

1. The Church in Acts (Exciting yet challenging time—they were fully engaged; energized against the opposition; determined to spread the gospel; and completely trusting in the power of God. Long a model for us to admire and aspire to copy. Can we?)
2. Our Challenges (faced them all my ministry—felt them also—been pushing against them—hearts desire to overcome them)
 - a. Apathy (Revelation 3:15-16 AKA “lukewarm.” Where really is our passion? Cannot help but speak the things we have seen and heard? 4:20)
 - b. Low priority (Follows—breaks my heart to see other priorities capture our gifts, time, money, effort. It is a battle. How can church be more relevant? What can we do to push the church up the priority ladder?)
 - c. Limited involvement (again—follows. The Acts church had folks literally dying to follow Jesus. Today we compete with everything just to get folks to attend and maybe, just maybe involved on some level. Always hurting for teachers and volunteers)
 - d. Non-Growth (all of this leads to the very opposite of Acts—churches not growing; closing doors; etc. It all kind of doubles down—apathy starts the process)
3. (As I mentioned—I have wrestled with this since the beginning of my ministry—heard how churches need to do this or that; how this generation or that no longer needs the church or gets anything out of it; how the church needs to change; to offer more—and maybe so. In Acts though I just see folks in love with Jesus and as a result the church grows and prospers. At what point do I take responsibility for myself in regards to my relationship with Christ and his church? Yes, the church is here to encourage; offer a belonging place; help the hurting; care for the needy; be a family for all and a body in which to fit and serve. According to the NT—I Corinthians 12 to be specific—there is a place in it for all of us to fit into and work to help the church function and grow. Do I wait to get invited? I already have been? Is it about me or about others? Both I suppose. What it is to be is about Jesus. That is what fueled the first church in Acts—he was the focus of their passion; he spurned on their involvement)
4. “Devoted Themselves”-- Acts 2:42
 - a. Learning
 - b. Community
 - c. Communion
 - d. Prayer
5. “So the word of God spread”—Acts 6:7 (Can it happen again? Will you help?)