

Sermon Notes and Daily Devotional

First Congregational Church of Woodstock

Live Stream Morning Service:

Pastor Doug Warren

April 19th, 2020

Easter Sunday

Acts 4:32 – 5:11

Enemies Within the Church

1. The Church Is Being Renewed for Deployment.
2. New, Improved Covenant Community Is Still a Mixture.
3. Christ Will Purify His Church.

Sometimes when we look back at things in history we gloss over difficulties and paint an ideal picture of those golden days. We face the same challenge with church history. If only we were everything the first century church was, we wouldn't have such difficulties. But the reality is that God's covenant people have always been a mixture of sinful people being transformed by His grace and sinful people who claim membership while continuing as traitors. Our great hope is not in our accomplishing anything as His Church, but rather His promise to make us completely holy. Let us yearn for that fulfillment and begin today acting like it by faith in Christ.

Ephesians 5: 25 – 32

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

Taken from *The Westminster Shorter Catechism*.

Question #26: How does Christ rule as king?

Answer: Christ rules as king, in subduing us to himself, in ruling and defending us, and in restraining and conquering all his and our enemies.

Acts—Series Overview

The Expansion of the Gospel Witness with Power

Acts records God’s faithful accomplishment of all that He promised in taking the gospel to the nations. It lays the groundwork for all that will take place as His Church awaits His return. Just as Jesus lived and spoke as the Father commanded, we now are called to do in the power of His Holy Spirit. While Jesus did this perfectly, we will strive imperfectly, constantly in need of the Holy Spirit’s direction, power, and correction. Nevertheless, our faithful God will work even through our failing efforts and His gospel witness through us will prevail and penetrate every nation, tribe, & territory. For the praise of our King!