

"MARKS OF A TRUE CHURCH"**Introduction**

1. This is a picture of the Early Church
2. It is a lovely picture – as near to 'heaven on earth' as we shall get
3. There are things here which ought to be true of every church

1. SOME OF THE THINGS HERE WERE SPECIAL

* Some elements here belong to the Day of Pentecost and are not "common marks".

- 1) The presence of Apostles: v.43
- 2) "signs and wonders": v.43 – they were given to authenticate the gospel.
- 3) The "community of goods": v.44-45
This is not obligatory on all believers
- 4) The work of revival going at that time: v.41, 47
OBSERVE 1: I do not believe we are to expect these things to be the every-day experience of churches in all ages to come after Pentecost.
OBSERVE 2: Pentecost was both unique and also the fruit of the great revivals.
APPLICATION: Pray for revivals, but not for miracles

2. SOME THINGS HERE ARE MARKS OF ALL CHURCHES

- 1) v.41: attitude to preaching
- 2) v.41: baptism, but not re-baptism
- 3) v.42: a wonderful statement:
 - (i) apostles doctrine = sound doctrine, such as our Confession and Catechism

(ii) fellowship: gathering together

(iii) the Lord's Supper: Cp. v.46

(iv) prayers: importance of Prayer Meetings

- 4) v.43: "fear on every soul": this is fear of God – afraid to sin against God.
OBSERVE: This is common in a revival.
- 5) v.44: "togetherness" – unity of heart and of soul. It cannot be done by external means. Faith produces this.
- 6) v.45: "as every man had need". This is a part of Christian love.
- 7) v.46: "eat their meat (food)...gladness..."
They visited one another ("house to house") and they were happy because saved.
- 8) v.47: "Praising God...favour"
They were full of love for God and their neighbours saw it and were affected.
- 9) v.47: "the Lord added"
OBSERVE: This is our prayer.

CONCLUSION

Let us learn that the gospel makes us happy.

PSALM**89: 5 – 9****89: 15 – 18****89: 49 – 52**