



Part 1: Simple Beginnings

Pastor Grant Fishbook
September 3 & 4, 2011

The Historical Lead-up

- Jesus does ministry for about 3 ½ years – miracles, teaching, serving, gathering
- Jesus goes to Jerusalem where He is crucified, buried and resurrected
- Jesus rallies His followers and gives them the Great Commission

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. – *Matthew 28:19-20*

Key Elements of the Great Commission

Go

Make disciples

Baptize

Teach

Acts 1:4-8

"Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. ⁵ For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

⁶ Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

⁷ He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Key Elements for the Beginning of the "Church"

Wait

Receive the Holy Spirit

Witness

Simple Truths

The church began as a movement

We are the result of the original church actually moving

We are still called to move, because movements move

(Continues on back)

Twelve years ago I dreamed of a gathering of people where:

- The name of Jesus was used often and without apology
- It was OK to not be OK, but it wasn't OK to stay not OK
- The people who gathered cared more about someone else's eternal need than for their earthly want
- The church existed more for the people they were trying to reach than for the people they were trying to keep
- Gossip was not normal
- There was no room for church politics because we saw it as a glorious waste of time
- The Bible was held up as absolute truth in a relative world
- People accepted Jesus, were baptized, and the transformation was obvious
- People did life together in a way that wasn't weird
- Sin was sin and it was named and called out within the context of God's grace
- The impact was felt in small villages on the other side of the world
- Orphans and widows could find help and a home
- You could actually have an honest and hard conversation without the fear of being thrown away or abandoned
- The pastor could be a person too
- People got to be in the game (not just watch it from the sidelines) and that their approach to life was bold and fearless, and that they lived as if God was actually God
- Failures were seen as growth moments and not as fatal or final
- People believed the best of their leaders and that they assumed that every decision was made with prayer and fasting while seeking God for direction
- Humility was normal and pride was distasteful
- Regular people were empowered to dream big dreams and actually accomplish them
- The biggest question was not whether or not I liked the worship but whether or not Jesus liked it
- People actually believed that it was more blessed to give than to receive so they would give of their time, their talent and their resources; not because they had to but because they got to
- We could experience intimacy and impact in the same church

Next Steps

Be here for the whole journey. This sermon series is foundational to how we will be "doing church" this year and in our future. I encourage you to **make every effort to be here each week** during the series so we call all get on the same page.

Baptism. If you've accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, take a cue from the Early Church who simply "believed and were baptized" (Acts 18:8). Baptism classes happen September 17 & 18, followed by baptism in all weekend services on September 24 & 25. Details online and in today's program.

Small Group Questions



- 1) What was the greatest accomplishment of your summer?
- 2) What do you think of when you hear the word "church?"
- 3) Put yourself in the original group of 120 followers of Jesus. Think about everything they had seen and experienced before Jesus up and leaves. If you were in the room in Jerusalem while they were "waiting," what would you have been thinking? Feeling? Doing?
- 4) What are you doing to obey the Great Commission today?
- 5) Where are you seeing spiritual movement in your own life?
- 6) How can we pray for you today?