Galatians 3:1-3 (Topical Study) – “Priorities”, Nov. 15, 2026

I. Welcome

A. Good morning. Ohaiyogozaimasu! It is good to be back with you all this morning. I’m looking forward to all the Lord has in store for us today and I hope that you all are as well.

1. *Welcome any visitors*.

B. At this time, let’s go ahead and dismiss our elementary aged children to their Sunday School classes.

C. This morning, we are going to take a break from our systematic study through the gospel of John and consider something I feel the Lord has placed upon my heart to share with you all.

1. Two weeks ago, I, along with a couple other guys here from the church went up to Tokyo for the annual Calvary Chapel Japan Senior Pastors and Leaders Conference.

a. This is an annual conference where many of the Calvary Chapel pastors from Japan and some of their leaders gather together for a time of fellowship, prayer, worship, and the study of God’s Word.

b. For me, it is something I look forward to each and every year.

c. This year, we had several guest speakers come from the States. One of them being Pastor Holland Davis who actually came back with us to Iwakuni and shared from the pulpit last week.

i. It was a great word from the Lord where Holland reminded us of the God we worship and serve and how there is no god like Him.

d. The theme of the conference we attended was “Having Begun in the Spirit” and was based out of Galatians chapter 3 vs. 1-3.

e. During the conference we were exhorted and encouraged to keep the course, to let God have His way in us and in the churches we serve. There was a definite emphasis upon sticking to the priorities.

i. The priority of being led by the Spirit of God and submitted to the Word of God. The priority of God’s love being demonstrated in everything that we put our hands to. The priority of abiding in Christ and remaining in close communion with Him.

ii. Our need to remain humble and teachable, dependent upon the Lord. It was a great conference and it got me thinking.

2. This last Friday, November 13th, marked for Calvary Chapel Iwakuni another year of service to this community. This church started off in the living room of Pastor Mike Silva 21 years ago, and has grown into the body we have today.

a. And the Lord has been so faithful to us. We have seen a lot of change through the years. I’d say that on average, we lose about a

third of our congregation each year thanks to the PCS season, but God is always faithful to bring new people along.

b. We've had different people step up to lead various ministries throughout the years; some of those ministries have continued and some have not. We've learned that ministries have seasons where God wants to move in certain ways and then those seasons come to an end. We've learned to trust the Lord and His leading and guiding through the years for the ministry He wants to do.

c. Throughout the constant change this church has experienced, the Lord has remained the same. He has been faithful to His people and to the promises of His Word. He has added to the church as He sees fit and has done some pretty amazing things through the years.

3. As some of you may know, Calvary Chapel Iwakuni is a non-denominational church that has its roots in the Jesus movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's.

   a. From this movement came the start of Calvary Chapel as a whole primarily through the ministry of a pastor named Chuck Smith.

   b. Pastor Chuck was someone who loved God, loved God's Word, and loved God's people. The church he pastored, Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, blossomed into a wonderful work of God's grace that eventually developed into over 1,800 different churches and ministries planted around the world.

   c. Pastor Chuck went home to be with the Lord in October of 2013, the same year my family and I moved to Iwakuni to continue the work began by Pastor Mike Silva here in Iwakuni.

   d. Since Pastor Chuck's passing the church he pastored, Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, has had a couple different pastors who have led that particular church in a different direction.

   e. Two weeks ago, while we were attending the Calvary Chapel Japan Pastors and Leaders conference the current pastor of Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa announced a departing from some of the distinctives that have been part of the Calvary Chapel movement ever since its founding.

   f. I didn't think to say much about it because I imagined that most of you were probably unaware of what was going on back in the States within the Calvary Chapel movement.

      i. I know and appreciate that many of you who call Calvary Iwakuni home, don't necessarily come from a Calvary Chapel background, but have chosen to plug in with us and grow where God has planted you during your time here in Iwakuni.

   g. So, I wasn't going to address any of the changes thinking that it wouldn't be something to reach us out here in Iwakuni.

h. So, I was a little surprised last week when I was approached by someone asking about our connection with Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa and whether or not we are in agreement with the new direction they are going.

i. Some people mistakenly think that Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa represents the whole of Calvary Chapel. That is not the case. Each Calvary Chapel is an independently run church that has their own autonomy to operate as the Spirit of God leads and guides.

j. Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa does not speak for us, nor are we in agreement with the new direction they are headed. We are going to continue to stick to the course and blueprint laid out for us within the pages of the Scriptures in our pursuit to love God and His people.

4. In consideration of the theme from our conference, the fact that we just marked another year of ministry here in Iwakuni, and the fact that some have wondered about the direction we are headed in, I felt led to look at some of the priorities that have defined us as a church through the years and will hopefully continue to define us as the Lord tarries.

D. This morning will be a topical message. I know it is different from what we normally do, but rest-assured we will be back in our study of the gospel of John next week, Lord willing.

E. For our time together I'd like to start off with the theme verses from this year's Calvary Chapel Japan conference and then branch out from their highlighting the various priorities we have developed as part of what we believe God would have for us as a church.

F. So, if you have your Bible with you this morning, we're going to start off in Galatians, but then we will be hitting a couple different key texts within the NT Scriptures that lay out some of the priorities that have made us who we are today. Open up your Bibles to Galatians chapter 3.

1. Within the book of Galatians, the apostle Paul has some harsh words for the church in chapter 3. And what I'd like to do is to read what Paul had to say and then launch from there into what I believe the Lord has to say for us.

2. Our launching point this morning is going to be Galatians 3 vs. 1-3. Galatians is a smaller book in the NT; one of Pauls' epistles. It is found after 1 & 2 Corinthians, but before Ephesians, Philippians or Colossians. Once you have found it, I'd like to invite you to rise to your feet in honor of God and His Holy Word.

3. The title of our study this morning is simply "**Priorities**". Follow along in your Bible as I read from mine. Paul writes the following to the church in Galatia… (*R & P*)

II. Intro;

A. The churches in the region of Galatia had a beautiful and wonderful beginning to them. We can read about their start in the book of Acts in

chapters 13 & 14 when Paul the apostle, along with his companion Barnabas, made their way into the region preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ and the grace of God.

1. They began much like most of us began our own walk with the Lord; by grace through faith, a genuine work of God's Holy Spirit.
2. But the churches in Galatia seemed to have turned away from the simplicity of their faith in Christ. They began with such great potential and hope, but as time went on, things began to change for them.
3. Foolishly, they had begun to turn from the simplicity of their faith in Christ. They began in the Spirit, as a beautiful work of the Holy Spirit, but they were ditching that way and looking to be made perfect through various works of the flesh.
4. As fallen human beings we have a tendency to lean upon our own flesh, to look to our own means. To take things of the Lord, and put our own personal touches upon them.
5. The churches in Galatia were started out as a beautiful work of God's Spirit. The Holy Spirit convicted them of their sin and they responded in simple faith, receiving the grace of God unto salvation.
6. But as they looked to grow and mature in their faith, they began to look to their own flesh, to their own means, to their own works, even looking back to the Law as a means of being perfected.
7. They were abandoning the simple truths that the church was founded upon. They were abandoning the work of the Spirit, and turning to the works of the flesh. And this is something that we need to be mindful of as well. None of us are beyond reproach and we can all easily be swayed to do the same.
    a. To abandon the Spirit and our reliance upon Him and instead, turn towards our own thoughts, our own ideas, our own plans. It's as if we look at our walk with the Lord and think that we have figured it all out and can take it from here.
    b. And what we usually end up doing is creating a big mess out of something that was so simple and so beautiful. We take something that was meant to bring freedom to our lives and we turn it into some sort of bondage God never intended it to be.

B. So, what I want to do this morning is to look back at the beginning of the church. The church began as a work of the Spirit; this is true of the churches in Galatia, the 1st century church in Jerusalem, and should be true of every other God-honoring church ever started.
    1. I want to look back and note just a few things that were taking place at the beginning of the church, and from that, look to develop an understanding of the priorities they had and how those priorities should still be the same priorities that move the church today.

2. We want to make sure that what began as a work of the Spirit, remains a work of the Spirit. We don't want to turn it into a work of the flesh or into something that isn't in accordance with the way in which God would have for us to continue as a church.

C. So, let's start in chapter 1 of the book of Acts where we will note a few things about the way in which the church began.

III. Acts 1:4-5, 8;

A. Take a look at Acts chapter 1 verses 4 & 5. *This is prior to Jesus' ascension up into heaven. He was gathered together with His disciples in Jerusalem and He gave them some very specific instructions that are paramount to the way we must follow*. (***READ***)

1. Jesus commanded His disciples to wait; to wait for the Promise of the Father, which we know to be the coming of the Holy Spirit.
2. Jesus had previously spoken to His disciples how it was necessary for Him to leave them, but how it was going to be to their advantage.
3. He said, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:" (**Jn. 16:7-8**)
4. In vs. 13 & 14 Jesus said, "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you." (**Jn. 16:13-14**)
5. The Holy Spirit was sent to the church to be a Helper. To lead us and to guide us into the truth, to ensure that all we do brings glory to Christ.
6. And this is the first priority I want to make note of for those of you who like to take notes. We must, as the church, **<u>wait upon the Holy Spirit</u>**.
7. We cannot move ahead of the Lord. We cannot get involved in things the Holy Spirit is not involved in. We must ensure that whatever we do, it is because of a direct result of the leading of the Holy Spirit.
8. We don't want to do anything that the Holy Spirit isn't leading us into doing.
    a. Its so very easy to get caught up into doing things, just to do them. Good things, things that are admirable, things that are God-honoring, things that we believe God would have us to do.
    b. But if the Holy Spirit isn't leading and guiding those activities, what it often amounts to is simply another work of the flesh. Even good things, can be works of the flesh if not led by the Holy Spirit.
    c. So, we must make sure that we are heeding the leading of the Holy Spirit. That we wait upon Him. That when He moves, we move in

accordance with Him. And when He doesn't move than we don't move either.

d. That means we have to learn to resist doing things just to do them. We have to learn to say, "no" to certain people, certain activities, certain ministries; because the Lord simply isn't leading in that particular direction.

9. There are all sorts of things I wish we could do as a church. There are works that could be done, ministries that could be started, steps of faith that could be taken. But if the Holy Spirit isn't leading us and guiding us in those things, then we run into the danger of those things becoming works of the flesh, rather than genuine works of the Spirit.

10. Having begun in the Spirit we must continue in the Spirit.

B. Take a look at verse 8 where we see another important reminder of our need for the Holy Spirit and the way in which we must go. (***READ***)

1. The disciples were instructed to wait upon the Holy Spirit so that they may be empowered by the Holy Spirit.

2. As a church we want to make sure that whatever we are doing is not only being led by the Holy Spirit, but it is also being **empowered by the Spirit**.

3. We trust that where the Spirit of God is moving, the same Spirit of God will also empower. We don't want to operate in our own strength. We want to operate in the strength of the Holy Spirit.

4. When we find ourselves operating in our own strength we will come to find that the work of the ministry is draining; it is unfulfilling, and it is a drag. We must be empowered by the Holy Spirit.

5. You will never experience burnout when you are being led by and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Because even in our weakness, His strength is perfected.

6. The Lord told Paul that His grace was sufficient, that God's strength is made perfect in weakness and that's why Paul was able to write, "When I am weak, then I am strong." (**2 Co. 12:10b**)

7. Paul was empowered by the Lord Himself. And we too must operate in the strength and power that is made available to us through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

C. Here in Acts 1:8 Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would empower us to be witnesses, which leads me to another priority we must consider found in the book of Matthew. Turn with me to Matthew chapter 28.

IV. Matthew 28:18-20;

A. Read with me verses 18-20. This is a very well-known portion of Scripture commonly referred to as the Great Commission. Jesus said these words

to His disciples before ascending to heaven and leaving them to wait upon the Holy Spirit. (***READ***)

1. The Great Commission involves different actions, but the overarching mandate, the verb that is written in the imperative mood, which means it is a commandment, is the verb hear translated “make disciples”.
2. The Great Commission is to make disciples. Let me repeat that: The Great Commission *is* to make disciples. The Great Commission does not *involve* making disciples, *it is* making disciples. I think that this is very important to highlight.
    a. Some have mistakenly come to believe that the Great Commission is simply to go and proclaim the gospel. That telling someone the gospel is all you have to do in order to fulfill the Great Commission.
        i. Telling someone the gospel is great, but it is only one aspect of the Great Commission. Jesus’ command was not to simply share a message.
    b. Nor was the Great Commission a command to make converts. If you do share the gospel and the Holy Spirit convicts someone and they respond to the gospel and come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ; that is an incredible thing.
        i. It’s a great thing to be a part of. But that is not the fulfillment of the Great Commission.
3. The fulfillment of the Great Commission is **to make disciples**. This was what Jesus commissioned His own disciples to do; it was the overarching priority of their ministry and what He had prepared them for.
    a. Disciples are defined in my lexicon as “an adherent who accepts the instruction given to him and makes it his rule of conduct”.
        i. A disciple of Jesus Christ not only accepts the teachings of Jesus Christ, but lives his or her life governed by those teachings. Their conduct, the things they do and say in life are ruled by Christ.
4. Jesus listed two things we are to do in completing this incredible task of making disciples.
    a. Number 1, we are to baptize disciples in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
        i. This speaks of water baptism which we do as an outward demonstration of our faith. It is symbolic of our belief in and association with, the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.
        ii. Baptism is a beautiful picture of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, but it is also a picture of our own death, burial, and resurrection into new life.
        iii. The old person is dead and buried and we are raised up out of the water as a picture of our new life in Christ. The Scriptures

teach us that if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (**2 Co. 5:17**)

b. So, we are to baptize disciples. Number two, we are to teach disciples to observe all the things Jesus commanded.

i. Here at Calvary, we place a great significance upon the teaching of the Word of God as part of our duty to fulfill the Great Commission and make disciples of Jesus Christ.

ii. Added to our importance of Bible teaching is the style in which we teach the Bible. We want to teach you all of His commandments.

iii. That is why we teach chapter by chapter, verse by verse. We don't want to leave anything out. Jesus said to teach them to observe ***all things*** that I have commanded.

iv. And so, we don't pick and choose what we want to teach upon. We just keep going verse by verse and eventually we'll cover it all.

5. There's something else I want to point out about the Great Commission to make disciples: The Great Commission is for all of us.

a. We are ***all*** called to be doing our part in completing the Great Commission. Each of us should either be in a position of being discipled or discipling someone else.

b. Discipleship doesn't have to be something formal like a 10-week intensive study course with tons or reading and homework.

c. Primarily, discipleship is relationship based. Disciple the people that you hang out with. Or seek discipleship from brothers or sisters that you hang out with.

d. Do a weekly lunch prayer meeting or small Bible study. Share your life with others. Pour into them and let others pour into you.

e. Our men's group is currently going through a discipleship series where we have partnered up with other men to go through a very simple handbook. We meet regularly to discuss the Lord and the things God is showing us. It isn't difficult.

f. Discipleship doesn't have to be rocket science. Just determine to invest in someone else. Come alongside them and help them grow in their walk with the Lord and encourage them to live their live according to the Lord and His Word.

B. I want to take a look at one more portion of Scripture that I believe highlights the priorities that the church began with and must continue in.

V. Acts 2:42-47;

A. Turn back to the book of Acts chapter 2 and take a look at verses 42-47. Dr. Luke, in writing the book of Acts, from time to time will give summary

statements regarding the church; generalizations of what the 1st century church was experiencing and/or how God was moving and using them. This portion is one of those summary statements describing the priorities within the 1st century church and how God was leading them. (***READ***)

B. Note with me from this text that there were four main activities that characterized what the 1st century church did on a regular basis when it first began.
   1. The early church continued steadfastly in one, the apostle's doctrine; two, fellowship; three, in the breaking of bread; and four in prayers.
      a. As we look at these four activities this morning it's important to note how the Church did them. The text informs us that they "continued steadfastly" in all four of these activities. Which means they did them persistently, unwaveringly, totally devoted to them as a way of life.
   2. Let's take a look at each one of these activities and gain an understanding of what that looked like for the 1st century church and what it should look like for us as part of the 21st century church.

C. They continued steadfastly in "the apostles' doctrine";
   1. What is doctrine? Doctrine defined by Merriam Webster is something that is taught; usually a principle, or position, or the body of principles, in a branch of knowledge or system of belief.
   2. Biblical doctrine is a body of beliefs centered on the Bibles' details concerning God, Christ, humankind, and the church.
   3. The apostles' doctrine, therefore, implies what the apostles were teaching the early Christians.
      a. Just prior to this text, Peter's teaching on the Day of Pentecost is recorded for us.
         i. He spoke in his sermon to the crowd about the prophets, about Jesus and his ministry on earth, about his death upon the cross, his resurrection, and his redemptive power over our sinful lives.
         ii. He taught of repentance, baptism, the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
         iii. He exhorted all to be saved and some 3,000 were added to the church that day.
      b. We know of Matthew's teachings found in his own gospel record.
         i. How he was constantly quoting from the Old Testament scriptures, to show that Jesus was the Messiah that the Jews had been waiting for.
         ii. Matthew focuses in on Jesus as King and teaches about His kingdom.
      c. We also know of the teachings of John as we've been studying lately on Sunday mornings.

i. John set out to show that Jesus was the son of God.

ii. He tells us of God's great love for us and builds upon the deity of Christ.

d. We have the apostle Paul's teachings as well through all the various epistles he wrote.

4. Where can we find all these teachings? Well it's basically the entire New Testament. The apostles' doctrine is found within the pages of our New Testament.

a. And since we know that the apostles often quoted the prophets, and drew from the accounts of Old Testament figures such as Abraham, David, and Solomon, we can conclude that the apostles' doctrine would include Old Testament teachings as well.

b. Therefore, the apostles' doctrine refers to the entirety of the Bible; it is the Word of God.

c. So when it states that the early church continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, what its saying is that the early church had an insatiable appetite for the Word of God.

5. As we look at the example of the church when it first began, we note here that **the study of God's word** was paramount.

6. God's Word was a priority in the early church and it needs to be a priority in today's church as well. God still places a high priority upon the study and teaching of His Word.

D. Not only was the early church unwavering in their study of the apostle's doctrine, but they were also devoted to fellowship;

1. The word here for fellowship is *koinonia*. The word means an intimate sharing of one's self with another.

2. It's a word that shows the care, love, and support that we should show and have towards one another.

3. For the early church we read in verses 44-45 just how this played out in their lives. (***READ***)

a. Now some of you may be thinking that sounds a lot like communism. But don't be deceived, this style of living was totally voluntary, temporary, and especially motivated by love.

b. We know for sure that it was not required because of what Peter says in chapter 5 when Ananias tried to lie to the Holy Spirit, Peter said in regards to the money received from the selling of some of his land, "while it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." (**Acts 5:4**)

c. The selling and giving of material possessions was a voluntary thing, it was not required of anyone. It was a simple desire to show love and support to those who were in need.

4. The same principle is true for us today. It's not about selling all you own and giving it all to charity, but rather the principle of caring for others. A since of brotherhood amongst the body of believers.
5. Fellowship was a vital part of the early church. To remove it would have been disastrous for the life of the body. And the same is true today. It is so important to the life of the church that we **have fellowship one with another**.
6. The church, you and I, should gather together often and have a genuine love for one another that looks to help in times of need.
7. Sometimes that need is financial, sometimes it's emotional, it can be social, most of the time it's spiritual.
    a. Christ said about the church and his disciples that the world will "know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another." (**Jn 13:35**)
8. And my hope is that this could be said of our church family. That we genuinely love one another and look out for one another. That people would come to our church and know and sense the love of God in this place demonstrated through each of you.

E. The church was steadfast in the apostle's doctrine, fellowship, and thirdly in the breaking of bread. Now the breaking of bread can be understood as two things.

1. First and foremost, the breaking of bread was simply their regular meals. In verse 46 it tells us that the early church went from house to house breaking bread, eating their food with gladness and simplicity of heart.
    a. Do you know what happens when you invite someone over to your house and share a meal with them? You share your life with them. You talk together, you pray together, you laugh together, if you come to my house you usually play a board game together.
    b. When we are willing to open up our home and break bread with our brothers and sisters in Christ it creates a wonderful opportunity for fellowship.
        i. We've just highlighted the importance of fellowship and breaking bread is a great means to fellowship.
    c. The first century church placed an emphasis on getting together and breaking bread. And I think we ought to emulate that.
        i. Through the years we have sometimes been referred to as Calorie Chapel because we like to get together and break bread with one another.

ii. We routinely try to plan opportunities for the body to get together for potlucks at the church or picnics at the park.

iii. There's a reason we do that. It's not because it's easier than going to get something on your own on Sunday afternoon. I know that it takes a little extra planning and some extra work, but it's worth it. It's a great means to fellowship and get to know one another, to love on one another.

d. When the early church gathered together for meals they were often called "agape feasts" or "love feasts"

i. They were meant to draw the body together and were commonly followed up with the observance of communion, which leads us to our second understanding of the breaking of bread.

2. Secondly, the breaking of bread is understood to be the partaking of communion.

a. It makes sense as you look at the instruction that were given by Paul in regards to reminding the church about the institution of Communion.

b. In **1 Corinthians 10:16** Paul writes, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

c. Also, in the same letter to the Corinthians Paul declares that "as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes." (**1 Co. 11:26**)

d. These love feasts were times when the church would gather together for their common meal. Bread and wine were common food at a Jewish table, and at the end of these love feasts, they would pause to remember the Lord by observing Communion.

3. And so we see a two-fold application here. Not only was **breaking bread** an opportunity for fellowship for the believers, but it also spoke of partaking of communion and remembering what Christ did for us all.

F. Moving on, we note that lastly the church continued steadfastly in prayer.

1. Prayer is our lifeline to the Lord. It is how we speak to our Creator, our Savior, and Lord.

2. Prayer may have been the fourth and last thing mentioned in the practices of the church, but it wasn't fourth in priority.

a. In Acts chapter 6 the apostles didn't think it was best to have themselves waiting on tables so that they could give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the Word. (**Acts 6:4**)

b. Prayer was a top priority in the early church. Prayer and the Word!

3. It's interesting to me that prayer and the Word were the most important things in the church. It's interesting because prayer and the Word are the best means of communication we have with the Lord.
    a. It's really beautiful, the way the Lord has set it up. He has given us His written Word, His will for our lives; He speaks, most often, through His Word.
    b. And how do we respond to Him? Through prayer!
    c. May I suggest to you that the reason the Word and prayer had top priority within the early church is because they understood this was how the Lord was going to continue their relationship with Him.
4. Communication is one of, if not the, most important thing in relationships.
    a. A healthy relationship is one that is filled with open and honest communication.
    b. That goes for our relationships with our spouses, with our family, with our friends, and most definitely with our Lord.
5. So we see here that the church needs to be involved in prayer, in open communication with the Lord.
6. Here at Calvary Iwakuni we have various opportunities to gather for group prayer.
    a. We gather on Wednesday nights and spend some time in prayer and small groups after our time in the Word.
    b. We have a prayer meeting that meets every other Thursday morning here at the church, where we lift up the body of Christ by name and pray for each of you.
        i. We've made prayer cards for those of you who have been willing to send us a picture of you or your family. It has a picture of you on one side and your names on the backside.
        ii. We pray for you even if we don't know what is going on in your life, we just ask God to be active on your part, to be leading and guiding you and moving through you.
        iii. By the way, if you haven't sent in a family picture for us and you'd like to, you can simply send your photo to us with your name in an email to prayer@calvaryiwakuni.com and we'll make you a card and add you to our list.
7. **Prayer is something we desperately need** in our church. This is a priority we cannot neglect. It is the way for us to communicate with our Lord and continue to grow our relationship with Him.

G. In closing, I want to note the results that came from the church that was led by the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit, that was all about making disciples,

and who continued steadfastly in the word, in fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayer.

1. This is what we hope to see when we follow in the same way.
    a. The fear of the Lord came upon every soul (**vs. 43**).
    b. Many wonders and signs were done through the apostles (**also vs. 43**).
    c. The church cared for each other and looked to the needs of others (**vs. 44-45**).
    d. The church was unified in one accord (**vs. 46**).
    e. Praise was given to the Lord (**vs. 47**).
    f. The church found favor with all people (**also in vs. 47**).
    g. And last but not least the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved (**again in vs. 47**).
2. It is God's job to add to the church; not ours. He knows how to build His church. And He is perfectly capable of doing so.
3. Our responsibility is to simply be led by the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit, to faithfully make disciples, to get into His Word, to fellowship together, to break bread together and to pray together.
    a. And we will leave the results in God's hands. We'll let Him add or take away as He sees fit.
    b. We want this work that began as a work of the Spirit to continue to be a work of the Spirit, not a work of the flesh.
    c. We want to be led by the Lord and empowered by the Lord. We want to focus upon the priorities God has given to us as a church.
    d. And we'll entrust God with the rest, trusting Him for great things, because He is a great God. Amen? Amen. Let's pray.