evangelized. *Acts 19:20 “All Asia heard the word of the Lord.”*

Qualities That Must Be Present

Maintain genuine love for one another.

Example:

- Thyatira. Revelation 2:19; cf. 1 Corinthians 13; 1 Peter 1:22-23; John 13:34-35

Qualities That Must Be Present

Keep a strong faith.

Example.

- Thyatira. Revelation 2:19

Necessity of faith. Hebrews 11:6

- Abraham. Genesis 15; Romans 4; James 2
- Paul. *“I believe God, that it shall be even so as it hath been spoken unto me.” Acts 27:25*

Qualities That Must Be Present

Stay alive.

Example.

- Sardis. Revelation 3:1 Good reputation, but dead.

Qualities That Must Be Present

What about Fifth Street East?

- Measure it by the quality of worship. John 4:24
- Measure it by the thirst for truth. Matthew 5:6
- Measure it by the young people and their knowledge of truth. Proverbs 22:6; Judges 2:10
- Measure it by what is taught. 2 Timothy 4:2ff
- Measure it by its leadership. Acts 20:28
- Measure it by our attitude toward each other. cf. Galatians 6:1

Conclusion

- Works, moral purity, identifying and correcting error, perseverance, keeping the passion alive, loving one another, strong faith, staying alive ... are necessary to make us what we want to be.
- The church belongs to Christ, because he bought it with his own blood. Acts 20:28
- It is important that we see true growth and greatness through His eyes.