

# *Welcome To Open Bible Hour*

*Thank you for joining us on this Lord's Day!*

*Our desire is that you may grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ as we pursue an in-depth study of the first 2 chapters of Acts.*

*If you have a prayer request, for which you would like us to pray, please fill out a prayer sheet at the back table and give to Lyle.*

**Our website: [OpenBibleHour.net](http://OpenBibleHour.net)**



# “THE CHURCH AT ITS BEST”

Acts 2:43-47

February 5, 2012

## **Acts 2:43-47**

43 Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.

44 And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;

45 and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

# **10 responses:**

1. **“Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe”**
2. “many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles.”
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“awe” - a feeling of amazement, astonishment, fear, respect, and wonder.

## **Phil 2:12**

12 work out your salvation with fear and trembling;

### ***When in the presence of God the Bible tells us:***

- Some people tremble in terror, falling with their faces to the ground.
- Some people weep in mourning.
- Some people are filled with great joy.
- Some people are reduced to silence.
- Though the responses differ, one reaction we never find is boredom.
- It is impossible to be bored in the presence of God, if you know that He is there.

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## **2 Cor 12:12**

12 The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.

## **Heb 2:3-4**

3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,

4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.

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## **Acts 4:32-35**

32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.

33 And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.

34 For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales

35 and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need.

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## **John 17:11**

11 "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, that they **may be one** even as We are.

## **Phil 2:1-2**

1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,

2 make my joy complete by being of the **same mind**, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

## **Eph 4:11-13**

11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

13 until we all attain to the **unity** of the faith

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## **1 Peter 4:9**

9 Be hospitable to one another without complaint.

## **2 Cor 8:14-15**

14 at this present time your abundance being a supply for their need, so that their abundance also may become a supply for your need, that there may be equality;

15 as it is written, "HE WHO gathered MUCH DID NOT HAVE TOO MUCH, AND HE WHO gathered LITTLE HAD NO LACK."

## **1 John 3:16-17**

16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

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# **Ps 148:1-6**

1 Praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord from the heavens;

Praise Him in the heights!

2 Praise Him, all His angels;

Praise Him, all His hosts!

3 Praise Him, sun and moon;

Praise Him, all stars of light!

4 Praise Him, highest heavens,

And the waters that are above the heavens!

5 Let them praise the name of the Lord,

For He commanded and they were created.

6 He has also established them forever and ever;

He has made a decree which will not pass away.

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## **The philosopher Aristides early in the second century: (defense of Christians before Hadrian)**

Now the Christians, O King, by going about and seeking, have found the truth. For they know and trust in God, the Maker of heaven and earth, to whom there is no other god as companion. From him they received those commandments which they have engraved on their minds, and which they observe in the hope and expectation of the world to come.

For this reason they do not commit adultery or immorality; they do not bear false witness, or embezzle, nor do they covet what is not theirs. They honor father and mother, and do good to those who are their neighbors. Whenever they are judges, they judge uprightly. They do not worship idols made in the image of man. Whatever they do not wish that others should do to them, they in turn do not do; and they do not eat the food sacrificed to idols.

Those who oppress them they exhort and make them their friends. They do good to their enemies. Their wives, O King, are pure as virgins, and their daughters are modest. Their men abstain from all unlawful sexual contact and from impurity, in the hope of recompense that is to come in another world.

As for their bondmen and bondwomen, and their children, if there are any, they persuade them to become Christians; and when they have done so, they call them brethren without distinction.

They refuse to worship strange gods; and they go their way in all humility and cheerfulness. Falsehood is not found among them. They love one another; the widow's needs are not ignored, and they rescue the orphan from the person who does him violence. He who has gives to him who has not, ungrudgingly and without boasting. When the Christians find a stranger, they bring him to their homes and rejoice over him as a true brother. They do not call brothers those who are bound by blood ties alone, but those who are brethren after the Spirit and in God.

When one of their poor passes away from the world, each provides for his burial according to his ability. If they hear of any of their number who are imprisoned or oppressed for the name of the Messiah, they all provide for his needs, and if it is possible to redeem him, they set him free.

If they find poverty in their midst, and they do not have spare food, they fast two or three days in order that the needy might be supplied with the necessities. They observe scrupulously the commandments of their Messiah, living honestly and soberly as the Lord their God ordered them. Every morning and every hour they praise and thank God for his goodness to them; and for their food and drink they offer thanksgiving.

If any righteous person of their number passes away from the world, they rejoice and thank God, and escort his body as if he were setting out from one place to another nearby. When a child is born to one of them, they praise God. If it dies in infancy, they thank God the more, as for one who has passed through the world without sins. But if one of them dies in his iniquity or in his sins, they grieve bitterly and sorrow as over one who is about to meet his doom.

Such, O King, is the commandment given to the Christians, and such is their conduct. (The Apology of Aristides, translated by Rendel Harris [London: Cambridge, 1893])

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# **Application:**

1. There is not 1 negative about the church in these 5 verses.
2. The Church has lost the sense of the presence of God.
3. The Church wasn't awed because of its buildings, programs, or anything reflecting any human ability but by the presence of the Spirit of God in the life of the Church.
4. There is nothing like adversity, crisis, or great need to bring people together.
5. If the Church today is to experience the 10 responses in verses 43-47, it must first commit itself to the 4 pillars in verse 42.