

Acts 2: 40-47 (New International Version)

⁴¹Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

OASIS: Getting first things first; Acts 2:40-47

Possible Starter question: When you put together an item with “some assembly required” (a puzzle, a swing set, a household item, etc.), are you more likely to work from a picture or set of directions, or do you like to dive right in?

Transitional comment: In Acts chapter 2, we are provided with a model – a prototype, in fact – of what the church looks like when it works as intended. Let’s turn to Acts 2 and take a look.

- Pray for the Holy Spirit’s leading (if you haven’t already prayed)

Read and Overview observations:

- In order to establish the context of today’s passage, read Acts 2:1-39.

- O What is going on in the story through verse 39?

Allow people to make general observations. This will give you the chance to briefly catch people up on what’s happening without having to do an intensive study on the first section of Acts 2.

- O What is the main point that Peter is trying to convey to his hearers in his ‘min-sermon’?

A What are the implications for the way we think about the church?

- Read aloud Acts 2:40-47. Especially consider how this story can become a ‘model’ for what the church should be and what kinds of activities are involved.

- O From the very first days of the church, what were the environments in which the people gathered? *Temple courts and peoples’ homes.*

I Why do you think they gathered both in the large group as well as in small groups?

I What could be done in the temple courts that couldn’t be accomplished in a home?

I What could the church do in homes that it couldn’t do in the temple courts?

I What organizational and leadership challenges must this early church have faced?

- O What are the activities listed in this passage?

I How do these activities align with Grace Chapel’s core values of Worship, Community, Discipleship, Service and Outreach?

I Can these various activities of the church stand alone, or are they each contingent on one another? Explain some of these connections.

I If you were forced to identify one or two of these activities as most important, which would it be?
Explain your answer.

Is there a phrase in this passage that is most appealing to you? What is it and why does it resonate?

O Who benefits from the experience described in these verses?

O How do they benefit?

How did the early church do outreach? Was it an intentional activity or was it an outcome? Explain.

A How is this description of the church like the experience that you've had at church?

A What do you read here that you would like to experience more of?

A Is there any aspect of this description that, if experienced, would be outside of your comfort zone?

I Is this a human enterprise or a divine enterprise? Explain your answer?

Summary

A As a fellow participant in the life of the church, which aspect of life modeled in the early church are you missing the most?

A What can you do in the days ahead to strengthen this aspect of your experience as a follower of Christ

Prayer together: for opportunities to live out the life of faith with others in a way that resembles the first church's experience and vitality..

Text is on other page or www.Biblegateway.com

- a. BIG idea: The church is intended to be a community of Christ followers that is vital, balanced and growing.
- b. Key verse/idea: verse 47: "And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."
- c. KEY: O = Observation; I = Interpretation; A = Application (or C = Challenge).

Advice to study leaders:

- d. Complement your OIA questions with "process questions" (what else? what more? What do others of you see/think?).

- e. Determine the core questions you'll ask (know which ones to skip if pressed for time.
- f. Always reword questions in words are comfortable for you (and, if the question doesn't make sense to you, then discard it.)
- g. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. How long do you wait? Take your time; don't rush people but encourage their participation. And avoid answering your own questions!
- h. Timing/pacing: allocate your time and move forward gently, with a steady pace.
- i. Application: Pace the study to conclude with "difference making" application.
- j. Secondary texts—use other texts very sparingly, even if they are relevant. Otherwise, other texts will push you more into the "teacher role," rather than that of facilitator. It also can cause some people to feel distracted or de-powered.
- k. If you are utilizing this "on-line" study and not part of the OASIS course, I recommend that you get the 1-volume commentary entitled New Bible Commentary, Revised (21st Century Edition, IVP). It is well worth the \$40.