

The Acts of the Apostles

[Wed. Aug. 20, 2014] Acts Series, Acts 9.20-31 - Craig A. Thurman

20 *And straightway*

εὐθέως, adverb of εὐθύς; KJV *immediately, forthwith, by and by anon*

he preached (ἐκήρυσσε, cried) Christ in the synagogues,

Again, we note that the disciples resorted to the synagogues, and had not made a full break with the Jews' traditional place of worship yet.

Paul separates the disciples from the synagogue at Ephesus:
Acts 19.8 ¶ And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.

Doubtless, however is that fact that those that believed in Christ knew who they were and worked together as a young church in and around Israel.

Fifty Years Among the Baptists, David Benedict, Published by Sheldon and Co. NY (digital media, Univ. of MI, Ann Arbor, MI) pp. 325-333,

Neander is here quoted on the subject: “* * * The disciples had not yet attained a clear understanding of that call, which Christ had already given them by so many intimations, to form a church entirely separated from the existing Jewish economy; to that economy they adhered as much as possible.”

that he is the Son of God.

Saul not only had heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, but that since coming to Christ the Lord opened his understanding to the O.T. Scriptures concerning His Son.

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Mt 13:52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

Again, another proof of the benefit that believers receive for identification with one of the Lord's churches: the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence to instruct him.

Was Saul an apostle at that moment? Doubtless. (Ro.1.1; 1Co.1.1; **Gal.1.15, 16**) Saul appears to have been converted and commissioned at the same time. (See also below Acts 26.16) What ordination did Saul receive to do the work of the ministry? Was he ordained by a church? We never see any other ordination for the apostles other than the fact that the Lord Jesus called them. With that in mind, the church cannot ordain a man to do what the Lord has not called him to do. The church may place their approval upon a man who has professed the Lord's calling upon his life, but she has absolutely no power to distribute any spiritual gifts. Laying on of hand is simply symbolic of a greater work that the Lord has or will do in the lives of his people; whether it is healing, preaching, or the Spirit's condescension. So whatever traditions the churches have concerning this must be scrutinized by the Scriptures. Ananias laying his hands on Saul did not ordain him for the apostolic ministry. It would be very difficult to prove the necessity of the laying on of hands for healing or for ordination. Clearly, ministers need the calling of God upon their lives for ministry, not a piece of paper from the government, a presbytery, a church, an association, a university or a seminary. None of these things qualify a man for the service of Christ. As we see in the following verse (26.16), such service is a hand-selection by the Lord, and used in the LXX only of Moses and Joshua.

*Acts 26.16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, **to make** προχειρίσασθαί (22.14 hand-select, see below) thee a **minister** ὑπηρέτην (an attendant to the One in authority; 1Co.4.1) and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee ...*

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προχειρίσασθαι, aor 1, **inf** of προχειρίζομαι, πρό toward, unto + χείρ hand;

*Ac 22:14 And he said, The God of our fathers **hath chosen** προχειρίζομαι thee, that thou shouldst know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth. (perhaps the easiest way to understand this is to say that the Lord had *put forth* his hands to Saul for service.)*

LXX, προσχειρέιν **Ex.4.13 appoint; Jos.3.12 choose.**

ὑπηρέτην, acc sing of ὑπηρέτης, ὑπό under, of + ἐρέτης rower; **attendant to one in authority**; *Mt.5.25 the judge deliver thee to the **officer**; Jn.7.32 and the chief priests sent **officers**; Jn.18.36 then would my **servants** fight; Acts 13.5 and they had also John to their **minister**.*

What ordination to the ministry did the apostles receive other than that calling of the Lord into the ministry?

Mr 6:7 And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits ...

21 But all that heard him were amazed,

ἐξίσταντο, 3p pl, imperf, **mid** of ἐξίστημι; to stand out. Again, we have from this word our English *ecstasy* ἔκστασις.

and said; Is not this he that destroyed

πορθήσας, nom, sing, masc, part, aor 1 of πορθέω; only used 3 times. Gal. 1.13 *and **wasted** it* (that is, the church); 23 *preacheth the faith which once he **destroyed**.* (Perhaps **devastated**, OED, *obs* at Is.61.4 *And they shall build the old **wastes** ...* [meaning devastation])

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them which called on

ἐπικαλουμένους, acc, pl, masc, part, pres, mid of ἐπικαλέω; ἐπι upon + καλέω call, bidd; ἐπιλακέομαι, KJV *surname, call, appeal, call upon, call on*.

this name in ἐν Jerusalem, and came hither for εἰς that intent, that he might bring

ἀγάγη or led

them bound unto the chief priests?

It appears that synagogues resorted to Jerusalem as final arbiter of the Law. Perhaps this pattern explains the error of a universal church doctrine. We have no biblical reason for patterning churches after the Temple/synagogue order. While the ἐκκλησία is a very common Greek word used in the LXX, it is defined as assembly. Used as a verb, ἐκκλησιάζειν, is translated as *assemble* (Le.8.3); *call* ἐκκλησίασον the assembly συναγωγῆν (Nu.20.8); *gather* (Deu.4.10); *gathered together* (Deu.31.28), et al.

22 But Saul increased the more μάλλον in strength,

increased in strength, ἐνεδυναμοῦτο, 3p sing, imperf, pass of ἐνδυναμώω; ἐν in, with, by + δύναμις KJV *power, might works, virtue, wonderful works, ability, miracle, might, strength*; Lit. **became empowered**

J. P. Green Sr. Bible Interlinear, *was filled with power*. Perhaps the word 'was empowered' more ... captures the whole sense. Remember that this is the result of his being filled with the Holy Spirit in verse 17, which is to witness Christ to others.

Ro 4:20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but **was strong** (ἐνεδυναμώθη, aor. 1, ind, **pass**) in faith, giving glory to God;

2Ti 4:17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and **strengthened** (ἐνεδυνάμωσε, **aor.** 1, ind, act) me; that by me the preaching might be

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fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

*Heb 11:34 Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness **were made strong**, (ἐνεδυναμώθησαν, aor.1, ind, **pass**) waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*

and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

We have the Jews which dwell at Damascus, and the disciples which were at Damascus. Both instances refer to particular and identifiable people.

While the Jews could not gainsay what Saul was teaching concerning Jesus Christ, many did reject it. You might have read this week of a preacher who called those that believe in the doctrine of God's election of grace *idiots*. He advised his congregation not to go to the web sites of certain preachers that he mentioned by name because they were *idiots*. This a common tactic used by many, perhaps by us: if one cannot argue against the reason, then attack the person instead. Rejection of the truth does not discount the truth.

1Pe 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

We should always have a Christ-like spirit in our answers. Brethren, be humble (knowledge puffeth up, 1Co.8.1; truth will set us free; Jn.8.32; charity edifieth, 1Co.8.1), gentleness, and of the fear of God to be restrain ourselves for Christ's sake and for the honor of God.

*16 ¶ Having a good conscience; that, whereas **they speak evil of you**, as of evildoers (notice again the diversion from the truth to a personal attack), they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.*

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23 ¶ And after that many days (probably meaning three years, see below) were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel (aorist middle ... plotted with themselves)

J.P. Green's Interlinear Bible, *plotted together*.

συνεβουλεύσαντο, 3rd p, pl, aor 1, ind, **mid** of συμβουλεύω; συμ with, together + βουλεύω KJV to *consult, determine, mind, purpose*; συμβουλεύω, KJV *consult, which gave counsel, took counsel, counsel*.

Whether before he began to preach in the synagogues or just before he was let over the wall of the city of Damascus, Saul went into Arabia and was taught of the Lord's Spirit many things concerning Jesus Christ. (Gal.1.15-18)

(Gal.1.16) *immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood ...*

προσανεθέμην, 1st p, sing, aor 2, ind, mid of προσανατίθημι; πρόσ to, against, by, with + ανά again, re- + τίθημι put, purpose, lay, ordain, appoint; Gal. 2.9 *conference* only other time used.

Paul's goal during his temporary exile was not to reconstitute the Word of God with human intellect. What He knew he needed, more than anything else, was a pure understanding of the truth of the Word of God concerning Jesus Christ, seriously disconnected with rabbinical thought. And he wasn't going to get this by going back to Gamaliel and Jewish seminary. Rather, he was going to resort to the school of God: just him, the Lord and the Book. This is what every effectually called child of God needs, and especially everyone who believes they are called to serve the church as a pastor. I believe a God-called man, for that matter, every Christian, before they start to get into all of the commentaries, topical books, dictionaries and lexicons should get a serious education into the Word of God. Get familiar with the Bible. We need to know at least what the Bible says, before we need to know what men say. There is good order to learning. We don't need to jump into the 'hard things' until we have some kind of a handle on the basic things of God's Word. We ought to have digested the substance of a vast part of the Word of God. We ought to have some idea about the great men of God in the Bible. We should know the basics about Israel's history, the judges,

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kings, and Babylonian captivity and their return to the promised land. We need to know things well enough so that when a person says something that doesn't sound quite right that we can check for ourselves and reconfirm our minds in the right way that it should be. Paul resorted to God's school and was taught the truth of God's Word from the Old Testament Scriptures. (That was all that they had at that time and consider well his learning the truth from the Spirit of God. That is invaluable!)

to kill ἀναλεῖν him:

Saul now finds himself on the receiving end of that same hatred and persecution that he once showed toward the Christian Jews.

24 But their laying await (their devise against him)

ἐπιβουλή, ἐπί upon + βουλή KJV *counsel, advise*; only used 4 times; always translated as *laying in wait*. (Acts 20.3, 19; 23.30)

was known of Saul. And they watched

παρετήρουν, 3rd ρ, pl, imper, act of παρατηρέω, παρά by, with, of, before + τηρέω keep, reserve, watch; παρατηρέω once is translated **observe** (Gal.4.10), otherwise it is *watched* 5. They **kept about the gates** ... day and night to kill him.

the gates day and night to kill him.

Cities were populated areas with defensible positions having walls and gates. Evidently, Damascus was such a city. Every access in and out of the city was being monitored by the Jews in hopes of apprehending Saul and killing him.

*2Co 11:32 In Damascus **the governor** under Aretas the king **kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:**
33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.*

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When Saul overheard of their evil counsel he must have related it to the disciples who then knew what action to take to help deliver him from the hands of the unbelieving Jews.

We note the practical workings of God through His people. The Lord revealed to Saul how that he would be a witness to the Gentiles, kings and the Jews. And from all outward appearances, in light of his immanent death, this was not possible. But God! always considered, cannot fail.

And while we might not know what to do when we fall into such trying circumstances, let us be ready to hear the counsel of our brethren. There are brethren that know what we DO NOT. Can we hear what others might have to say to us when we need good counsel?

25 *Then the disciples took him by night, and **let him down** (and lowering him)*

καθῆκαν, 3rd p, pl, aor 1, ind, act of καθίημι; κατά + ἵημι; on in the KJV as *let down* 4; Acts 10.11; 11.5 of the great sheet let down to Peter in a vision.

χαλάσαντες, nom, pl, masc, part, aor 1, act of χαλάω; this is not translated here. We find this word used interchangeably with καθίημι. Compare Mk. 2.4; Lk.5.19 and Acts 9.25; 2Co.11.33. The idea shown in J. P. Green Sr. Bible interlinear is the *lowering* of the basket ... *let down through the wall, **lowering** him in a basket.*

by διὰ the wall

τείχους, always translated *wall*.

in ἐν a basket.

σπυρίδι, dat, sing of σπυρίς; always translated with the English word *basket*.

26 *And when Saul was come (in)to εἰς Jerusalem,*

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Some three years later. (? Gal.1.17)

he assayed

ἐπειράτο, 3rd p, sing, imperf of πειράομαι, cf. πειράω, [Acts 26.21 and *went about* to kill me] and πειράζω, to tempt, try, examine; root πείρα; Acts 16.7 they **assayed** to go. From this word we have the English word *empirical*. The Greek emphasizes the experience; or that which can be observed.

to join

To **cleave**; this is what the Spirit of God works in the saints ... creates a love for the people of God.

κολλᾶσθαι, pres, inf, mid of κολλάω; KJV *cleaves, joined, keep company, cleave*.

We are commanded to, *Ro 12:9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.* And the form of this word, again we take note of in the marriage covenant between a man and a woman, *Mr 10:7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife ...*

himself to the disciples:

Does water baptism automatically add any member to a church? Reexamine Acts 2.41; does this Scripture say that all that were baptized that day were added to the church, or that of those baptized there were added 3000 souls? The teaching that baptism would automatically admit any to either a local or universal church is incorrect. What about the Samaritan baptized believers?

The difference between the first church of Jerusalem and the Samaritan church is this: The Lord Jesus Christ, having the fullness of the Holy Spirit started and continued with that church until His

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resurrection. Just before His ascension He breathed upon the apostles and they received the Holy Spirit. (Jn.20.22) And the whole church of Jerusalem received the Spirit at Pentecost. The Samaritans were all baptized believers, who at their conversion has clearly the presence of the Spirit of God [a minimal requisite for true believers, Jn.14.17; Ro.8.9], but for a church to be a church she must be the inhabited by the Spirit of the Lord corporately and individually.

What about all of the disciples of John the Baptist. Why weren't they all automatically added to Christ's church having been baptized by God's authority? Yet they had to leave John and go to Christ. Otherwise, how could they make a distinction between John's disciples and our Lord's? (Lk.5.33; Jn.1.35-37; 3.22-30)

What about the Ethiopian eunuch of Acts chapter 8. If we believe that when he was baptized he became a member of the Jerusalem church, even though he is said to have gone on down to Ethiopia, and how we do not see the great incongruity of a member located in another place that cannot associate with his local church, then we clearly profess either a universal visible or universal invisible church. But we definitely contradict the local N.T. church doctrine by such a practice. We might say we believe in a local church with our lips but we practice universal. And at least we should be honest with ourselves and say so.

but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple.

The church must be convinced that one is worthy of becoming a part of their company, right or wrong. But it is the church's prerogative nonetheless. It is absurd to think that it can be otherwise. But it appears that they shall receive him into their number for a few days anyway. (vss.27-30)

27 But Barnabas took him,

The implication is that Barnabas had some knowledge of Saul's repentance and faith in Christ some three years earlier. John Gill suggests this notion and I think it has some warrant.

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John Gill, vol.8, p.229, 'It is probably that Barnabas had been at Damascus, and had there related to him the whole account of Saul's conversion and entrance in the ministry, which he gives a particular relation of, as follows ...'

and brought him to πρὸς the apostles, (cf. Phl. Study @ 2.25 messenger, ἀπόστολον)

Galatians 1.19 tells us that the apostles here were only two, Peter and James (the Lord's brother, Mt.13.55; pastor of the Jerusalem church, Acts 15.13; and writer of the epistle that bears his name) and that his stay in Jerusalem was just 15 days.

and declared

διηγῆσατο, 3rd p, sing, aor 1, ind of διηγέομαι; διά by, through, thorough + ἡγέομαι count, reckon, account; so to thoroughly recount to them; KJV *tell, show, declare. Acts 8.33 who **shall declare** his generation?* (12.17 also)

unto them how he had seen (how he saw)

εἶδε, 3rd p, sing, aor 2, ind, act of ὁράω

the Lord in the way ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly

ἐπαρρησιάσατο, 3rd p, sing, aor 1, ind of παρρησιάζομαι; used 9 times in the KJV, 7 of which are in the book of Acts (9.27 *preached boldly, 28 spake boldly; 13.46 waxed bold; 14.3 speaking boldly; 18.26 to speak boldly; 19.8 spake boldly; 26.26 freely*); the other two instances are Eph.6.20 *that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak; 1Thes.2.2 we were bold.*

B-D-A-G Lexicon, '... **to speak in the open as opposed to in secret, κρύπτω.**'

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Ac 26:26 *For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely (παρρησιαζόμενος): for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden (λανθάνειν, KJV hid, unawares, ignorant; to escape cognizance) from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.*

In preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ there is nothing of which we need to be ashamed, or that could not be declared, or that should be kept secret. But in that vein of thought our minds consider the content of that message. The gospel message for the unbelieving must be very basic and considers the audience that is being addressed.

It seems to me that as the apostles and disciples of our Lord could address the national audiences of the Jews, during the church's early ministry, much more comprehensively than they could the gentiles. To Israel we see the gospel containing Old Testament history, of the fathers, and prophecies (Acts 2.16-21; Acts 7; 13.17-41); of the promises and covenants (Acts 2.33; 3.25), the coming of Messiah (2.31; 3.18-23); and we read of the deep considerations of predestination and foreknowledge (Acts 2.23; 4.28). For the most part these kinds of discussions would involve considerable more time when speaking before gentile audiences who know very little of the particulars of God's special dealings with the nation of Israel. To them the gospel takes a much more simple approach. (cf. Acts 10.35-43; 16.31, 32; **17.24-31**). The goal of the message is not to instruct in doctrines, as much as it is to command them to repent of their sins before God, and believe in Jesus Christ as God come to man, died, buried and raised from the dead, and presently seated at the right hand of God awaiting the day of His rule and reign over all the earth.

Ac 20:21 Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

at ἐν Damascus in the name of ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Jesus.

28 And he was with μετ' them coming in and going out (for those fifteen days)

εἰσπορευόμενος, to proceed into; KJV whatsoever entereth, went into, entering in, entered, which come, which enter, entering into, coming in, that came in.

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ἐκπορευόμενος, **to proceed out**; KJV *went out, that proceedeth out of, which cometh, goeth out, departed, which come, proceed, come, when gone forth, as he went, came forth, issued.*

at ἐν Jerusalem.

29 And he spake boldly (vs.27, root παρρησιάζομαι) in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed

συνεζήτηι, 3rd p, sing **imperf** of συζητέω; σύν with, together + ζητέω to seek, desire; KJV *questioning Mk.1.27; reasoning together Mk.12.28; they began to enquire Lk.22.23; disputing with Stephen, Acts 6.9.*

Disputed:

One means for the opportunity of sharing Jesus Christ with others is sometimes asking questions. It is amazing how few people have been challenged by the truth of the Word of God. Most people have a supposed 'fool-proof' defense for doing what it is that they do in life. But the truth of the Word of God quickly dissipates these false notions and requires the person to either receive the truth or to reject it. But in the life of the servants of God how many times was Christ shared where there was not some manifestation of contradiction or opposition?

The mocking crowd at Pentcost, (Acts 2.13); the grieved Sanhedrin, (Acts 4.2); the envious high priest and Saducees, (Acts 5.17); the contrary ones in the synagogue, (Acts 6.9); a sorceror in Paphos, (Acts 13.8); the jealous Jews of Antioch Pisidia, and Thessalonica, (Acts 13. 45; 17.5); the influential Jews and the gullible gentiles in Iconium, (Acts 14.2); the superstitious of Lystra and Derby, (Acts 14.11; 28.6); the demon possessed damsel and the angry merchantmen of Philippi and at Ephesus, (Acts 16.16; 19.23, 24); the idolators of Athens and Melita, (Acts 17.16; 28.6); the blaspheming Jews and insurrectionists at Corinth, (Acts 18.6); the confused mob of Jews at Jerusalem, (Acts 21.27-30; 23.9; 25.19, 28); and the fickle rulers at Caesarea (Acts 24.26, 27).

against πρὸς the Grecians Ἑλληνιστάς:

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That is the Hellenist Jews, but not to be understood as those of the church of Jerusalem. (Cf. Acts 6.1, where the Grecian [Hellenist] Jews murmured against the Hebrews about an inequity they perceived in the care of their widows.)

but they went about

ἐπεχείρουν, 3rd pl, imperf of ἐπιχειρέω; ἐπι upon, at, to, against + χεῖρ hand; *at hand*; probably meaning that some had taken it upon themselves to kill Saul the moment the opportunity presented itself. Three places use this Greek word: Lk.1.1 *taken in hand*; Acts 19.13 *took upon*.

to slay him.

30 Which when the brethren knew,

Which indicates that the church had received Saul into their fellowship, and their fear and suspicion were allayed.

they brought him down to Caesarea, and sent him forth to Tarsus.

Notice the church took interest in Saul's welfare and provided a means for him to reach as far as his home, Tarsus. (vs.11 *Saul of Tarsus*) Tarsus still exists today in the country of Turkey.

31 Then had the churches

Fifty Years Among the Baptists, David Benedict, Published by Sheldon and Co. NY (digital media, Univ. of MI, Ann Arbor, MI) pp. 325- 333,

'During the apostolic age, a large number of churches arose in Palestine, and in the surrounding countries, whose names appear in the New Testament narratives. But relative to the manner of their formation, in no one case is the least information given. All at once the names of these churches appear; some incident, or the name of some person or persons connected with them is given, but nothing in particular is said as to the time, or the circumstances of their origin. Although the foundations of many of the first Christian communities,

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were no doubt, laid in **Christian houses**, yet but three household churches are mentioned in the New Testament narratives, the most important of which I am inclined to think was that in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, whose praise was in all the churches of the Gentiles. We also read of churches in the houses of Nymphas and Philemon. But of no others, then in being.

rest (peace)

εἰρήνην, acc sing of εἰρήνη; KJV *peace* (many times), at *one* 1 (Acts 7.26 of Moses), *rest* 1, *quietness* 1 (Acts 24.2).

Rest from persecution. The word *rest* is better here, as the Lord's people could certainly have the fruit of the Spirit, *peace*, in the midst of their great trial of affliction. (2Co.1.3, 4) But to be clear, it is translated *rest*. There is an element that we can enjoy, and that is just having *rest* from great persecution.

Lk.7.50 the harlot having peace concerning the great debt for sins forgiven before God by Jesus.

Lk.8.48 the woman with the issue of blood healed. She became distressed because she knew she was not hid. The Lord spoke peace to her heart.

Lk.12.51; 14.52 The lack of strife, combat.

Acts 7.26 reconciling conflicted brethren

Acts 9.31 persecution ceases

Acts 10.36; Ro. 1.7; 2Co.1.2; Eph.2.15 God is at rest concerning the sins of His people by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. This is the greatest peace that the election of grace enjoys since Christ Jesus' death on the cross for them.

throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, (This notes a northward expansion of the churches of Jesus Christ.)

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Whatever we are to make of the history thus far given in the book of Acts, we must confess at least this: that the first church, which is at Jerusalem, had been persecuted at the death of Stephen, and the membership

(only called men and women, 8.3; 9.1, disciples 9.1; believers, 22.19; saints, 26.10; and one named Philip [who had been a deacon, 8.5], of which scattering clearly excluded the apostles, (9.1) and never called preachers,)

was scattered to many places. We have only one instance of a N.T. church's origination, and that was in the city of Samaria. (Acts 8) And we have been able to garner enough information to say that when two or three baptized saints come together as one for the purposes of carrying out the commandments of Jesus Christ there is a church. We are *constrained*, both by the lack of information and by the information supplied to us in the Holy Word of God to conclude that these Jewish, baptized saints of the church at Jerusalem went out preaching the Word and baptizing those converted to Christ just as freely as we saw Philip do. We cannot say that this man had any other credential to preach and to baptize than another member of the church at Jerusalem might have had. We have no biblical evidence (And that is what we need isn't it?) supporting that only special men went out and began churches. None. (And keep in mind that these members were scattered. They were not going to back to Jerusalem. Baptized believers may go forth and carry on the work of Jesus Christ wherever they go.) Perhaps some would claim '*deaconoral*' authority. I'm being facetious.

The notion of pastoral succession even among the reformed Protestants:

Ezra Hoyt Byington, *The Puritan in England and New England*, p.161, Chapter IX which deals with independent churches in New England who separated from the Church of England, "People in the Episcopal Church have sometimes questioned the validity of Non-Episcopal ordination. But among the Puritans, the question was whether Episcopal ordination was valid. They held that the only valid call to the ministry was the call of Christ through a congregation of His

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people. So that, although their ministers had been ordained years before, by the bishops and presbyters of the Church of England, they held that their office had terminated with the end of their pastorage. The doctrine of the permanence of the office of the ministry, aside from the pastorate of a local church, they held to be nothing short of a Romish heresy. One who ceased to be a pastor was no longer a minister. He could enter the ministry again only by the call of a church, and a new ordination. So that it was not so much a disowning of Episcopal ordination, as the opinion that the validity of the ordination had passed away when the pastorate ended. If the call of the church was the only true call to the ministry, it followed that it was proper for the church to set apart the man of its choice to the sacred office.

But please hear this very important point brethren, aside from extra biblical tradition there is no biblical basis for the notion that the ordinances are delivered to a special class of men in the church. Notice that the ordinances/traditions, and the doctrine is delivered to the church, not to special men.

*1Co 11:2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the **ordinances**/traditions παραδόσεις, **as I delivered them to you.** (the Corinthian church)*

*2Th 2:15 Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the **traditions**/ordinances παραδόσεις which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.*

*Ac 16:4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered **them** (The churches, verse 5; 15.41) that they were visiting for the purpose of confirming in the faith.) **the decrees** (the dogma, doctrine) **for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.***

*5 And so were **the churches** established in the faith, and increased in number daily.*

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Thus far, by Scripture, we cannot prove that there is any such office as that of the pastor in the church yet. The implication of a pastor doesn't even present itself until chapter 12.17; 15.13: James is traditionally called the first pastor of the Jerusalem church. But as far as any one name named as a pastor in a church we haven't one given us in the Bible.

Saul, before his conversion, was used of his religious organization to do much hurt to the saints of God everywhere. When the Lord converts him to Christ it is as if the majority of the evil work is instantly restrained. All it takes for a notable change from good to bad, bad to good is for the Lord to allow just one man to go his own way; or for the Lord to bestow his love upon the heart of a single sinner, and what a change takes place! The churches had rest when but one man is brought to Christ. That one man who spearheaded the persecution, now reconciled to God by Jesus Christ. Now, for all that he did against the church for the glory of the religious Pharisees, in a very short time, they would turn upon him and try to kill him at every opportunity.

and were edified; (and were being built up)

οἰκοδομοῦμεναι, nom, pl, fem, part, pres, **pass** of οἰκοδομέω, οἶκος
house + δέμω ;

Mt 21:42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders οἰκοδομοῦντες rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

Lu 6:48 He is like a man which built οἰκοδομοῦντι an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

1Pe 2:7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders οἰκοδομοῦντες disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,

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8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

and walking

πορευόμεναι, nom, pl, fem, part, pres of πορεύομαι; KJV *go, depart, went, way, walking, journey; proceeding*

in the fear of the Lord,

As we have recently seen in the book of Philippians 2.12 *Php 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with **fear and trembling** φόβου καὶ τρόμου.* It is proper and good for us to have the fear of God upon us. We should be constrained from behaving as we would if we had the fear of God in our lives at every moment. This coupling of *fear and trembling* is found also in 2Co.7.15; Eph.6.5. That we would hold our tongues, our anger, our actions because we feared God so, and at the prospect of standing before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ!

On the one hand, God forbid that I should do any evil work; and on the other, God forbid that I fail of the grace of God to do all that is commanded me.

and in the comfort

παρακλήσει, dat sing of παράκλησις; παρα about, of, by, nigh + 'καλέω to call; to call to the side; KJV *consolation, exhortation, comfort, intreaty*; The Holy Spirit is called *The Comforter* four times (Jn.14.16, 26, 15.26; 16.7); Our Lord Jesus is called our *Advocate*. (1Jn.2.1) Only the apostle John uses this term. Acts 15.31 gives us a good sense of the comfort that the saints had when once the matter of the law was settled for them by the conference of the apostles and brethren in Jerusalem. They were no longer disturbed, but settled and calm.

of the Holy Ghost,

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The Works of John Owen, vol. 2, p.250, 'This is the first general consequent of his dispensation and work. Whenever there is mention made of comfort and consolation in the Scripture given to the saints (as there is most frequently), it is the proper consequent of the work of the Holy Ghost towards them. Comfort or consolation in general, is the setting and composing of the soul in rest and contentedness in the midst of or from troubles, by the consideration or presence of some good, wherein it is interested, outweighing the evil, trouble, or perplexity that it hath to wrestle withal.

were multiplied.