

What Did the Early Church Experience?

The New Testament church was challenged and expected to possess the qualities of faith, hope and love. These virtues were developed by providing four vital experiences in the church.

Vital Experiences of the Church

1. Learning Experiences from God's Word.

"Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. ⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching.... ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts."
- Acts 2:41,42,46

How do we have learning experiences from God's Word?

A) Preaching God's Word.

*"In those days when **the number of disciples was increasing**, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, **"It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables.** ³ Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and **will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.**"*
- Acts 6:1-4

"So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith." - Acts 6:7

B) Teaching God's Word.

C) Singing God's Word.

2. Relational Experiences With Each Other.

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship.... ⁴⁶ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."
- Acts 2:42, 44-47

3. Relational Experiences With God.

"They devoted themselves to... to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."
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4. Witnessing Experiences With Others.

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"On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria."
- Acts 8:1

"Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.."
- Acts 9:31

The Biblical Process for God's Church to Grow:

1. We begin to glow. - When we become filled with the Word and the Holy Spirit.
2. We begin to go. - Witnessing by our lives & our words
3. We begin to grow. - People will come to faith in Jesus

Closing Thought: When the church is provided these four vital experiences, a spirit of sacrifice and unselfishness prevails.
(Acts 2:15)

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