**RETHINKING THE CHURCH**

It's Time to Renew the Church - Part1

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**Scripture Reading**

**Matthew 16:13-18**

**Acts 2:41-47**

**Matthew 16:18 (NIV)- Memory Verse**
And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

**The danger of erosion**: It's a sneaky reality of life that silently, subtly, and slowly eats away at islands also eats away at lives and institutions, such as churches.

The church is not affiliated with any political party. It is not restricted by any racial or linguistic barriers. It is devoid of any social or economic status. It is the "called out ones" from the world by Jesus Christ to make up His body. The church belongs to Jesus Christ. It does not belong to any pastor, group of leaders, any individual or any congregation. Jesus is the head of the church. Everything a church does should be about upholding and magnifying the reputation of Jesus.

**THE BIRTH OF THE FIRST CHURCH**

**Acts 2:1-13 (NIV)**
When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?
9  Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome
(both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs--we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

**THE FOUR KEY ELEMENTS OF EVERY CHURCH**

**Acts 2:42 (NIV)**
They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

1. **Teaching**

2. **Fellowship (Life Together)**

3. **Worship**

4. **Prayer**

**THREE PRIORITIES FOR EVERY CHURCH**

1. **Think Spiritually**

Biblical thinking must override secular planning and corporate mentality.

2. **Stay Biblical**

Studied, accurate decisions must originate from God's Word, not human opinion.

3. **Be Flexible**

Essential changes must occur to counter act any and all signs of erosion.