

Sunday Morning Message

May 5, 2024 (Edited from a Message Preached on April 29, 2012)

The Miracle Gro Church

Topic – Soulwinning and Revival; Pentecost; the Early Church; Overview of Acts 2

Text – Acts 2

Congregational Reading – Acts 2:40 - 42

Introduction

Illustration – Miracle Gro is a brand of fertilizer that has been known to produce some wonderful results in plants. The stuff really works.

In Acts 2, we see a small group of confused and somewhat cowardly men and women who are literally transformed into a powerful group of preachers that literally turn the world upside down for the Lord Jesus Christ. As these 1st century Christians boldly proclaim the gospel of the Lord, the Lord begins to grow this church. It was as if God was pouring out some spiritual Miracle Grow from Heaven.

Consider these verses from the Book of Acts:

Acts 1:12 – 15 – We have the disciples of the Lord in the upper room waiting for the promise of the Comforter – the Holy Ghost of God.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." - (Acts 2:41)

"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." - (Acts 2:47)

In Acts 3 & 4, Peter is preaching again in the temple:

"Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." - (Acts 4:4)

"And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)" - (Acts 5:14)

In Acts 5, the religious leaders are pretty upset with this church because they had filled Jerusalem with their doctrine:

"Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." - (Acts 5:28)

Could it be said of Jersey Shore Baptist Church that we have filled Galloway Township with our doctrine?

"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." - (Acts 5:42)

In Acts 7 & 8, persecution comes:

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." - (Acts 8:4)

In Acts 9, one of the main persecutors – Saul – was gloriously saved, which caused much of the persecution to stop – at least for a while.

"Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied." - (Acts 9:31)

"But the word of God grew and multiplied." - (Acts 12:24)

"And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;" - (Acts 17:6)

"And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks." - (Acts 19:10)

So, from 120 in an upper room in Jerusalem, we see this small church grow in a very short time into many churches with multitudes of baptized believers all over the known world.

This morning, I would like to go back to our text – back to where it all began and look at the ingredients that went into this Miracle Grow Church. What did this church have that perhaps our church lacks? What would we need to have to see the kind of result that this early church saw?

I. The Power of the Spirit of God (vs. 1 – 13)

Notice in v 4 that these believers were all filled with the Holy Ghost.

We believe that when a person trusts Christ as Savior, they immediately receive the Spirit of God, meaning the Holy Ghost enters in at salvation.

"That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise," - (Ephesians 1:12-13)

However, having the presence of the Spirit, and being filled with the Spirit are two different things. To be filled with the Spirit, we need to be yielded to the Spirit. It is not a

question of whether you have all the Spirit – the question is, does the Spirit have all of you.

1. You must desire Spirit Fullness

These believers were waiting in an upper room – praying. When was the last time we prayed for the filling of the Spirit of God.

2. You must deny the flesh.

"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." - (Galatians 5:16-17)

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." - (Hebrews 12:1-2)

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;" - (Ephesians 5:18)

3. You must detach from the world.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." - (1 John 2:15-17)

"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." - (2 Corinthians 6:17-18)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." - (Romans 12:1-2)

Have you ever experienced Spirit Fullness?

Are you filled with the Spirit of God right now?

These early church leaders were filled with the Spirit.

II. The Preaching of the Incorruptible Seed (vs. 14 – 41)

In Peter's message at Pentecost, he quotes from and explains three Old Testament passages: one from the Minor Prophet Joel (Joel 2:28 – 32); and two from the Psalms (Psalm 16:8 – 11; 110:1).

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." - (1 Peter 1:23)

A Miracle Grow Church has Spirit filled preaching and Spirit filled preachers.

Spirit-filled preaching is always from the Word of God.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."
- (2 Timothy 4:2-4)

Spirit-filled preaching always magnifies the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Preaching is from the Pulpit

The church has the privilege of proclaiming the doctrines of the Word of God. We do this through preaching and teaching. A good church will provide multiple opportunities for the preaching and teaching of the Word of God.

The church provides many opportunities for the Word of God to be preached and taught – both here at the church and out in the community (nursing homes, etc.)

Topical Messages

Textual Messages

Expository Messages

Sunday School classes for all ages

Discipleship training

Leadership training

Men's and Ladies Ministries

Someday – Bible Institute

2. Preaching is from the People

Bible doctrine needs to be taught in the churches by people who have been trained to teach and preach. However, all believers need to be Spirit-filled preachers of the gospel.

It is your responsibility as well as mine to tell everyone you know about the gospel – the good news – that Jesus died for the sins of the world.

III. The Presence of Singleness of Heart (vs. 42 – 47)

The Body of Christ is one – the local church must be one.

There needs to be unity – people need to be in one accord.

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;" - (Philippians 1:27)

Notice that this church:

Studied the Bible together – “they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine.”

They fellowshiped together – “and fellowship.”

Remembered the Lord’s Supper together – “and in breaking of bread.”

They prayed together – “and in prayers.”

They met each other’s needs – vs 44 – 45.

They praised the Lord together – “praising God.”

They assembled together often – “daily.”

They went soul winning together – “added ... such as should be saved.”

Oh, I guess we should add a fourth ingredient:

IV. A Passion for Souls

A church that is healthy; a church that is right will be passionate about seeing people saved. We need to corporately be proclaiming the gospel both at the church and within the community. Individually, you and I need to be sharing our faith in our homes; on the job; in our neighborhoods; with the people at the ballfields where our children are playing; and to our extended family members.

Conclusion

I understand that we would not be able to emulate everything about this early church. I know that they had some unique transitional gifts that we may not have available to us today; but we can have:

The Power of the Fullness of the Spirit of God

The Preaching of the Incorruptible Seed

The Presence of Singleness of Heart

A Passion for Souls – A Passion for Sharing the Gospel with People

And if we truly put these four ingredients into our church, then maybe God will give us a Miracle Gro Church as well.

I want our church to be alive and healthy – growing and fruitful.

Closing Illustration

Live churches' expenses are always more than their income; dead churches don't need much money!

Live churches have parking problems; Dead churches have empty spaces!

Live churches may have some noisy children; Dead churches are quiet as a cemetery.

Live churches keep changing their ways of doing things; Dead churches see no need for change!

Live churches grow so fast you can't keep up with people's names; In dead churches everybody always knows everybody's name.

Live churches strongly support world missions; Dead churches keep the money at home!

Live churches are full of regular, cheerful givers; Dead churches are full of grudging tippers!

Live churches move ahead on prayer and faith; Dead churches work only on sight!

Live churches plant daughter churches; Dead churches fear spending the money, time, and talent!

Live churches outgrow their Sunday School facilities; Dead churches have room to spare!

Live churches welcome all classes of people; Dead churches stick to their own kind!

Live churches' members read their Bibles and bring them to church; Dead churches' members seldom do!

Live churches' members enthusiastically support the ministries; Dead churches have no ministries--only functions!

Live churches' members look for someone they can help; Dead churches' members look for something to complain about!

Live churches' members reach out to share their faith in Christ; Dead churches' members don't have enough faith to share!

I want our church to be a live church – A Miracle Gro church.