



ENOGERA BAPTIST CHURCH
Jesus changes lives

ACTS



Acts #4 – 2:42-47

Acts 2:42 – And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers

NOTE FOR LEADERS

This document is intended to be used as a discussion *guide*, rather than a curriculum. As small group leaders, please feel free to lead through the topic as most appropriate for your group.

HOUSEKEEPING

Things going at the moment:

- **Prayer for Healing:** This Sunday we will encounter the first healing in the book of Acts, and will be therefore hearing from God's word as a church about miraculous healing. We will be providing an opportunity to pray for healing in the service, and so please be in prayer about this Sunday, and if you suffer from a particular ailment, consider coming forward for prayer.
- **Tri Church Summit Dates:** 25th –27th May. Get those registration forms & payment in ASAP!
- **Women's Breakfast:** 8am April 28th, with Fiona Gardiner
- **Service at EBC:** We are looking at for volunteers to help with various parts of church life. Let your small group leader know if you're interested to help. There is a signup sheet at the back of church.



#4 ACTS 2:42-47

REFLECT

This is a time to generate some discussion by reflecting on the ideas in this week's message. Some ideas include:

- Ask the group to debrief for those who have missed the sermons on Sunday
- What stood out? Do you have any questions?
- Were there any special moments of clarity where God spoke to you clearly?

DIG INTO THE WORD

Let's dig a little deeper. Use the biblical text to discover what God reveals to us in his Word.

In this passage we see the results of the disciples receiving the promised Holy Spirit in power, and proclaiming the good news of the gospel: **an explosion of kingdom growth**. These new believers became a new family: the people of God. The rich sold their possessions to provide for the poor as they would for their own flesh and blood – and amazing testimony to the sacrificial and vibrant nature of this new community.

Acts 2:42-47

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

GETTING STARTED: See how many features of the early church your group can find in these verses. Compare your list with Matt's list below (make sure you let the group try before checking the notes):

- The apostles teaching –
 - The role of the Scripture/the apostolic message of the Gospel
 - The centrality of Preaching and teaching Scripture/the gospel
- Qualified Leadership
- Fellowship and The breaking of bread
- Prayer
- The Supernatural power of God
- Being together



- Meeting Together
- Unity
- Material Generosity and contribution
- Care for those in need
- Meeting together in the temple – gathering together for worship as a large group
- Meeting together in their homes – gathering together for prayer and support in small groups
- Worship and giving thanks to God
- Evangelistic growth

APPLY

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scriptures apply directly to their lives. Get group members to talk about the real life implications of the study.

1. **DISCUSS:** How are we to apply these things? Are there any immediate implications?
2. **STUDY: Read Acts 2:42-47**
 - a. What were the spiritual and practical changes due to the outpouring of the Spirit?
 - b. Acts 2:42 is often regarded as laying down the ‘four marks of the church’: the apostles teaching; the fellowship of those who believed; the breaking of bread; and the prayers. These four go together. You can’t separate them or leave one out without damage to the whole thing. Look at each four.
 - i. Consider each in turn. What does it mean for our church to be committed to:
 1. the apostles teaching?
 2. fellowship?
 3. breaking of bread?
 4. prayer?
 - ii. What risks does our church face if any of these is absent or neglected?
 - iii. Which of these four is weakest in our church? How might it be strengthened? How could your group practically work to strengthen it?
3. **DISCUSS:** You can’t love Jesus and not His church. What is your response to this? Why?
4. **UNDERSTANDING:** Matt outlined some common mistakes about what the church is. The Greek word for church simply means ‘the assembled’ or ‘the gathered’. The church was the people of God together. This means it is not
 - a. a building,
 - b. the institution or leadership / hierarchy,
 - c. a spiritual service provider from which we only receive,
 - d. or even the post-modern response the previous mistakes and just abandoning all marks of what the church should be as seen in Acts 2:42-47.
 - e. Which of these mistakes do you see most in our church? How would you use Acts 2:42-47 to correct these mistakes?



PRAY

Thank God for the work and power of the Holy Spirit and pray that we would understand Him more deeply and rely on Him more fully. Pray that our church would more fully resemble this image of a healthy church in Acts 2:42-47.

HELPFUL NOTES

NOTES ON KEY TEXTS

Acts 2:14–5:42 The Witness in Jerusalem. Beginning with Peter’s sermon at Pentecost and continuing through ch. 5, the witness of the Christians is confined to the city of Jerusalem and restricted to Jews.

Acts 2:42–47 The Christian Community Shares a Life in Common. This is the first extensive “summary” in Acts. It depicts a number of activities characteristic of the earliest church (see note on v. 42).

Acts 2:42 The early church was devoted to the apostles’ teaching, which would have included Jesus’ earthly teaching plus what he taught the apostles in his 40 days of resurrection appearances. Fellowship (Gk. *koinōnia*, “participation, sharing”) included the sharing of material goods (v. 44), the breaking of bread (vv. 42, 46), which likely covers both the Lord’s Supper and a larger fellowship meal, and prayers in house meetings and likely also in the temple (vv. 42, 46).

Acts 2:43 The church experienced awe (reverent fear) in response to miracles (wonders), which served as signs of the Spirit’s power and presence among them (v. 43). Miracles were occurring regularly (many ... were being done), many more than the few that Luke records in detail.

Acts 2:44 all things in common. Though some people have referred to this situation as “early communism,” this is clearly not the case, since (1) the giving was voluntary and not compelled by the government, and (2) people still had personal possessions, because they still met in “their homes” (v. 46) and many other Christians after this still owned homes (see 12:12; 17:5; 18:7; 20:20; 21:8, 16; Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philem. 2; 2 John 10). Further, Peter told Ananias and Sapphira that they did not have any obligation to sell their property and give away the money (Acts 5:4). In contrast to communist theory, the abolition of private property is not commanded or implied here. (See 1 Tim. 6:17–19; but also 1 Tim. 6:6–10.) On the other hand, there is a voluntary generosity in sharing possessions that is seen as commendable.

Acts 2:45 On generosity among Christians, cf. 2 Cor. 8:9–15.

Acts 2:47 praising God. One of the characteristics of true revival is a desire to spend much time in worship. And the Lord added to their number is again an affirmation of God’s sovereignty in salvation, since he alone can change the human heart to enable true repentance and faith.



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REFERENCE:

Developed with the help of the following:

- ESV Study Bible, Crossway.