

The First 100 years of N.T. Church Life

5-4 BC Birth of Christ

26 AD Baptism of Christ and beginning of Jesus' ministry

30 AD Death of Christ – birth of the church – outpouring of the Holy Spirit

33 AD Gospel goes to the Gentiles – Conversion of Cornelius

36 AD Paul the apostle saved

45 AD First book of the Bible written

69 AD ? Paul Martyred in Rome by Nero

70 AD Jerusalem destroyed by Titus

90 AD Revelation written

95 AD? The apostle John dies in Ephesus after returning from the banishment on the Isle of Patmos and writing the Revelation

Apostolic Age 30 -95 AD

1. Face of the Early Church: Acts 2:43-47: Continued steadfastly
 - a. Apostles Doctrine
 - b. Fellowship
 - c. Breaking of Bread
 - d. Prayer

2. **The 20/20 (perfect) Vision of the Church: Acts 20:20 “publicly and from house to house.”**
 - a. Church was generally organic; they primarily met daily in homes in small groups and occasionally gathered in larger venues.
 - b. Having two eyes gives us depth perception – the church has lost this depth perception by losing site of the small group / fellowship aspect of the church. Some churches have tried to overcome this with varying degrees of success by adding cell groups/home groups/etc. However, this is backwards to the early church, the church meet in homes primarily and in larger groups as a secondary part

3. **The Early Church – How it viewed itself**
 - a. Organism not organization
 - b. Did not own property – First signs of “church buildings” not until 2 century
 - c. Defining Church GR Ecclesia, “Called Out Ones” – the word “church” in the Bible ALWAYS referred to the people not the structure, building or organization.
 - i. In the truest sense of the word, you can not GO to church, because you ARE the church.
 - ii. What are some functional differences between “going to church” and “being the church?”
 - d. **The Body of Christ (Rom 12:5, 1 Cor. 12:12, 1 Cor. 12:27, Eph. 4:12)**
 - i. Not a literary Device, but a realty -“membership” was functional not organizational – as in the eye is a “member” of my body differing from my nose in function, but no more or less important.
 - ii. As people gather together in Christ He is the head and each “member” functions in the body as the head directs. 1 Cor. 12
 - iii. Each “member was necessary and had a part to play in any given meeting 1 Cor. 14
 - e. **The Structure of the Early Church**
 - i. Led by a group of more mature men called Elders Acts 20 (bishops, elders, shepherds all referred to the same group of men)
 - ii. 5-fold Ministry Eph 4:11 For the PERFECTING of the Saints and the EDIFYING of the Body of Christ
 1. Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, teachers