

LG 7: A New Community Acts 2:37-47

Objectives: We want to learn how we should live life as a community of Spirit-filled Christians. We will seek to apply this passage to our individual and corporate lives. We want this passage to shape our small groups.

Getting to Know You (15 minutes)

What would you like to be true of this group? (What characteristics?)

Launch

Write on the white board: Acts 1:8--the mission of Jesus. Acts 2--the power of Jesus to live the mission. The last 2 weeks we learned about the mission of Jesus, and the power with which we are to live out this mission. Tonight we are going to look at a summary statement of how the earliest church lived in community. First we will pick up at the end of a sermon that Peter is preaching.

Explore

Have someone summarize what happened in **2:1-41** (120 receive the HS, Peter preaches and 3,000 repent and join this new community of believers)

Read **2:37-47**

2:41 and 2:47 both talk about how the Lord was adding to their numbers. What does this tell us about one of God's purposes for his people? (God is serious about reaching out to others. Even the passage most often used to describe the life of a body of believers is set in the context of outreach to those outside the body)

John Stott (a British pastor) put it this way: "No self-centered, self-contained (only inward focused) church can claim to be filled with the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a missionary Spirit. So a Spirit filled church is a missionary church."

- **What do you think of this? Agree? Disagree? Does the scripture in Acts back this up?**

Re-read 2:42-47 to yourself. What do you observe about how they lived? (record on board, there is a lot here but at minimum they were a learning, loving, worshipping and witnessing community)

What does "devoted" mean?

What does "fellowship" mean? (The word literally means "common." It is what they shared together in common.)

- **What did they share together?** (They shared in a relationship with God; they shared out with each others their lives, stuff and gospel)

What does breaking of bread mean?

(probably referring to a meal together where they remembered the death and resurrection of Jesus with communion)

What was their attitude like? How did that affect their community?

Summary: this passage describes a new community put together by God and empowered by God the Holy Spirit. It is a community that is not centered on doing (or not doing) things, but on relationships. There are at least 4 relationships listed that this new community had.

- **What are some of the relationships you see in the passage?** (they related to God, the apostles, each other and the world)
- **How did this new community relate in each of these relationships?** (worshipped God, loved each other, submitted to apostles teaching, they shared Christ with the world)

Apply (You want good practical discussion here, so leave time!)

How do these relationships look in our lives today? (we have apostles teaching in NT, the rest are the same as in Acts)

In what ways are these relationships difficult to live out in our culture?

What could it look like if this passage described our life group? (practical dreaming time for your LG)

- **What will keep this from happening?**
- **What are some steps we can take as a group to make this a reality?**
- **What are some steps you can take personally?**
- **Pray together**

Announcements (5 minutes)

- Spooktoberfest?