

Church – Ogilvie

Ogilvie claims that Luke tells about an essential ingredient of a great church; an unlimited commitment to Christ and each other which is expressed in unrestrained loyalty. Not only to the Lord, but one another. The beloved physician gives us a moving, narrative description of this ingredient and then provides two illustrations, one to show what loyalty really is, and the other to alarm us as to what happens when it is lacking. The first is very positive and the second is equally negative. In Acts 5:11, Luke uses the word “church” for the first time. This passage (4: 32-35) is an excellent description of what the word meant to him. The Greek word used in 5:11 was *ekklesia*. Its original meaning ¹ was an assembly called together. *Ek* means “from” or “out of”; *klesis* is rooted in *kaleo*, “to call.” In Luke’s time the word was used for a body of citizens called together to discuss the affairs of a local community or the state. In the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, *eklesia* is the word selected to translate the Hebrew word for an assembly of the people of Israel. Simply stated, it means it means “called out and called together.” Originally, for the followers of Christ it meant an assembly of believers gathered together for prayer and fellowship. The idea developed of their being called out by the Lord, called into oneness in Him, and called into the world to serve. ²

For Paul, the favorite phrase was “the body of Christ.” His letters to the Ephesians and Corinthians express the powerful image. “The church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all” (Eph. 1;22-23). This is explained vividly in Corinthians 12. “For as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one Spirit ... Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually (1 Cor. 12:12-13, 27). ³

Paul goes on to explain the interdependence of the members of a body as an example of how Christians are to be mutually dependent on each other. And Luke, his faithful friend and companion, describes the birth and growth of the church as Christ’s body. We all called to be Christ’s people, called to communion with Him and each other, and together as the church to be the divine agent for the continuing ministry of His Spirit today. The expression, “Body life,” used often today, expresses the quality of the ingredients of how Christ lives and ministers through the parts of the Body equipped with the gifts of His Spirit. ⁴

There are four things that were part of the loyalty of the members of the Body to one another. They were of one heart, one soul, one blessing, all rooted in one great conviction. The heart, *kardia*, is used by Luke in the Hebrew sense of reason, emotions, and will. It stood for a person’s entire mental and emotional activity. Why did Luke add soul? The *psuche* is the life spirit in a person which can be touched and quickened and then filled by the Holy Spirit.

¹ Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator’s Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 111.

² Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator’s Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 112.

³ Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator’s Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 112.

⁴ Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator’s Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 112.

In essence what Luke is saying is that the early Christians had their minds, emotions, and wills open to each other, and the Spirit in each enabled oneness with the other. ⁵

⁵ Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator's Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 112.