

TEACHER NOTES:



ADULT LEADER GUIDE 1

# *The Founding*

of the New Testament Church in Jerusalem



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## INTRODUCTION

**Cause and Effect:** In the secular world, the concept of “Cause and Effect” is vital to productivity. A person will analyze a result. He will then break that result down to the individual ingredients or factors that produced that result. That process is how mistakes are corrected that produced an undesired result, and also how a result can be duplicated to continue to produce the desired product. These lessons are designed to do something very similar, only we are going to be analyzing the local church.

**The Great Commission:** There is no question that God gave very clear instructions to His church as to what He desired for the finished product, a church that was focused upon introducing Him to the entire world which He loved and for which He died. He stated this on several occasions. Matthew records that Jesus told them to “*teach All nations*” (emphasis added). They were to reach beyond going to just the Jewish people and go to everyone for whom Jesus had shed His blood to save. However, they were not to stop there. They were to [teach](#), [baptize](#), and [continue teaching](#) these new converts “*ALL*” things that Jesus taught.

**The Message:** Are we able to teach “*ALL*” things without having the Scriptures from which to teach them? Mark records Jesus’ command to go into “...*ALL the word, and preach the gospel to EVERY creature*” (Emphasis added). Luke records for us the last words of Christ before He ascended to the Father as “...*ye shall be witnesses unto me BOTH in Jerusalem, and in ALL Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the UTTERMOST part of the earth*” (emphasis added). This was the last commission that Jesus personally gave to His church in the first chapter of Acts.

This study will reveal that we cannot effectively carry out the Great Commission without providing the Scriptures throughout this endeavor. An imbalance of any one aspect, whether it is *only* preaching the Gospel, or *only* handing out Bibles will fall short of completing the command which Jesus gave His church. It truly takes both! The sending of the “messenger” is certainly a huge part, but sending him with the “Message” is what causes his work to last and to reproduce. For decades, churches have heavily emphasized the “messenger.” This can cause similar results as seen in the Jerusalem church - quick, immediate, bursts of growth and excitement. For the church to grow spiritually, converts must be fed and nourished beyond the message of the death, burial, and resurrection of

Christ. The belief in and acceptance of this message is what births a new believer into the family of God (the church).

**God’s [desire](#) for the message:** God’s desire is not for us to remain as babies. He wants us to grow spiritually in order to more effectively introduce Him to others with whom He desires to have a relationship also. This type of growth only happens through having the rest of the Bible to go along with the Gospel. The church in Jerusalem emphasized reaching Jews; and the Word of God “increased” by doing so (Acts 6:7).

When the early church extended its reach to the Gentiles in a couple of cities, the Word of God grew and “multiplied” (Acts 12:24). When the church at Antioch practiced total obedience to Jesus’ last command and went to the world, it “mightily grew” the Words of God and “prevailed” (Acts 19:20).

**The [results](#) of the message:** The messenger taking the Message clearly produced [unification](#) in [direction](#) and [focus](#). They had a genuine concern for others in the church. They viewed everything that they possessed as God’s. As a result, if another member had a need, and God had provided them with enough to cover that need, they gave what was needed. Everyone used what God had provided them with to see to it that no one went without (they had “all things common”). There were collective occurrences happening amongst the church, that the only explanation was “God did it” (Acts 2:43; 3:1-11; 4:10, 16, 31; 5:12, 16). Their lives reflected evidence that they had a relationship with Jesus Christ (Acts 4:13; 6:15). With all the miracles going on, and the amazing manifestation of the Holy Ghost of God in the lives of the believers, they were still careful to give Him the credit for what was being done (Acts 4:32; 5:39). **Their testimonies were so powerful, the counterfeits of their day died out, and they proved to be genuine** (Acts 5:33-40). There was so much happening, it became necessary for the early church to establish what would become the first deacons (Acts 6:5-6). The work of these men would allow the apostles to continue to study and to feed the church spiritually.

This church was greatly used of God in reaching the Jewish people around Jerusalem and Judea. As they evangelized, the Word was preached, and the Bible says that the Word “*increased*” through this church (Acts 6:7). What began with 120 people in the upper room (Acts 1:15), soon multiplied. The Lord added 3,000 in one day at Pentecost (Acts 2:41). About 5,000 men believed, following the preaching on another day (Acts 4:4). In Acts 5:14, God doesn’t record the exact number for us, but He tells us there were multitudes added on another occasion.

## New Testament Church in Jerusalem

### I. The Foundation of the New Testament Church

- A. Focus of Jesus’ [Actions](#) while on Earth
  1. “I will build...” (Mt. 16:18)
  2. “...gave Himself for it” (Eph. 5:25)
  3. “...purchased with His own blood...” (Acts 20:28)
- B. Focus of Jesus’ [Affection](#)
  1. “... Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;” (Eph. 5:25)
- C. Focus of Jesus’ [Attention](#) now
  1. “...not prevail against it.” (Mt. 16:18)
  2. He added to the church (Acts 2:47; 4:4; 5:14).

### II. The Functioning of the New Testament Church

- A. They were [unified](#) (Acts 1:14; 2:1, 42, 46-47; 4:24, 32; 5:12).
- B. They had [love](#) for the brethren (Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-37). They cared for the needs of the “body.”
- C. They had obvious signs of [God’s activity](#) amongst the “body” (Acts 2:43; 3:1-11; 4:10, 16, 31; 5:12, 16).
- D. Their lives showed evidence of their [relationship](#) with Christ (Acts 4:13; 6:15).
- E. They gave [God](#) all the credit (Acts 4:32; 5:39).
- F. The false teachers were [disproved](#) over time (Acts 5:33-40).
- G. They established [leaders](#) to help the work move forward (Acts 6:5-6).

### III. The Fruit of the New Testament Church

- A. 3,000 added after Pentecost (Acts 2:41).
- B. 5,000 men believed following the preaching on another day (Acts 4:4).
- C. Multitudes of men and women added on another day (Acts 5:14).
- D. The Word “[increased](#)” (Acts 6:7).

## Definitions

Affection: feelings of love; feelings of caring for something or someone

Unified: to cause to be joined or brought together; to make into a unit

Disprove: to show that something is false or in error