

COMMUNITY IN CHRIST

ACTS 2:42-47

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE - FEBRUARY 4, 2024

SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 2:42-47 ESV

42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe[a] came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

Reflect on a time when you felt a deep sense of belonging to a community. What made that experience meaningful?

SERMON RECAP

The sermon, "Community in Christ," delves into the essence of the Christian community as depicted in Acts 2:42-47. It emphasizes the importance of connection, care, and celebration within the body of Christ. Through the early church's example, we learn the significance of devoting ourselves to apostolic teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer. This sermon challenges us to live out these pillars in our modern context, fostering a community that mirrors the unity, generosity, and joy of the first believers.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. Read Acts 2:42-47 aloud as a group. Share what stands out to you without moving into interpretation or application yet.
 - How did the early church practice their devotion to the apostles' teaching and fellowship?
 - What role did breaking bread and prayer play in their community?
 - How did their sense of community impact the broader society around them?

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. Connection in Christ
 - Discuss the significance of the four pillars (apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer) mentioned in verse 42. How do these pillars support a vibrant Christian community?
 - Reflect on the role of awe, wonders, and signs in the life of the early church. How does this compare to our experience today?
2. Care in Community
 - Verse 44-45 speaks about having all things in common and distributing to the needy. How does this concept challenge our individualistic society?
 - Consider the implications of selling possessions and sharing resources. How can we apply this principle without adopting a simplistic or impractical approach?
3. Celebration in Communion
 - Verses 46-47 highlight the joy and favor experienced by the early church. Discuss the balance between formal worship in the temple and informal gatherings in homes. How does this model inform our church life today?
 - The passage concludes with "And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved." What does this tell us about the evangelistic impact of authentic community?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. Cultivating Connection

- In what ways can you deepen your commitment to learning from Scripture, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer within your community?
 - How can our group foster a sense of awe and expectation for God’s work among us?
2. Practicing Care
- Identify practical steps our group can take to support members in need and extend care beyond our immediate circle.
 - How can we cultivate a spirit of generosity and willingness to share, reflecting the early church’s example?
3. Embracing Celebration
- Discuss how we can incorporate more celebratory practices in our gatherings, acknowledging God’s goodness and grace.
 - How can our community life be a witness to the joy of salvation and attract others to Christ?

LEADER NOTES

- Follow up on, “Mission 3.” Three names, three areas: family, friends, fun, and three acts: prayer, care, and share.
- Encourage sharing personal experiences and challenges in living out these principles.
- Consider planning a group activity that embodies one of the sermon’s points, such as a shared meal, service project, or prayer night.
- Highlight upcoming church initiatives and gatherings that align with the sermon’s themes, encouraging participation and deeper engagement with the wider church community.
- Remember this Wednesday is “First Wednesday” and the potluck will start at 6:30 pm. The prayer gathering will be from 7:30 pm to 9 pm.