

## The fellowship of the believers - Acts 2: 42-47

### Introduction

- **Context** = explanation looking back on how the Early Church developed following the events of the Day of Pentecost when all the disciples were gathered in one place in Jerusalem, along with many Jews who had come together from many nations to celebrate the feast.
- Holy Spirit came as prophesied in OT and promised by Jesus.
- Witnessed by crowds who all heard in their own languages.
- Peter's gospel sermon explaining how all the recent events they had witnessed were part of God's plan to redeem His people, after which about 3,000 repented, were baptised and continued meeting together and passing on the Good News of salvation through Jesus.
- **Personal testimony**
- Met and talked with an old school friend at time of student mission in my last year at uni after year out in France.
- Unconvinced by meeting on Christianity & psychology but intrigued by follow-up personal testimony of friend.
- Responded to gospel at eve meeting 'Counting the Cost' with David Watson, including a call based on Rev 3: 20.
- Joined Christian Union for teaching and powerful student church with congregation of 600 to make up for lost time in final year at Manchester.
- Most powerful memories of teaching there were a New Year message based on Isaiah 26: 3 Perfect Peace, and a 4-part series based on Acts 2: 42 which reflected the experience lived out in that church.

## 1. The apostles' teaching

= doctrine

They devoted/ committed themselves to the apostles' teaching continued steadfastly in

- Think back to when you first heard & responded to gospel
- At the heart of **the Christian church** that began on that day is **the truth of the gospel**: Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life, the only way we can come to Father God through responding to the message as Holy Spirit touches our heart.
- This is the truth the apostles were proclaiming as a foundation for their faith and lived-out experience.
- Today's church is a group of people who know the gospel of Jesus Christ and are devoted to growing in it as they live out its truth.
- **Challenge to go on learning from God's word daily**
- Ps 119: 105-6: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path."
- We never stop learning – from God's word, from worship songs, Christian books, other people's testimony, anything that Holy Spirit uses to speak into our lives and show us the way ahead.

## 2. The fellowship – koinonía

- = communion, fellowship, sharing in common  
Involves communication, contribution, partnership, participation, distribution
- Name given to student group meeting after the eve service
- 'Church Family' used to describe the church – apt description.
- Continuing welcome to all who come – no discrimination.
- Know & be known, open sharing & encouragement.
- Life groups, Church café, village events.
- Serving together and giving to those in need.

## 3. The breaking of bread

Break a piece off the loaf

- Bread is broken and consecrated to the Lord every Sabbath.
- Jesus declared: “I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.” : John 6: 35
- Eating together was important, as in Jewish meals, beginning with thanksgiving and including the breaking of bread.
- At the Last Supper with his disciples, Jesus showed his servant heart by washing their feet, and He gave them the New Commandment: “As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”
- After His resurrection, Jesus was recognised by His disciples in the breaking of bread:  
Luke 24: 30-31 on the Road to Emmaus  
John 20: 12-13 after the miraculous catch of fish  
1 Cor 11: 23-26 The Lord's Supper
- Hospitality and sharing meals is an important part of ministry.
- This reference applies to shared meals as well as to the Lord's Supper as a formal act.

#### 4. The prayers

Prayer to God – formal when meeting in the temple and other prayers as taught by Jesus and as inspired by Holy Spirit.

#### Conclusion

- What impression did they give to the surrounding people?
- Everyone was filled with awe  
*Phobos* = fear of the Lord & awareness of His presence.
- Many wonders & miraculous signs.
- The Lord added to their number those who were being saved.
  
- What lessons can we learn from this account of the Early Church?