

# Sharpening the Focus of the Church

## POWER

**Acts 2:41** *Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.*

What does the word **power** mean to you?

Where else in Acts (chapters 1-4) do you see power demonstrated?

Acts 1	Acts 2	Acts 3	Acts 4

Power in the New Testament is always connected with:

1. The Holy Spirit – 1:8; 2:2
2. Prayer – 1:14; 3:1
3. Evangelism – 4:13, 20

## PURPOSE

**Acts 2:42-47** <sup>42</sup> *They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.* <sup>43</sup> *Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.* <sup>44</sup> *All the believers were together and had everything in common.* <sup>45</sup> *Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.* <sup>46</sup> *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,* <sup>47</sup> *praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

*Apostles' teaching:*

**Acts 20:27-31** <sup>27</sup> For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. <sup>28</sup> Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. <sup>29</sup> I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. <sup>30</sup> Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. <sup>31</sup> So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

**2 Timothy 4:1-5** <sup>1</sup> In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: <sup>2</sup> Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. <sup>3</sup> For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. <sup>4</sup> They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. <sup>5</sup> But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

*Fellowship:*

**Acts 4:32-35** <sup>32</sup> All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. <sup>33</sup> With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. <sup>34</sup> There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales <sup>35</sup> and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need.

**Hebrews 10:24-25** <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. <sup>25</sup> Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

*Breaking of bread:*

**1 Corinthians 11:23-26** <sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, <sup>24</sup> and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." <sup>25</sup> In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." <sup>26</sup> For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

*Prayer:*

**Acts 3:1** One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon.

**Acts 12:5** So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him.



Purpose	Task	Acts 2:42-47	Objective	Target	Life Component	Basic Human Need	The Church Provides	Emotional Benefit
Outreach	Evangelize	<i>"...added to their number daily those who were being saved."</i>	Mission	Community	My Witness	Purpose to live for	A Focus for living	Significance
Worship	Exalt	<i>"They devoted themselves to breaking of bread and prayers ... praising God."</i>	Magnify	Crowd	My Worship	Power to live on	A Force for living	Stimulation
Fellowship	Encourage	<i>"...devoted to the fellowship ... all the believers were together ... ate together."</i>	Membership	Congregation	My Relationships	People to live with	A Family for living	Support
Discipleship	Edify	<i>"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching."</i>	Maturity	Committed	My Walk	Principles to live by	A Foundation for living	Stability
Service	Equip	<i>"They gave to anyone as he had need."</i>	Ministry	Core	My Work	Profession to live out	A Function for living	Self-expression

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. Take a look again at the above chart. As you look at the five purposes of a church, how well do you believe *your actions* reflect those values? Give *yourself* a “grade” (A, B, C, D, F) in each of the five areas:

Fellowship –

Learning –

Outreach –

Worship –

Service –

2. Look again at those five areas of purpose. What *one thing* could you do right now to improve your “grade”?

3. How would you summarize the *victory* the church achieved in this chapter through the power of the Holy Spirit? How was it strategically important for the continued growth of the church?

## QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. In class we talked about references to “power” in the first four chapters of the book of Acts. Go back over those chapters. Search for additional references to power in these chapters. (If you’re a glutton for punishment, don’t stop at chapter four – keep going throughout the rest of the book!)
2. Read Ephesians 1:15-23. How do we embrace the power of God in our lives?
3. Verses 46-47 speak of the way the infant church was viewed by a watching nation. How do you see the example of the believers here as a demonstration of the principle taught later by the apostle Paul in Romans 14:17-18?

## MORE ABOUT THE POWER AND PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH

Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church*  
John MacArthur, *The Master’s Plan for the Church*  
Frank Tillapaugh, *Unleashing the Church*