

ACTS 2

CHURCH: BY GOD'S DESIGN

LEGAL SYSTEM: THE LAW OF PRECEDENT

- ▶ One of the principles that underpin common law
- ▶ Binding authority on lower courts and requires judges to follow rulings and determinations of higher courts
- ▶ Establishes principle or rule for similar cases and facts

BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION: THE LAW OF FIRST OCCURRENCE

- ▶ Begin with a study of first occurrence in order to gain the fundamental inherent meaning of that truth or doctrine
- ▶ As there is movement of time and development from original to more complex, the fundamental and original principles remain the same

THE CHURCH THAT FOLLOWS GOD'S DESIGN—

(1) The church that follows God's design prays continually for power to be effective in witness - 1.14; 2.1

The components of witness:

- ▶ Proclaiming the gospel of Jesus (Matthew 24.14)
- ▶ Living as “Spirit-ual” people (Galatians 5.16-25)
- ▶ Loving one another visibly and intensely (John 13.34-35)
- ▶ Being in complete unity and peace (John 17.23; Romans 15.5-6)

THE CHURCH THAT FOLLOWS GOD'S DESIGN—

(1) Prays continually for power to be effective in witness - 1.14; 2.1

- ▶ Jesus commanded his disciples to pray for power - Luke 24.46-49; Acts 1.4, 8
- ▶ The disciples understood Jesus' directive as the ongoing necessity for their effective witness - Acts 1.14; 2.1; 4.29-31

THE LAW OF FIRST: Our effectiveness as followers and witnesses of Christ depends on prayer—much prayer.

THE CHURCH THAT FOLLOWS GOD'S DESIGN—

(2) Reflects His plan for including all ethnicities around us - 2.5-11

Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken.

Utterly amazed, they asked: “Aren’t all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?”

—Acts 2.5-8

THE FIRST CHURCH, ESTABLISHED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, INCLUDED—

- ▶ Iranians of multiple ethnicities
- ▶ Iraqis, Kuwaitis, Kurds
- ▶ Israelis, Syrians
- ▶ Turks of various ethnicities (Asiatic, Indo-European, etc.)
- ▶ Egyptians, Libyans
- ▶ Italians (Europeans)
- ▶ Cretans
- ▶ Arabs (Arabian Peninsula)

THE CHURCH THAT FOLLOWS GOD'S DESIGN—

(2) Reflects His plan for including all ethnicities around us - 2.5-11

- ▶ God's heart is for all people - John 3.16
- ▶ Jesus' command is to go to all people - Matthew 28.19; Acts 1.8
- ▶ Like the disciples, we have a common sinfulness that leads us to prefer our own, stay with our own, and consider ourselves to be better—a sinfulness and hypocrisy that needs to be confronted - Acts 10.27-28; 11.1-2; Galatians 2.11-13

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When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all . . . ”

—Galatians 2.11-14

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Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

—Colossians 3.9-11

THE CHURCH THAT FOLLOWS GOD'S DESIGN—

(2) Reflects His plan for including all ethnicities around us - 2.5-11

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”

—Revelation 7.9-10

THE LAW OF FIRST: The first church was established at a time and in a way to show that God has one demographic paradigm for the church: all people.