

The Model of the BIGGER Church

A Bible Study Lesson of The Mt. Zion Church

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Introduction: The church is at its strongest when its people are actively engaged in loving, serving, and building one another up. God never intended for believers to live disconnected or independent lives. Instead, He designed the church to function as a unified body where every person **contributes, serves, and strengthens others** (1 Corinthians 12:12–27).

Real church life is not limited to what happens during a service — it is revealed in how we **respond to one another’s needs, walk alongside each other in difficult seasons, and invest in each other’s growth**. When someone is hurting, we are called to **step in and support**. When someone is in need, we are called to **give and provide**. When someone is struggling, we are called to **encourage and restore**. This is how we live out the command to love one another (John 13:34–35).

The early church modeled this kind of life with clarity and consistency. They did not approach community casually — they **committed to it fully**. They shared what they had, cared for one another deeply, and ensured that no one was left without support (Acts 2:44–45). Their example shows us that biblical community is not just beneficial — it is essential.

However, this kind of community requires intentional participation. Each believer must choose to **move beyond observation and into action**. We must **recognize what God has given us and use it to serve others**, understanding that a healthy church is built when every individual does their part (Ephesians 4:16).

This lesson will challenge us to examine how we function within the body of Christ and call us to live in a way that strengthens others and honors God.

By the end of this lesson, students will learn how to actively contribute to the body of Christ and use what God has given them to serve others effectively.

Key Scriptures: Acts 4:32-37; Galatians 6-1-2

I. United in Heart—Acts 4: 32-33

*³²And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said **any of them** that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things **common**. ³³And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them **all**.*

The Greek word for “church” is *ekklesia*, which means “those who are called out” — a gathered community or congregation. Scripture challenges us to **see the church not as a building, but as a people** called out by God to **live on mission and carry out His work** together (Matthew 16:18). The early church models this powerfully. In Acts 2:42–47 and 4:32–35, believers **devoted themselves to teaching, shared generously, prayed fervently, and lived in radical unity**. Because of this, “the Lord added to their number daily” — growth followed obedience and action.

The church is a **living, active body**, not a passive audience. In 1 Corinthians 12:12–27, the writer Paul describes believers as one body with many parts, each uniquely gifted and intentionally placed. We must **embrace our role, engage our gifts, and function together** so that Christ is fully represented on the earth. We do not simply attend church — we **become the church in action**. Action is the answer of God’s people to the call to **serve Christ, worship passionately, teach truth boldly, and walk in unity intentionally** (Ephesians 4:11–16). As His body, we are to **demonstrate Jesus visibly** through how we love, serve, forgive, and build one another up. We are people serving people!

Now let’s confront a hard truth: much of what we see today — on television, online, and even in churches — often does not reflect this Acts model. Instead of expanding the mission, we can drift into comfort, division, or distraction.

So, we must ask: **what happened?**

Since the church is called to represent Jesus in a *Bigger* way, then we must **identify where we’ve drifted and realign with God’s original purpose**. Acts 4 shows a church that was bold, unified, and focused — a church that **prayed together with power, spoke with courage, and lived with open hands**.

A church that loses its way presents an unclear picture of Jesus to the world. That reality should **wake us up, refocus our priorities, and call us back to action**. We are the *ekklesia*. We must **commit again to teaching truth, sharing the gospel, and pointing people to Christ in everything we do**.

Bigger Thinking Questions

1. Where do I need to **step out of comfort and actively engage** in the mission of the church instead of just observing it?
2. How can our church **reflect the Acts 4 model more clearly this week** through unity, generosity, and bold witness?

II. Willing to Pay the Cost—Acts 4: 34-35

³⁴ Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

³⁵ And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

In Acts 4:33–34, we see a defining characteristic of the early church: they **refused to separate spiritual ministry from practical care**. They did not stop at celebrating salvation — they **actively addressed real needs** within their community.

The believers **paired their worship with action**. They **looked around, identified needs, and stepped in to meet them**. Scripture says, “there were no needy persons among them,” because those who had resources **chose to share generously and sacrificially**. Giving was not viewed as a burden — it was embraced as an act of worship and obedience. This is a powerful model for us to follow. But when we compare that model to much of what we see today, we must **pause and evaluate honestly**.

The early church **prioritized people over presentation**. They **directed resources toward needs**, not preferences. Their giving ensured that lives were changed, burdens were lifted, and no one in the body was overlooked.

In contrast, many modern churches can drift toward **prioritizing comfort, image, and consumption**. We often **allocate significant resources to buildings, branding, and experiences**, while needs within and around us remain unmet. We may **raise funds for expansions, upgrades, and programs**, yet hesitate when it comes to **sacrificial generosity that directly impacts people**.

This is not a condemnation — it is a call to **realign our priorities**. We must **ask harder questions** about how we steward what God has entrusted to us. Are we **investing in what impresses people**, or are we **investing in what transforms lives**? Are we **funding convenience**, or are we **fueling ministry that meets real needs**?

The scriptures challenge us to move beyond intention into action. James 2:15–17 reminds us that faith without works is dead — we must **respond tangibly** when needs are present. The early church understood this. Those with abundance **gave freely out of their overflow** (2 Corinthians 9:6–8), and even those with little **participated faithfully and sacrificially** (Mark 12:41–44). Everyone **engaged, contributed, and took responsibility**. No one sat on the sidelines.

As a result, they **pursued a bold goal**: to ensure that every legitimate need was met within the body. They did not ignore problems. They did not delay action. They **moved quickly, gave willingly, and served collectively**.

Bigger Thinking Questions

1. What resources (time, money, skills) do I need to **release more intentionally** to meet real needs around me?
2. How can increase our **investing in kingdom impact over comfort**?

III. Bigger Power by Intentional Training—Galatians 6: 7-12

⁷ Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. ⁸ For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. ⁹ And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. ¹⁰ As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

The final focus of today’s lesson answers a critical question: **What must a loving church do to help people mature?**

Spiritual growth does not happen by accident. It requires intentionality. The biblical principle of sowing and reaping applies directly to the life and direction of the church. Galatians 6:7–9 reminds us that we will reap what we sow — and that truth should **shape every decision we make**.

We must **decide deliberately** what kind of church we are building.

Are we trying to **gather members**, or are we committed to **making disciples** (Matthew 28:19–20)?

Are we creating a **comfortable social space**, or are we cultivating a **transformational environment** where lives are changed?

Whatever we choose will determine the seeds we plant.

If we sow convenience, we will reap complacency.
If we sow truth, accountability, and service, we will reap maturity and multiplication.

Before we answer, we must **realign our perspective**: this is not our church. We are the *ekklesia* — those **called out by God**, not gathered for ourselves (1 Peter 2:9). Therefore, we must **build intentionally in a way that honors God, lifts Christ, and follows the leading of the Holy Spirit** (Ephesians 2:19–22).

Our goal is not temporary success — it is eternal impact.

We must **commit to the work**, even when it becomes difficult. Ministry requires effort, sacrifice, and endurance. But Scripture calls us to **keep sowing faithfully**, knowing that God is responsible for the harvest.

Galatians 6:9 urges us not to grow weary in doing good, because in due season we will reap if we do not give up. Reaping is the gathering of what has been planted — and a harvest only comes if we **stay consistent in the work**.

That means we must **continue to preach truth, teach faithfully, disciple intentionally**, and **serve selflessly** (1 Corinthians 3:6–7). We plant. We water. God gives the increase.

This is why we serve.

We do not work for recognition — we **labor for transformation**.
We do not serve for comfort — we **serve for God’s glory**.
We do not stop when it gets hard — we **press forward because the harvest is coming**.

When we sow with intention and serve with endurance, we position the church to **become exactly what God designed it to be** — a place where people grow, mature, and are sent out to impact the world.

That is what it means to live *Bigger* for Jesus.

Bigger Thinking Questions

1. What kind of “seeds” am I personally planting — and what kind of harvest are those seeds producing?
2. Where do I need to **shift from being a consumer to actively making disciples**?
3. What step can I take this week to **stay consistent in the work**, even if I feel tired or discouraged?