

THE UNSTOPPABLE CHURCH – ENGAGEMENT

Acts 2:42–47 and 8:1-9 • August 29, 2021

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I. Acts 2:42-47 describes a healthy engaged church

- Devoted to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, Lord's supper and prayer
- Everyone was filled with awe...All the believers were together.
- They met in a large group (Temple courts) and small groups (house to house)
- Glad hearts, favor, and new Jesus followers added

A. God uses healthy practices to prepare his people

B. To unleash the Church's potential, God sometimes allows crisis.

We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself...But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God. — 2 Corinthians 1:8–9

All except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. — Acts 8:1

C. New leaders emerge and start using their gifts

Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. — Acts 8:4

D. Established leaders help train, equip and link these new leaders

Peter traveled from place to place, and he came down to visit the believers. — Acts 9:32

Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." — Acts 15:36

II. From Spectators to Imitators of Christ

You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. — 1 Thessalonians 1:6–7

III. The growth catalyst since the beginning

Jesus said: *In your going **make disciples** of all nations...and teach them to apply all that I have commanded you. — Matthew 28:19-20*

- The Reformation: Catechisms popularized
- The First Great Awakening: 1730 - 1740
 - Jonathan Edwards and John Wesley pioneered small groups and classes
- The Second Great Awakening: 1800 - 1840
 - Publishing and Christian Education
- The Third Great Awakening: 1860 - 1930
 - Campus ministry, men's and women's ministries
 - Outreach groups after the Flu pandemic
- The Fourth Great Awakening: 1950 -1970
 - Multiplication of discipleship, college ministry and mission "para-church" organizations staffed by the "Jesus People"

IV. How SCC is becoming an engaged, disciple-making church

- Small groups, Bible studies, seminars and ministry teams
- Intentional Growth Experiences (lasting 9-10 weeks)
 - Courageous Manhood starting September 14
 - Rooted and Restoring Rhythm – January 2022
 - Basic Beliefs – April 2022

*Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.
And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,
not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging
one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.* — Hebrews 10:23–25