



WnL CONNECT GROUPS

A Church is a Community

Acts 2:41-47

MAIN POINT

God's plan for making disciples involves a community of believers who are there for each other.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

- Whenever you are in need of someone else's help, do you know who you would turn to?
- Why that person? What is it about them or your relationship with them that leads you to count on them in a time of need?

We are constantly living in community with others, but that is all the more true when we are in a time of need. The early church, from its outset, became the centre of community for its members, primarily because individuals were there for one another when they were in need.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

Have A volunteer read Acts 2:41-42.

- Imagine our church had a 3,000 member increase in one day. What would some of the logistical and relational challenges be?
- Why was belonging to a community of believers so important to these first Christians? What made these believers want to get together?
- There are four purposes of the church here in Acts 2. What are they?



The church is devoted to the apostle's teaching, devoted to fellowship, devoted to breaking bread, and devoted to prayers.

- Why are these four areas vital to the church?
- What role did getting together for fellowship play in unifying the early church?

Have a volunteer read Acts 2:43-47.

- Why did the early church experience fear? Discuss.
- Do you have the same awe and reverence for God? Why or why not?

As the new believers began to join the early church, we learn that fear came over everyone. This type of fear carries a unique connotation. It is a healthy fear, a reverent fear of God. Accordingly, this fear arose as many wonders and signs were being performed through the apostles. These actions were performed in order to demonstrate God's hand in the organization of the church.

- According to these verses, what are marks of a healthy church? What attitudes accompanied these actions?
- What did the people demonstrate by selling their possessions and by their unified commitment to the church?
- Which of these actions—fellowship, worship, discipleship, ministry, and evangelism—do you more naturally gravitate toward? Why is the balance of all five important for the individual Christian and the church as a whole?
- How are we, as growing disciples, strengthened by doing each of these things together (worshipping, connecting, serving and going)? What might happen if we tried to live out these values on our own?
- What impact do you think the early church's community had on its rapid growth (v. 47)? What does the world learn about God through healthy Christian community?
- For first-century Christians, what was the draw of becoming part of a local body of believers? Is it the same draw today? Why or why not?
- What are some of the unique challenges we face as we practice biblical community?

The unity of the church was a testimony to God's presence, and "every day the Lord added to them those who were being saved" (v. 47). The early church was a growing church. They first had a reverent fear for God that guided them in their daily living (see v. 43). Next, they made loving other believers as themselves a priority for their fellowship, even to the point of selling private property in order to provide for members in need (vv. 44-45). They followed Jesus' great commandment to a "T." As a result, God honoured them for that by blessing them with new members every day.



APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

- Would people outside of our church say we model the characteristics of the Acts 2 church? Where do we excel, and where might there be room for improvement? What can our group do to help?
- What are some of the unique challenges we face as a church to engaging deeply with each other? What could each of us do to make our church a closer community?
- In what ways has our discussion challenged your view of church membership? How will you approach church differently moving forward?

PRAYER

Ask God to bless the church with a unity born of genuine love that Christians have for one another. Ask God to build up the faith of each person so that he or she may love God with all his or her being and that each might truly demonstrate love for one another. Thank God for His commitment to growing disciples. Pray that God would continue to challenge our view of His church and our role in it.

