

The Church

Part 4: Features of the First Church

Acts 4:32-33

- “Now the multitude of those who believed were of **one heart and one soul**; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had **all things in common**. And **with great power** the apostles **gave witness** to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.”

One Heart and One Soul

- Heart
 - Mind or thought
 - Attitude
- Soul
 - In work



All things in common

- Commentary of
St. John
Chrysostom



Faithful

- “A person who does not do what God has commanded shows he really does not believe.” (St. Clement)
- “He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” (1 Jn. 2:4-6)
- “And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” (Phil. 2:8)

Origen to the Romans

- *“When God gives the Tempter permission to persecute us, we suffer persecution. And when God wishes us to be free from suffering, even though surrounded by a world that hates us, we enjoy a wonderful peace. We trust in the protection of the One who said, ‘Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world.’ And truly He has overcome the world. Therefore, the world prevails only as long as it is permitted to by Him who received power from the Father to overcome the world.*

Origen to the Romans, cont.

- *“From His victory we take courage. Even if He should again wish us to suffer and contend for our faith, let the enemy come against us. We will say to them, ‘I can do all things through Christ Jesus our Lord who strengthens me.’”*

Courageous

- “Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.” (Acts 8:1)
- “Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.” (Acts 8:4)

St. Paul

And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'" Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done." (Acts 21:10-14)

St. Ignatius to the Romans

- “Pray, then, do not seek to confer any greater favor upon me than that I be sacrificed to God while the altar is still prepared; that, being gathered together in love, you may sing praise to the Father, through Christ Jesus, that God has deemed me, the bishop of Syria, worthy to be sent for from the east unto the west. It is good to set from the world unto God, that I may rise again to Him.”