

RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP (LESSON 51)

DISCIPLESHIP AND THE CHURCH (CONTINUED). Martin Lloyd-Jones speaks of the disciple's need to be a part of the church. "Now I want to emphasize particularly verse 42 and 46 (Acts 2). These men and women had become Christians. How did they show it? Negatively, they separated themselves from what they had been. Positively, they joined the church and continued in the church. Let me divide this up. The first thing we are told is that they came together constantly – 'they continued steadfastly'...All who believed these things, all who were Christians, were constantly found together. So here is my first proposition. One of the first tests you must apply to yourself, or to anybody else, in order to discover whether or not you are a Christian is to ask the question, 'Do you want to come together with other Christians?' If you do not feel this desire, there is only explanation: You are not a Christian. Any believer, group of believers, or organization that attempts to do the work of making disciples without the church compromises God's plan. It violates the command of Scripture and the spiritual instinct of a true disciple. That does not mean that discipleship has to happen within the walls of a building, or that there is no purpose for parachurch ministries. It is to say that for discipleship to be Biblical, the church must be an integral part of the process. On the other hand, many churches have neglected or ignored the discipleship process set forth by the Jerusalem church.