

**TODAYS CHURCH**  
**FEBRUARY 25, 2018**

**INTRODUCTION:**

**EPHESIANS 2:19-22 (ESV)** – In the Old Testament the Father dwelt among men in the ark in the Temple. His fire was seen, His glory appeared, and the priests were responsible to keep the flame burning. In the gospel era, Jesus dwelt among men in the Temple of His body. Today, the Spirit dwells in a spiritual house. He dwells in us individually and collectively. We are responsible to provide the Father a place worthy of His manifested glory.

**THE CHALLENGE**

1. We are living in the last days. **2 TIMOTHY 3:1-5, REVELATION 3:14-18**
  - A. We are living the Laodicean Church Age – the most heavily rebuked and deceived church in the history of the church age. How they saw themselves and how Jesus saw them were polar opposites.
  - B. The challenge is to overcome the deception by taking a close look at the foundation Jesus established for the church.

**THE PATTERN FOR HIS CHURCH**

1. Operated in the power of the Spirit. **ACTS 1:8, 4:33**
2. Preached the gospel with power. **ACTS 2:14-21**
3. Was excited about Jesus. **ACTS 2:22-24, 32-33**
4. Was united and cared for each other. **ACTS 2:44, 4:32**
5. Was given to praise and worship. **ACTS 2:46-47**
6. Stayed committed when persecuted. **ACTS 8:1-4**
7. That witnessed God's mighty power: That saves (**ACTS 2:41**), that shakes (**ACTS 4:31**), that impacts (**ACTS 17:5-6**).
8. Was militant: Targeting sickness (**ACTS 3:6-9**), and demonic activity (**ACTS 8:5-8**)
9. Was feared. **ACTS 5:11-13**

**TO BE EFFECTIVE TODAY REQUIRES**

1. The right message. **1 CORINTHIANS 2:1-5**
  - A. Jesus is to be the primary focus of our message. The gospel alone has the power of God to save. We are to point people to Jesus, not impress them with our theology.
2. The right methods – **ACTS 1:8**
  - A. We are to bear witness to the truth. **1 JOHN 1:1-3** – We are to tell what we know to be true. How He saved, delivered, healed and helped us, as Paul did before King Agrippa.
3. The right mindset. **MARK 16:15-16**
  - A. The world is the courtroom we witness in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and anywhere a sinner can be found.
4. The right muscle. **MARK 16:17-20**
  - A. If our message is to have power, if our methods are to be effective, if our mindset is to be what it should be, then we must give place to ministry of the Word and the Spirit.

**CONCLUSION:**

We are a blessed people. God blessed us to make us a blessing. Along with blessings comes responsibilities. The same grace that blesses us also teaches us to live godly lives (**TITUS 2:12-15**) and empowers us for service (**1 PETER 4:10 HCSB**). It's up to us as to what kind of vessel we will be - individually and collectively. **2 TIMOTHY 2:19-21**