

SIGNS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH **(Acts 2:42-47)**

- I. Healthy churches are measured by spiritual and not numerical terms.**
 - A. Some think that because a church is large in number it is healthy.
 - B. There is no place in the scriptures where this is a sign of health.
 - C. We read in Acts 2 that 3,000 souls were added to the Lord's church (Acts 2:41).
 - 1. He then told us the formula for healthy churches.
 - 2. Acts 2:42-47.
 - 3. Bible study, prayer, fellowship, praise and worship.
 - D. Whenever these things are present the congregation grows and is healthy.
 - E. It was the behavior of the early Christians that attracted the attention of non-Christians.

- II. Healthy churches follow biblical and not cultural ministry patterns.**
 - A. One of the great things about Christianity is that it is able to be followed in all cultures.
 - 1. There is no where that Christianity cannot be followed.
 - 2. It knows no borders.
 - B. The problem arises when Christians try to change Christianity to fit their surroundings and it loses its distinctiveness.
 - C. Christians are the ones in need of transformation, not Christianity (Romans 12:2).
 - D. A lot of congregations place emphasis on programs and certain ways of doing things, while the first century church focused on unity, generosity and evangelism.
 - 1. They simply preached the gospel (Acts 8:4).
 - 2. This is why the world was so interested.

- III. Healthy churches are based on theological and not sociological foundations.**
 - A. There are leaders in the church who have abandoned Bible doctrines for what is the most practical things in society.
 - 1. They don't look at cultural practices in light of scripture.
 - 2. They set goals for the congregation that society has and not the Bible.
 - B. Paul set biblical goals and how they can be achieved in the book of Ephesians.
 - 1. Nowhere in the book did the words "plateauing," "programs," or "statistics" come up.
 - 2. He did not talk about fund drives and membership drives.
 - C. Instead, Paul wrote about being humble and making spiritual progress with God and other Christians (Ephesians 4:1-6).
 - D. In a recent survey 1,000 people were asked why does the church exist.
 - 1. 89% said that it existed to meet their needs and the needs of their families.
 - 2. This has happened because we've gone away from doctrine and

focused on society.

IV. Healthy churches focus on a ministry and not a marketing model.

- A. The congregation that is healthy is concerned about what God thinks and not the community around us.
- B. We are to minister to the needs of others, not market the church as a place to be.
- C. Luke 19:10.
 - 1. This was the mission of Jesus and our mission as well.
 - 2. We are to minister to the greatest need of others, which is their need to get rid of sin.
- D. We are a protest movement, we protest against sin, not in a murmuring and disputing way, but in a way that bring glory and honor to God.

V. Healthy churches adopt scriptural not secular models of leadership.

- A. There is a great distinction between leadership as a noun and as a verb.
- B. Shepherds lead, they don't drive and they don't occupy a position.
- C. Leadership is not a possession, it is an exercise.
- D. When leadership is scriptural, scriptures like Hebrews 13:17 become vital.
 - 1. We don't need figureheads or chairmen.
 - 2. We need true shepherds in the Lord's church.
 - 3. Healthy congregations have them.

From a sermon by Mark Posey