Additions to the Church

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon's sermon emphasizes the vital role of the Holy Spirit in adding true believers to the church and the importance of active evangelism and community engagement.

Duration: 51:30
Scripture: Jonah 3:4, Matthew 28:19-20, John 14:15, Acts 2:37-38, Acts 2:41-42, Ephesians 4:4-6
Topics: "Church Growth", "Discipleship"

Description

The sermon transcript discusses the importance of welcoming and watching over new converts in the church. It emphasizes the need for all members, not just pastors, to take responsibility in caring for and guiding new believers. The speaker encourages the existing members to be a source of support and friendship for the newcomers, and to set a positive example for them. The sermon concludes by highlighting the potential for growth and impact that comes with the addition of new converts to the church.

Transcript

Additions to the Church. A sermon delivered on Lord's Day morning, April 5th, 1874, by C. H. Spurgeon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington. And the Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved, Acts 2 47.

We are just coming to the most beautiful season of the year, the spring, when everything around us is shaking of the chilled grave clothes of winter and putting on the beautiful array of new life. The Church of God was in that condition at Pentecost. Her winter was past and the flowers appeared on the earth.

She enjoyed the spring breezes, for the breath of the Holy Spirit refreshed her garden. There was spring music. The time of the birds was come, for her preachers testified faithfully of Jesus.

And so many and varied were the sweet notes which welcomed the new season that many nations of men heard in their own tongue the wonderful works of God. There was also the spring blossoming. The fig tree put forth her green figs and the vines with the tender grapes gave a good smell, for all around multitudes inquired, Men and brethren, what must we do? Many also avowed their faith in Jesus.

There were the spring showers of repentance, the spring sun gleans of joy in the Holy Ghost, and the spring flowers of newly given hope and faith. May we behold just such another spring time in all the churches of Jesus Christ throughout the world. Meanwhile, let us arouse ourselves suitable to so glad

summer season.

Let us rise up and meet the well-beloved, and in concert with him let us sow in hope and look for a speedy upspringing. The sun of righteousness is coming forth as a bridegroom out of his chamber, and the weary night is melting into welcome day. Let us hear the beloved's voice as he cries to us, Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

It seems from the text that the additions to the church which were made in the Pentecostal spring tide did not occur always in one form. Sometimes they came in crowds, and at other times by gradual increase. Upon one day there were three thousand added.

That is an instance of conversion in the mass when a nation is born at once. In such a work we are bound to believe, I mean not merely in the possibility of it, but in the probability of it, for it stands to reason that what should convince one man in a particular condition of heart would as readily convince three thousand or thirty thousand if they were in the same state. Granted, the same soil, the same seed, the same season, and the same wonder were King God, and I cannot imagine any reason why a limit should be set to results.

The Holy Spirit is divine, and consequently He knows how to influence all kinds of men, and He can by the instrumentalities now in use reach just as many as He pleases. I recollect well when I first preached in London a remark made by a friend, which very greatly encouraged me at the time and has proved true in my experience. When he heard that my little country chapel had been filled by the inhabitants of the village in which I had preached, he gave me hope of filling a far larger place in London, for, he said, what will draw two hundred will draw two thousand, and what was useful to a few may be made just as useful to a multitude.

I saw at once that it was so. When we are dealing with spiritual forces, we have not to calculate by pounds and ounces or by so many horsepower. We have not to think of quantity.

As an illustration, give me fire. I will not bargain for a furnace. Give me but a single candle, and a city or a forest may soon be in a blaze.

A spark is quite sufficient to begin with, for fire multiplies itself. So give us the truth, a single voice, and the Holy Spirit with it, and none can say where the sacred conflagration will end. One jonah suffices to subdue all Nin■va by one monotonous sentence oft repeated, and despite the weakness of our present instrumentality, if God does but bless the gospel, there is no reason why it should not speedily be felt by the whole of London.

The sermon preached by Peter at Pentecost was the arrow of the Lord's deliverance to three thousand, and there is no reason why the Lord should not cause one of ours to be the same. Three thousand cannot be converted if only a hundred are present to hear, but with this vast assembly and thousands of smaller ones within gunshot, why should not the slain of the Lord be many? Assuredly, the divine comforter can as readily bless three millions as three individuals. But it would appear from our text that the additions to the Pentecostal church were not made in a mass at all times.

The Spirit of God was still with them, but their increase was more gradual. The Lord added to the church daily of such as should be saved. You have seen a heavy shower of rain in the spring.

In a moment a big drop has fallen upon the pavement, and before you were ready to escape from it a deluge followed so plenteous that you half suspected a cloud had been rent in twain right over your head. Such a sudden and impetuous shower may serve for a figure of the conversion of three thousand souls at once, but at other times rain has fallen gently and has continued to descend hour by hour, a soft warm spring watering which in its own way and fashion has done its work of blessing quite as surely as the heavenly downpour. We must be very thankful if we do not see three thousand converted in one day.

If we see three hundred every day for ten days, or if we see thirty every day for a hundred days, we ought indeed to be grateful for all success so long as sinners do really come to Jesus. Whether they come in troops or one by one, we will welcome them. The woman who lost her money was glad to find one piece, although she would have been even more glad to have found a purseful if it had been lost.

I want you to think about additions to the church as they used to occur among the early Christians. Certain people are always talking about the early church, a very queer notion they seem to have of the aforesaid early church. Their early church was very different from anything we meet with in the Acts of the Apostles, for it was very particular in its architecture, millinery, and music.

This early church could not worship at all unless it had a visible altar with a rear rodos and frontal at which gentlemen in gorgeous attire of blue and scarlet and fine linen made postures many and bowings not a few. The early church, it seems, believed in baptismal regeneration, transubstantiation, priestcraft, and sacramental efficacy. Well, that may be or may not be, but there was an earlier church which had no such notions, and it is for us to get right away from such early churches to the earlier church or the earliest church, and there, I warrant you, you shall find no priestcraft nor nonsense of sacramental efficacy, but simplicity and truth and the power of the Holy Ghost.

The early church, so much admired by Anglicans, was a degenerate vine, a field of wheat and tares, a mass leavened with anti-Christian air in a word, a baptized heathenism. After its own fashion, it set up again the many deities of the heathen, only calling them saints instead of God, putting the Virgin into the place of Venus, and setting up Peter or Paul in the niches formerly occupied by Saturn or Mars. Our present revived early church is only paganism with a border of crosses.

We are resolved to return to the primitive church of which we read. Then they that gladly received the word were baptized, and they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine. In connection with this church, we shall handle our subject, trusting to the Holy Spirit to be with us as with them.

First then, additions to the church, what about them? The Lord added to the church daily of such as should be saved. It seems to have been the custom in the earliest times for persons who had been converted to Christ to join themselves with the church of Jesus Christ. From that fact, I feel persuaded that they did not conceal their convictions.

It is a strong temptation with many to say, I have believed in Jesus, but that is a matter between God and my own soul. There can be no need that I should tell this to others. Can I not go quietly to heaven and be a Nicodemus or a Joseph of Arimathea? To which I reply, yes, you can go quietly to heaven, and we hope you will do so, but that is a different thing from being cowardly and ashamed of Christ.

We will not object to your being a Nicodemus if you will go with him when he carries spices to the grave of Jesus. And you may be a Joseph of Arimathea if you will attend him when he goes boldly in unto Pilate and begs the body of Jesus. Neither of these two brethren were cowardly after the cross had been set up

before their eyes, neither were they ashamed to identify themselves with Christ crucified.

Follow them not in the infancy of their love, but in its mature days. Remember, dear friends, the promise of the gospel runs thus. He that with his heart believeth and with his mouth maketh confession of him shall be saved.

Do not, I charge you, neglect one half of the command. The gospel commission which we have received is this. Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. That is the message as we find it. We did not insert the clause concerning baptism, neither dare we leave it out or advise you to neglect it.

I give you the very words of the Savior. Do not therefore divide the gospel command in order to throw half of it behind your back, but both believe and avow your belief and be added to the church. It is quite clear, too, that believers in those days did not try to go to heaven alone.

There has been a great deal said in these latter days about being simply a Christian and not joining any particular church, a piece of cat mostly, and in all cases a mistake. In the name of unity this system is preached up, and yet it is clear to all that it is the reverse of unity. It is calculated to put an end to all visible church fellowship.

The good people mentioned in our text joined themselves with the church of God in Jerusalem at once. I dare say that even in those days, had they criticized the church, they would have found faults in her. Certainly within a few weeks great faults had to be remedied.

But these converts felt that the society of Jerusalem was the church of Christ, and therefore they joined themselves thereto. All of you can meet with churches of Jesus Christ if you choose to look for them. If you wait for a perfect church, you must wait until you get to heaven.

Even if you could find a perfect assembly on earth, I am sure they would not admit you to their fellowship, for you are not perfect yourself. Find out those people who are nearest to the scriptures, who hold the truth in doctrine and in ordinance, and are most like the apostolic church, and then cast in your lot with them, and you will be blessed in the deed. Consider the matter and reflect that if it would be right for you to remain out of church fellowship, it must be right for every other believer to remain in the same condition, and then there would be no visible church on earth at all, and no body of people banded together to maintain the Christian ordinances.

Christian fellowship, especially in the breaking of bread and the maintenance of an evangelistic ministry, would become an impossibility if no one openly avowed the Saviour's cause. Act then according to your duty. If you be a Christian, join with Christians.

And if you love the master, love the servants. If you love the captain, unite with the army, and join that regiment of it which you think cleaves closest to the master's word. Observe next that the persons who were received at Pentecost were added to the church by the Lord.

Does anybody else ever add to the church? Oh yes. The devil too often thrusts in his servants. Who was it that added Judas and Ananias and Sapphira, Simon and Magus and Demas to the church? Who was it that stole forth by night and sowed tares among the wheat? That evil spirit is not dead.

He is still busy enough in this department, and continually adds to the church such as are not saved. His are the mixed multitude which infest the camp of Israel, and are the first to fall a-lusting. His the Achans who bring a curse upon the tribes.

His are those of whom Jude says certain men crept in unawares who were before of old ordained to this condemnation. These adulterate the church, and by so doing they weaken and defile it, and bring much grief and dishonor. When the Lord adds to the church, that is quite another matter.

Moreover, the church itself cannot avoid adding some who should not be received. With the greatest possible care and prudence we shall still make mistakes, and some are thus added whom the Lord never added to the church. You have heard Mr. Hill's story of meeting a man in the street one night who hiccuped up to him and said, How do you do, Mr. Hill? I am one of your converts.

Yes, said Roland, I should say you are, but you are none of God's, or else you would not be drunk. Converts of that sort are far too numerous. Converts of the preacher, converts of friends, or converts of a certain fashion of making profession, but not true born, children of the Lord.

Dear friends, I invite all of you who are thinking about joining the church to search and see whether you are such as the Lord would add to the church. If you are, you have been converted by the Lord, you have been wounded by the Lord, you have been healed by the Lord, and in the Lord is your righteousness and trust. It has not been man's doing.

Whoever may have been the instrument, the Holy Spirit has wrought all your works in you. You must have been the subject of a divine agency. Something more than you could do for yourself or any man could do for you must have been wrought in you by the Lord.

He who made you has new made you. Oh, dear friends who love the Lord, join in earnest prayer that the Lord would add to the church daily of the saved ones, for we long for such. Then additions to the church of a right kind are described in the text by the words, such as should be saved.

Only those words are not quite a correct translation of the original. I suppose they were borrowed from the vulgar Latin, they are not in the Greek. The translation should be either the Lord added to the church daily the saved or the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Saved persons were added to the church and only such are fit to be added. We are not authorized to receive into our number those who desire to be saved as certain brethren do. I commend their design in so doing, but I am sure they have not scripture for it.

Those who are being saved in whom the work of salvation is really begun are the only proper candidates. These are spoken of in the 44th verse as believers. The proper persons to be added to the visible church of Christ are those who believe to the salvation of their souls, who are from day to day experiencing the saving power of the name of Jesus by being delivered from sin, by being saved from the customs of the world, by being saved in the sense of sanctified from the various corruptions and lusts which rule among the sons of men.

These are the sort of persons who should be added to the church. So let the question go round. Am I saved? Have I believed in Jesus? If I have, the process of salvation within me is going on.

I am being delivered from the reigning ruling power of sin each day. I am being kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and I shall be kept and presented at last spotless before the presence of God with exceeding joy. We set the door wide open to all who are saved, however little their faith may be.

The church has no right to exclude any of the saved because their knowledge or experience is not that of advanced believers. If they believe in Jesus and are saved, the babes are of the family and ought to be received. The lambs belong to the flock and ought not to be kept outside the fold.

Church membership is not a certificate of advanced Christianity. It is simply the recognition of the profession of saving faith in Jesus Christ. May the Lord add to his church many of the saved, and may we sit at the Lord's table together and sing of redeeming grace and dying love as those who love the Savior.

Come hither, ye who are the Lord's little ones, but far hence, ye unbelievers and unregenerate. Again the text says, the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. They were really added to the church.

I am afraid certain persons names are added to the church, but they themselves are not. They increase our numbers, they are added like figures on a slate, but they do not augment our strength. The church is a vital body, and to add to a vitalized body requires a divine operation.

The church is like a tree. If you want to add to a tree, you cannot take a dead bow and tie it on. That is not adding to it, but encumbering it.

To add to a tree, there must be grafting done, which requires skill, and the branch itself alive must be knit to the living trunk by a living junction, so that the vital sap of the tree shall flow into the grafted bow. A true church is a living thing, and only living men and women, made alive by the Spirit of God, are fit to be grafted into it, and the grafting must be made by the Lord Himself. Otherwise, it is no true addition to the church of God.

Some members are only tied on to the church, and they are neither use nor ornament, as a dead bow fastened to a tree would add no beauty to it, and would certainly bring forth no fruit. There must be a living union, so that the life which is in the church shall join with the life which is in the man, and the one life of the one quickening Spirit shall flow through the whole of the body. When I hear professors railing at the churches to which they belong, when I see disunion and disaffectation among church members, I can well understand that the Lord never added them, but it would be a great mercy to the church if the Lord would take them away.

When the Lord adds them, added they are for time and for eternity, and they can say to the church, Where thou dwellest, I will dwell. Thy people shall be my people, for thy God is my God. One more point in the text is this, that the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

There were additions to the church every day. Some churches, if they have an addition once in twelve months, make as much noise over that one as a hen does when she has laid an egg. Now in the early church they would not have been contented with so small an increase.

They would have gone weeping and mourning all over Jerusalem if there had been additions but once in the year. But, cries one, if we have an addition every month, is not that enough? Well, it is enough for some people, but when hearts are warm and full of love to Christ, we want him to be praised from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same, and we long to have added to the church daily of such

as are saved. Why not? But you reply, We are not daily preaching.

That may be, but we ought to be. If not daily in the pulpit, there should be the daily preaching of the life, and if all the members of the church were daily teaching of Jesus Christ from house to house, a daily sowing would bring a daily reaping. If we were daily praying with earnestness, and daily using every effort we could by the power of the Holy Spirit, and if daily the church bowed in fellowship with her master, we should soon see added to it daily of those who are saved.

Why do we not see it, says one, in many churches? Why? Because many churches do not believe in it. If there were many converts added to them, they would say, Yes, we hear of a great many additions, but what are they? We hope they will hold on, or some such ungenerous remark. If to some churches there should come a large increase, there are brethren who would not believe it to be genuine, and would despise the little ones.

God will not cause his children to be born where there are none to nurse them. He will be sure not to send converts to churches which do not want them. He will not have his lambs snarled over as if there were so many young wolves, and kept out in the cold by months together to see whether they will howl or bleat.

He loves to see his people watchful for new converts, and watchful over them. The good shepherd would have us feed his lambs, gather them in from the cold field of the world, and carry them to some warm, sheltered place, and nurture them for him. When he sees a church ready to do that, then he will send them his lambs, but not till then.

That brings me to the second point, which is this. Additions to the church, under what conditions may we expect them on a large scale? Turn to the chapter again, and we shall have our answer. We may expect additions to every church of God on a large scale when she has, first of all, a Holy Ghost ministry.

Peter was no doubt a man of considerable natural abilities. He was also a warm-hearted, fervent man, just such in one as would have power over his fellow men, because of the enthusiasm which dwelt in himself. But for all this, Peter had never seen three thousand persons converted until he had been baptized with the Holy Ghost.

After the tongue of fire had sat upon Peter's head, he was another man from what he had been before. If, dear brethren, we are to see large multitudes converted, the power of the preacher must lie in his being filled with the Holy Ghost. I fear me that many churches would not be content with a ministry whose power would lie solely in the Holy Spirit.

I mean this, that they judge a minister by his elaboration of style, or beauty of imagery, or degree of culture, and if he be a man of such refined speech that only a select few can understand him, he is a favorite with what is considered to be a respectable church. Some despise a preacher whom the common people hear gladly, who uses great plainness of speech and discards the words which man's wisdom teaches. They complain that he is only fit to address the tag-rag of the people, and for this they turn their backs upon him.

They want not the fire of the Spirit, but the flash of oratory, not the rushing wind of the Holy Ghost, but the perfumed zephyrs of high culture. The jingle of rhetoric has more attraction for them than the certain sound of the trumpets of the sanctuary. May God have mercy upon the church that has got into such a miserable state and is so wanting in true education, for where a church is educated by the Lord, she

understands that salvation is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God.

Plainness of speech is the perfection of gospel utterance, for the master himself so spake. Men of studied elocution who can pile up a climax and cap it with a dainty piece of poetry are not the men whom God the Holy Spirit honors to be soul winners. Have you not heard fine orations which have perfectly charmed you by their beauty, and yet after you have heard them, you have felt that if the Lord did bless such sermons to the conversion of anybody, it would be a novelty upon the face of the earth, for there was little of Christ in them and none of the unction of the Holy One? Great sermons are often great sins, and intellectual treats are frequently a mess of savory potage made of unclean meats.

A Holy Ghost ministry, if Peter be the model, is one which is bold, clear, telling, persuasive, one which tells men that Jesus is the Christ, and that they have crucified him, and calls upon them to repent and turn unto the Lord. The truly sent preacher speaks out straight and plain and home to the conscience, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. The Holy Ghost minister chooses Jesus for his main theme, as Peter did.

He did not speak to them about modern science and the ways of twisting scripture into agreement with it. He cared nothing for the maunderings of the rabbis or the philosophies of the Greeks, but he went right on setting forth Christ crucified and Christ risen from the dead. When he had preached Christ, he made a pointed personal appeal to them and said, repent and be baptized, every one of you.

He was not afraid to give such an exhortation. He was not like some who say, we must warn sinners and then leave them. We may preach Christ to them but may not bid them repent.

But he came boldly forth with a gospel exhortation and left it to his masters and sent it home by the power of the Holy Spirit. That was the sort of sermon which God blesses. The man was full of God and God shone through the man and worked with him.

The remission of sins was sought for and was found through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ by a vast number of souls. May God send to all his churches a Holy Ghost ministry. But if there are to be many additions to the church, it must next be a Holy Ghost church.

Note that. What is a Holy Ghost church? Well, it is a church baptized into his power and this will be known first by its being steadfast. Read the 42nd verse.

And they continued steadfast. He will not bless a church which is excited and then relapses, is carried away by every novelty and does not know what it believes, but a church which abides in Jesus and in his truth. They were steadfast in four points.

First, in the apostles doctrine. They were a doctrinal church. They believed in being steadfast in fixed truth.

They did not belong to the shifty generation of men who plead that their views are progressive and that they cannot hold themselves bound by a plain creed. Dear brethren and sisters, never give up the grand old truths of the gospel. Let no excitement, even though it be the whirlwind of a revival, ever sweep you off your feet concerning the great doctrines of the cross.

If God does not save men by truth, he certainly will not save them by lies. And if the old gospel is not competent to work a revival, then we will do without the revival. We will keep to the old truth anyhow come what may.

Our flag is nailed to the mast. Next, they were steadfast in fellowship. They loved each other and they continued doing so.

They conversed with one another about the things of God and they did not give up the converse. They helped each other when they were in need and they continued in such liberality. They were true brethren and their fellowship was not broken.

Next, they continued in the breaking of bread, which is a delightful ordinance and never to be despised or underestimated. As often as they could, they showed Christ's death till he should come. They delighted to enjoy the dear memorials of his sacred passion, both in the assembly and from house to house.

They remained also steadfast in prayer. Mark that, God cannot bless a church which does not pray, and churches must increase in supplication if they would increase in strength. Sacred importunity must besiege the throne of God and then the blessing will be yielded.

O children of the heavenly King, ye hamper the spirit and hinder the blessing if ye restrain prayer. Here were four points in which the church was steadfast and God blessed it. Note next that it was a united church.

We read of them that they were so united that they had all things in common and they continued daily with one accord in the temple. There were no parties among them, no petty strifes and divisions. They loved the Lord too well for that.

The sacred dove takes his flight when strife comes in. If you divide the church within itself, you also divide it from the mighty operations of the Spirit of God. Be ye full of love to one another and then you may expect that God the Holy Ghost will fill you with blessing.

They were a generous church as well as a united church. They were so generous that they threw in their property into a common stock lest any should be in need. They were not communists, they were Christians.

The difference between a communist and a Christian is this. A communist says all yours is mine while a Christian says all mine is yours and that is a very different thing. The one is forgetting and the other is forgiving.

These believers acted in such a generous spirit one to the other that it seemed as if nobody accounted that what he had belonged to himself but generously gave of it to the necessities of others. I do not believe the Lord will ever bless a stingy church. There are churches whose minister has anxiously to inquire how he shall even provide food and raiment for his household and yet these churches are not very poor.

There are churches where more is paid per annum for cleaning the shoes of the worshippers than they spend upon the cause of Christ and where this is the case, no great good will be done. The Lord will never bless a synagogue of misers. If they are churls, they may keep their worship to themselves for God is known as a generous God and he loves to have a generous people.

Again these people were in such a condition that their houses and homes were holy places. I want you to notice this that they were breaking bread from house to house and did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. They did not think that religion was meant only for Sundays and what men nowadays call the house of God.

Their own houses were houses of God and their own meals were so mixed and mingled with the Lord's supper that to this off eating their common meals and when they began eating the supper of the Lord, they elevated their meals into diets for worship. They so consecrated everything with prayer and praise that all around them was holiness unto the Lord. I wish our houses were thus dedicated to the Lord so that we worship God all the day long and made our dwellings temples for the living God.

A great dignitary not long ago informed us that there is great efficacy in daily prayer in the parish church. He even asserted that however few might attend, it was more acceptable than any other worship. I suppose that prayer in the parish church with nobody to join in it except the vicar and the beadle is far more effectual than the largest family gathering in the house at home.

This was evidently his Lordship's idea and I suppose the literature which his Lordship was best acquainted with was of such an order as to have led him to draw that inference. Had he been acquainted with the Bible and such old-fashioned books, he would have learned rather differently and if someone should make him a present of a new testament, it might perhaps suggest a few new thoughts to him. Does God need a house? He who made the heavens and the earth, does he dwell in temples made with hands? What crass ignorance is this? No house beneath the sky is more holy than a place where a Christian lives and eats and drinks and sleeps and praises the Lord in all that he does and there is no worship more heavenly than that which is presented by holy families devoted to his fear.

To sacrifice home worship to public worship is a most evil course of action. Morning and evening devotion in a cottage is infinitely more pleasing in the sight of God than all the cathedral pump which delights the carnal eye and ear. Every truly Christian household is a church.

As such, it is competent for the discharge of any function of divine worship, whatever it may be. Are we not all priests? Why do we need to call in others to make devotion a performance? Let every man be a priest in his own house. Are you not all kings if you love the Lord? Then make your houses palaces of joy and temples of holiness.

One reason why the early church had such a blessing was because her members had such homes. When we are like them, we shall have added to the church daily of the saved. I have already mentioned that they were a praying church and that accounted greatly for the increase.

They were a devout church, a church which did not forget any part of the Lord's will. They were a baptized church and they were a bread-breaking church so that they were obedient to Christ in both ordinances. They were also a joyful church.

We find that they ate their meat with gladness. Their religion was not of the somber hue which comes of doubting and fearing. They were believers in a risen redeemer and though they knew that they would soon be persecuted, they so rejoiced that everybody could read heaven shining on their faces and might have known that they believed in the blessed gospel for they were a blessed people.

They were also a praising church for they said they praised God and they had favor with all the people. May the Lord make this church and all churches around us to be as holy and joyful as that apostolical community. I must conclude with a word upon that which I wanted most of all to say.

What responsibilities do these additions to the church bring to us? To you who are to be added to the church tonight, and I thank God you are so many, 107 were to be received that night, it involves this

responsibility. Do not come in among us unless you are saved. Judge yourselves with honesty.

Examine yourselves with care. And although you have gone as far as you have, yet tonight, before I give you the right hand of fellowship, if you are conscious that you are not what you profess to be, I do beseech you still stand back. If you are the weakest of the weak and the feeblest of the feeble, yet if you are sincere, come and welcome.

But if you are not sincere, do not add to your sin by taking upon you a profession which you cannot keep up and by declaring a falsehood before the Lord. For if you do so, remember you will not have lied unto man, but unto God himself in daring to avow yourselves Christians while you are unbelievers. Come and welcome if you are believers.

And when you come, remember that the responsibility which you undertake in God's strength is that you live to prove that you have really given yourself up to the church. That you mean to serve Christ with all your heart and that you will seek to promote the holiness and unity of the church which you join and will strive to do nothing to dishonor her good name or to grieve the spirit of God. In joining the church, pray to be continued steadfast in doctrine and fellowship.

Pray for more grace that you may be filled with the spirit of God. Do not come in to weaken us. We are weak enough already.

Do not come in to adulterate our purity. We have enough impurity even now. Pray that God may make you a real increase to our prayerfulness, to our holiness, to our earnestness, to our higher life and then come and welcome and the Lord be with you.

As for us who shall receive the converts, what is our responsibility? First to welcome them heartily. Let us open wide the door of our hearts and say come and welcome for Jesus Christ's sake. After welcoming them, we must watch over them.

And when so many are added, double care is needed. Of course, no two pastors can possibly watch over this vast assembly of 4,500 professed believers. Let the watching be done by all the members.

By the officers of the church first and then by every individual. I am very thankful that out of the cheering number to be brought in tonight, the larger proportion belong to the families of the church. My brethren and sisters already in Christ, it is fortunate for these young people that they have you to watch over them.

Never let it be said that any parent discourages his child, that any guardian discourages the young after they have come forward and avowed their faith. If you notice faults, remember you have faults yourselves. Do not tauntingly throw their failing in their teeth as some have unkindly done.

Guide them and cheer them on. Help their weakness. Bear with their ignorance and impetuosity.

Correct their mistakes. I charge you, my beloved sisters, be nursing mothers in the church. And you, my brethren, be fathers to these young people that they may be enabled by your help through God's spirit to hold on their way.

It is an evil thing to receive members and never care for them afterwards. Among so many, some must escape our supervision. But if all the members of the church were watchful, this could not be.

Each would have someone to care for him. Each one would have a friend to whom to tell his troubles and his cares. Watch over the church then, I pray you.

And ye elder ones, myself chiefly among you, let our example be such as they can safely follow. Let them not come into the church to find us cold. Let us try as we see these young ones coming among us to grow young again in heart and sympathy.

In receiving these new members, we ought to have, dear brethren, an excess of new strength and a more vigorous life. The church ought to be giving out more light, for here are fresh lamps. She should be doing more for Christ.

Here are new workers. She should be herself stronger, more daring, more useful, for here are bold soldiers, newly enlisted. I think as I see new converts brought in, I see the Lord lighting up new stars to gladden this world's night.

I see him swearing in new soldiers to fight Christ's battles. I see him sending out new sawers to sow the plains of the world for the ever-glorious harvest. And I bless and praise and magnify his name with gladness of soul.

Heavenly Father, keep them. Yea, keep us all. Lest any of us, though added to the church on earth, should not be added to the church in heaven.

Keep us so that when the master roll is read for the last time, we who have had our names inscribed among the saints on earth may find them written amongst the blessed in heaven. May God grant it, and he shall have all the glory. Amen.

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