

## COMMENTARY - ACTS - Ogilvie

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

### Who were the people gathered 47-48

It is a good article about the mixture of people who gathered in the upper room.

### Acts 4: 32- 35.

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<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup>

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

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<sup>1</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator's Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 111.

<sup>2</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator's Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 112.

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).<sup>3</sup>

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.<sup>4</sup>

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. 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 others.<sup>5</sup>

The one thing about which they were one heart and soul was the resurrected Christ who lived in them. That prompted them to know that all that they had and were belonged to Him. No one said that what “he possessed was his own but they had all things in common” (4:32). That’s a shocker for “what’s mine is

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<sup>3</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator's Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 112.

<sup>4</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator's Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 112.

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

mine – one stewardship sermon a year” Christians today. And yet, sharing our material blessings may be the least of our difficulties with the passage. These early Christians had “*all*” things in common. To be of one mind is to have the mind of Christ in common – not our ideas about Him, or even our carefully polished theology, but our heart and soul. That means our inner selves – our thinking, willing, feeling. We can be supportive of each other only if we know what’s going on inside each other. And the handle of the door to our lives is on the inside. <sup>6</sup>

### **Acts 5: 11**

#### **The story of Ananias, with the consent of his wife Sapphira**

In Acts 5:1-11, Luke presents another story which is about what’s happening with Ananias and Sapphira. In this story, the problem was that they pretended to give all the proceeds of the sale of the property. No one had said that they had to give anything. But the spirit of giving to the One who had given all for the believers was very strong. No one said that what he or she had was his or her own. Except Ananias and Sapphira! The deception was sin. In fact, we can’t lie to God, who knows everything anyhow. The dangerous thing is pretending with the fellowship of believers. ... It had been a positive blessing for Ananias and Sapphira to sell that property; they had something to give. This is the key for what this means for us. The Lord has been blessing us in more than what we are; God has made a very special, never-to-be-repeated of human personality in each of us. To hold back ourselves and what the Lord is doing in us is the greatest act of disloyalty – to God and to others. To withhold any portion of ourselves from [needy] people around us is to deny the gift given to us for them. <sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator’s Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 113.

<sup>7</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator’s Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 119.

We are stunned by Luke's account of the cardiac arrest both Ananias and Sapphira suffered when confronted. Peter did not cause it; they brought it on themselves. The fear of exposure was so drastic, their nervous system could not take it. They wanted to die as a way out. But we must not miss the point for us. We die spiritually each time we withhold love or forgiveness or sensitive caring [of needy ones].... Loyalty and the lack of it were both visibly, then frighteningly, exposed. There was a sick and suffering world that needed gospel from a church free of any holdouts. <sup>8</sup>

**20: 35: "It is more blessed to give than to receive"**

He quoted the Lord Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (v. 35). Growth in Christ takes place as we give Him away to others. That always involves giving ourselves and what we have to help them discover what we have found. In actuality, it is blessed both to receive and to give. In fact, we cannot give away what we have been unwilling to receive. The more we receive of Him, the more we have to give of what people really need –love, forgiveness, and lasting care. <sup>9</sup>

[Volunteers who cook for the homeless on weekly basis confess that they are more blessed than what they give. People experience blessing in many different ways, not necessarily in material but .... Rockefeller blessed with healing with much long extended life. It is medically proven as research result reported in Body/Mind/Health .....

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<sup>8</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator's Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 120.

<sup>9</sup> Lloyd J. Ogilvie. *The Communicator's Commentary - ACTS* (Waco, TX. Word Inc., 1983), 292.