

THE 4 MARKS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42)

The church in Acts didn’t need a microphone. It had no fancy pulpits, no internet, and no social media. But it had something that many ministries today have lost: it had the four hallmarks of a healthy church, and those hallmarks made hell tremble.

The question is: What are these characteristics that sustained a church full of power, miracles, and supernatural growth?

That’s not just theory—it’s a fundamental principle.

1. The Apostles’ Doctrine

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42a)

Didachē = teaching, instruction, doctrine.

They remained faithful to the teaching → they knew God.

The Bible says that they continued to follow the apostles’ teaching. No matter how noble Augustine, Luther, Calvin, John Wesley, or Arminius may be, the teaching is not about them, but about Paul, James, Peter, and John. The teaching comes from them—from the apostles.

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” (Acts 2:42 — ARA)

This speaks of pure teaching and revealed truth.

The teaching comes from the apostles—not from this person or that, no matter how noble they may have been. The teaching, the doctrine, comes from the apostles, and they are irreplaceable.

They had a solid foundation in Christ. The early church did not rely on emotion, strategies, or methods; it relied on principles. And principles never change.

“When we break the principle, the principle breaks us. When we uphold the principle, the principle upholds us.”

The doctrine was based on:



- in the life and work of Jesus;
- in the death of Jesus;
- in the resurrection of Jesus;
- in the teachings of Jesus (Hebrews 6:1–3).

It wasn't just an opinion or a hunch: it was guidance from above.

Today, many people want to see an angel's wing in a poorly painted wall and claim that there is something new or different. They want something solid, but they reject the foundation.

A church (ministry) without doctrine becomes a mess. A Christian without the Word becomes easy prey.

If you want to mature:

- Love the Word—when you read it, it cleanses you; when you study it, it fills you;
- Long live the Word.

Because a church grounded in doctrine will not fall.

2. Communion

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42b)

τῆ κοινωνίᾳ (tē koinōnia) — “to fellowship.” The Greek word is koinonia.

They remained united → they lived as one body.

Christianity is about relationships, it is about unity, it is the Body of Christ.

The Bible is neither sexist nor feminist. But there is a foreign element that says, “My body, my rules.” The body belongs to Christ. (Example: a little hand that's loose and detached—only in *The Addams Family*.)

The Bible says that they lived in harmony.

“Oh, how good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity!” (Psalm 133:1)

And here's a powerful secret: there is no life without fellowship (a spark that falls from the fire goes out).

Why were souls saved every day? Because there were:



- unit;
- quality;
- quantity.

Everyone learned their place, and the fights over positions and titles came to an end.

- When we leave a place, even an angel can turn into a demon.
- It's worse to be in the wrong job than to have no job at all.

In a healthy church, there is no strife: there is purpose. For this to be a reality, brokenness is the only way.

“A leader who doesn't take offense fosters unity.”

Our bodies are just looking for an excuse to get out of here.

Today, many ministries are not making progress—not because of a lack of anointing, but because of excessive division.

- People competing.
- People comparing themselves to others (comparison drove Lucifer out of heaven).
- People who just want to show off (putting themselves on a pedestal).

That grieves the Holy Spirit.

Want to see growth?

- Honor others.
- Walk together.
- Serve with a smile.

Because where there is fellowship, God pours out His blessings.

3. The Breaking of the Bread

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42)

“from the breaking of the bread” (tē klasei tou artou) — “from the breaking of the bread”.



- Klasis = to break, to shatter.
- Artos = bread.

They persisted in breaking bread → they kept Christ at the center.

An expression used to refer to communal meals (house churches, door-to-door visits, discipleship groups) and, especially, to the Lord's Supper.

Breaking bread has a dual meaning:

- meals shared among siblings;
- The Lord's Supper, in remembrance of Christ.

It represented vertical communion with God and horizontal communion with one's brothers and sisters.

Do this in remembrance of me. (1 Corinthians 11:25)

Application today

Unfortunately, many ministries today have lost their focus. They've become a stage. They've become entertainment. They've become a social club. They've forgotten about the presence.

They look to themselves, not to Christ. (They look to their own nature, not to the nature of Christ.)

4. Prayer

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42)

ταῖς προσευχαῖς (tais proseuchais) — “to the prayers”.

They persisted in prayer → they relied on God.

Listen to this: the devil isn't afraid of:

- empty religiosity;
- an appearance of purity;
- human understanding;
- degree in theology.



But he trembles when he sees a disciple on his knees.
Much prayer, much power. Little prayer, little power.
Because prayer isn't just for show—it's spiritual warfare.

The church in Acts:

- prayed constantly;
- humbled himself;
- He wept in the presence of God.

And so the sky answered.

Application

Want to win battles? Pray.

Want to see miracles? Pray.

Want to experience the supernatural? Pray.

Because a church that prays is neither defeated nor defeated.

Less talk—more action.

The four pillars of the church (Acts 2:42)

- doctrine;
- fellowship;
- break bread;
- prayers.

The results of these gatherings (Acts 2:43–47)

- fear of God;
- a manifestation of God's power;
- generosity;
- unity;



- praise;
- growth and conversions.

The church in Acts did not grow because of its structure—it grew because of these pillars.

5. The Foundation of Scripture

The Scriptures occupy a central place, especially within the phrase “the apostles’ doctrine.”

The apostles taught from the Old Testament and from Christ’s revelation. The apostolic doctrine itself later became part of the New Testament Scriptures.

Therefore, we could say that the Scriptures are the foundation upon which the four pillars rest.

One way to look at it:

Foundation: the Word of God

Key points:

- the apostles’ teaching;
- fellowship;
- break bread;
- prayers.

Without the Scriptures, doctrine becomes corrupted, fellowship loses its purpose, the Lord’s Supper becomes a mere ritual, and prayer becomes nothing more than religious observance.

Everything we know comes from the Scriptures

- Teaching comes from the Scriptures;
- Holiness comes through the Scriptures;
- The practice is based on the Scriptures.

What some call theory, the Bible calls practice. (Example: the pastor working and the pastor reading.)



The Scriptures are the foundation upon which the four pillars rest.

The four pillars were:

- doctrine;
- fellowship;
- break bread;
- prayer.

These pillars, these landmarks, are still relevant today.

If we want to experience what the book of Acts experienced, we need to return to what the book of Acts practiced.

God is not looking for modern ministries; He is looking for churches with a solid foundation.

Return to the pillars, and you will see the sky move again.

In practice:

- Without Scripture, doctrine becomes mere human opinion;
- Without the Scriptures, fellowship becomes merely a social relationship;
- Without the Scriptures, the breaking of bread becomes an empty ritual;
- Without the Scriptures, prayer can become mysticism or mere emotionalism.

The Word of God is the foundation that supports the four pillars of Acts 2:42.

That is why the Scriptures are the foundation of a healthy church. And Christ is the Cornerstone, according to Ephesians 2:20.

Conclusion

These four elements are part of a healthy, balanced church that is rich in faith: doctrine, fellowship, the breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper), and prayer.

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