

The Birthday of the Church

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Acts 1:14-2:4.

B. Many say the church is irrelevant today

II. The church is the most important body of any age.

A. It is the source and support of all realistic knowledge of earth.

B. The church is the body of Christ.

1. It is like a living organism.

2. It has the life of Jesus Christ.

C. The church is like a building. (Acts 2)

D. Both a building and a body are inhabited by a Person—this explains the central relationship of the church.

III. The foundation for the building.

A. The apostles discovered through the Scriptures that Judas had to be replaced among the original Twelve. (Psalm 69)

B. Qualifications: the person had to have been there the entire time and he had to witness the Lord's resurrection appearance.

C. Our faith is based upon fact, not legend.

D. The men cast lots to decide between two things being equal. (Proverbs 16:33)

E. Matthias was chosen as Judas's replacement.

F. The tasks of the apostles.

1. Pioneer.

2. Proclaim.

3. Pattern.

IV. The birth of the body.

A. It was on the Day of Pentecost.

1. Two loaves were to be baked.
2. They were symbols of the two bodies that the church was to be formed from the Jews and the Gentiles.
3. The loaves were baked with leaven symbolizing sin—the church is not perfect.

B. On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came.

1. He took 120 isolated individuals and made one out of them.
2. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was a demonstration that they were one. (I Corinthians 12)

C. Symbols characterizing what the body was supposed to be.

1. Wind. This was a symbol of invisible power.
2. Fire. This was a symbol of purification and passion.
3. Tongues. This was a symbol of edifying proclamation.

Application questions:

1. Explain the importance of the church's foundation.

2. How does the metaphor of a body picture the church?

3. Which characteristic of the church in the first century is most needed for the church today? Explain.
