

AM Acts 2 How we should live

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[0:00] Together, chapter 2 of Acts. It's quite a long chapter, but there's not a chapter like it.

! Acts chapter 2. When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now, there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.

And at this sound the multitude came together and they were bewildered, because each one was hearing them speak in his own language. And they were amazed and astonished, saying, Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?

[1:16] How is it that we hear each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.

And all were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, What does this mean? But others, mocking, said, They're filled with new wine.

But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them, Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and give ear to my words.

For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it's only the third hour of the day. But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel. And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams, even on my male servants and female servants.

In those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy, and I will show wonders in the heavens above, and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and vapour of smoke.

[2:59] The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. And it shall come to pass, that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God, with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know. This Jesus delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God. You crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. For David says concerning him, I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken.

Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced. My flesh also will dwell in hope, for you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.

[4:18] You have made known to me the paths of life. You will make me full of gladness with your presence. Brothers, I may say to you with confidence about the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried,

and his tomb is with us this day.

Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that he would set one of his descendants on his throne, he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured out this, that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.

For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.

Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain, that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified.

[5:52] Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brothers, what shall we do?

And Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the promise is for you, and for your children, and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself. And with many other words, he bore witness, and continued to exhort them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation. So those who received his word, were baptized, and there were added that day, about three thousand souls, and they devoted themselves, to the apostles teaching, and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and the prayers, and awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs, were being done through the apostles, and all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and they were selling their possessions, and belongings, and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need, and day by day, attending the temple together, and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food, with glad and generous hearts, praising God, and having favor with all the people, and the Lord added to their number, day by day, those who were being saved.

Amen. May God add his blessing, to that reading of his word. Before we think, a little on verses, a bit over simplistic, but there's a rule of thumb, concerning the simpler aspects, of clinical medicine, and particularly, regarding the training, of junior colleagues, how to perform procedures, on patients, and that rule of thumb is, see one, do one, teach one.

Now before you panic, the doing one, is under supervision, and the more complex, the procedure, the one may become two, or three, and so on, but there's no better way, to learn, how to do something, than to actually practice doing it.

[8:48] And then from a position, of experience, and authority, you can teach someone else, to perform the task, not just correctly, but well.

Now I remember, some months ago, mentioning here, that verse in, 1 Peter 2, 21, which says, for to this, you have been called, because Christ, also suffered for you, leaving you, an example, so that you might, follow in his steps.

And the word, translated example, derives, from the Greek schoolroom, and there, the tutor or teacher, would draw, or write, on a wax, covered board, their version of a tablet.

And the very template, that was written there, was what the pupil, had to imitate, tracing it out, or copying it, carefully, and precisely, so that they might, learn to write, their letters, and learn, their numbers.

So the Lord Jesus, wants us, to imitate him. Having, seen him, seen one, we then, should, do one, or, more, and teach, others, from what we've, learned ourselves, and my, how we fight, that instruction, because it may not, suit us, but we really do, have to bend our will, to his will, if we want, to learn.

[10:25] And isn't that, the way it is, throughout God's, natural world, foxes, teaching their young, how to hunt, birds, teaching their chicks, how to fly, a mother, teaching her daughter, how to swim, or crochet, and so on.

So how do we, live, Christian? How do we, do this religion of ours, in a God pleasing, and God honoring way?

Where do we find, the template, from which we can learn? And surely, it's here in the word. If we're going to find, a pattern to follow, it must be here, in the scriptures.

What is that template? Well, do we, in our practice, match up, to the scripture template? Do you think, we should maybe, have a wee look, and see this morning, just if, and how well, what we do, tallies with God's word.

Now, if I were to ask you, if our reading this morning, came from the Acts of the Apostles, I'm fairly sure, that most of you, would agree, that that was so.

[11:36] But actually, we didn't do that. In the Greek manuscripts, the title of this book, is two words. There are no definite articles, no thes.

This book is called, Acts. That's the first word. And the second word, is a masculine word. All Greek words, are either masculine, feminine, or neuter.

The second word, in the title of our book, is masculine. And it's using the genitive tense, that's the possessive tense, belonging to, we would shorten it to, of.

So, of, apostolic men. Men sent forth. So, the title of the book is, Acts, of men, sent forth.

And so, even in the title, this doesn't claim, to be an encyclopedic, history of the early church.

[12:38] But merely, a collection, of selected extracts, from Acts, of men, sent forth. And realizing that, helps us to understand, the contents, and the format, of the book.

You see, after all, there were 12 apostles. We all know that. Matthias was appointed, to replace, Jude's Iscariot, in chapter 1. But of the 12, thereafter, only three are mentioned, by name.

And that's in 28 chapters. And I'm excluding Paul, who was a bit of a Johnny, come lately, in all of this. But of the three mentioned, the apostle John, is not recorded, as saying a word.

James, James, had a little bit, to say, at the Jerusalem Council, in Acts 15. And Peter's the main speaker, but only up until, chapter 15, after which, he's not mentioned again.

However, under the inspiration, of the Holy Spirit, in a masterly, analytical, and logical way, Luke shows us, that Acts, is part two.

[13:51] it's Luke's gospel, the sequel. And, whereas, in part one, in Luke's gospel, we read of what, to use the quotation, Jesus began, to do, and to teach, part two, Acts, of, men sent forth, is the record, of, what Jesus, not began, but continued, to do, and to teach.

And these 28 chapters, span the first 30 years, of the early Christian church. From the time, the resurrected, Lord Jesus, appeared to his disciples, before his ascension, to Paul's, in prison in Rome, apparently, awaiting, some sort of, denouement, some, encounter, with Caesar himself. And there, the book seems, to conclude, almost as if, it was unfinished, like a certain, symphony, symphony, that we're familiar with. But not so, you see. Luke has, researched, carefully, just like, for his gospel, all the facts, and figures, of the early church.

But then, midway through his book, his descriptive, pronouns, change from, they, to we. As he, thereafter, recounts, from first-hand, experience, about Paul, and his missionary journeys, where Luke, was his companion.

So, like the consummate, historian, and writer, and doctor, possibly, that he, he is, and in keeping, with the literature, of his day, Luke begins, chapter one, of Acts, with, a brief resume, of book one, the gospel, before giving, a preview, of book two.

[15:44] And in scientific, papers nowadays, we do, much the same thing, we write an abstract, so called, which summarizes, the paper, we're writing. And so, in verse eight, of chapter one, we have the abstract, for Acts, of Apostolic Men.

But, you will receive, power, when, the Holy Spirit, has come, upon you, and you will, be my witnesses, in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the end, of the earth.

So, a three-step process, in the abstract, the Holy Spirit, comes, power, is received, and the gospel, spreads.

So, what we find then, as the book develops, is a logical, and careful, description, of the fulfillment, of Jesus, you will receive, and the spread, of the gospel, as you will be, my witnesses.

And in the following way, up to, chapter six, verse seven, we see, the spread, of, the word, within Jerusalem.

[17:01] And, six, verse seven, finishes, so, the word of God, spread. The number of disciples, in Jerusalem, increased rapidly, and a large number,

of priests, became obedient, to the faith.

But it doesn't stop. By verse, by chapter nine, verse 31, the church, has spread, in Palestine, and Samaria. It says there, then the church, throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, enjoyed a time of peace, and was strengthened.

Living in the fear, of the Lord, and encouraged, by the Holy Spirit, it increased, in numbers. And it doesn't stop there. Because as we move on, to the end of chapter 12, or 1224, we've got accounts, of Paul's conversion, of the gospel, reaching the Gentile, Cornelius, and the church, spreads to Antioch, where the name, Christians, first applied.

And you know, that was initially, a kind of sarcastic slur. But the name stuck. And I quite like it myself. But the word of God, continued to spread, and flourish, is how 1224 finishes.

And you know what? Surprise, surprise, if we move on, to the next four chapters, the church then, spreads to Asia Minor, and Galatia. 16 verse 5 says, so the churches, were strengthened in the faith, and grew daily in numbers.

[18:27] And then if we move, through the next, three, four chapters, we find the church, spreads to Ephesus, and into Europe, including Corinth. In this way, the word of the Lord, spread widely, and grew in power.

Chapter 19 verse 20. And then in the, the remaining chapters, of the book, the church, spreads to Rome. It spreads to Rome, by circuitous route, admittedly, via Jerusalem, Caesarea, Crete, and Malta.

And Acts of Apostolic Men, finishes with the verse, he, Paul, proclaimed the kingdom of God, and taught about the Lord, Jesus Christ, with all boldness, and without hindrance.

So the book of Acts, is the demonstration, of the fulfillment, of the promise, of the Lord Jesus. And you see, that's the real denouement.

Jesus' own words fulfilled, step by step, as we move through the book. But remember, chapter 28 verse 31, is a full 30 years, since the crucifixion, of the Lord Jesus.

[19:38] But in chapter 1, we're talking, about days ago, as in, maybe 40 days ago, as we have it in, verse 3 of chapter 1, when the risen Saviour's, instruction, to the disciples, is to wait.

And we hate, that wait word, don't we? My mother used to, accuse me of not, having the word, in my vocabulary. But life's, full of waiting.

And if we haven't, learned that yet, we've got some, painful lessons, ahead of us. Wait, said Jesus. Let's read chapter 1, verses 4 and 5.

And while staying with them, he, Jesus, ordered them not to depart, from Jerusalem, but to wait, for, the promise, of the Father, which he said, you heard from me, for John baptized, of the water, but you will be baptized, with the Holy Spirit, not many days, from now.

Well, what in the world, literally, could they do, while they waited? Scripture tells us, in verse 12, then they returned, to Jerusalem, from the mount, called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away, that's about a kilometer.

[21:02] And when they had, entered Jerusalem, they went up, to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John, and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the zealot, and Judas the son of James, all these, with one accord, were devoting, themselves, to prayer.

That's what they did, together with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. So they prayed, I'm sure they ate, they slept, they talked, they even drew lots, for Judas' replacement, but basically, they prayed, for days, and days, on end.

And it may be, a poor illustration, compared with those, early post-resurrection days, but for a period of weeks, back in 2003, after my younger son, suffered a severe head injury, while in Australia, and was on life support, and was on life support, in Sydney, neurosurgical, intensive care, I, and many others, prayed, for weeks, at that time.

Maybe you've experienced, something similar. Praying, without ceasing, constantly. Praying, with intense, resolve, and focus, and application.

But it was absolutely, inevitable, that the Holy Spirit, would come. Because Jesus, had promised.

And that coming, has been described, in all its, extraordinariness, and awesome beauty, and unexpectedness, and glory, in chapter 2.

[22:52] It's almost like, a linguistic reversal, of what happened, at the Tower of Babel. And in that, melting pot, which was Jerusalem, at the time, of the Feast of Pentecost, seven weeks after, the Passover, seven weeks, after the crucifixion, where Jews, from all over the Diaspora, had gathered, for the feast.

Everybody, as in, every body, heard, in their own, native tongues, the apostles, and those with them, we're told in chapter 1, verse 15, that was about 120 people.

Chapter 2, verse 11, what they were doing, in these tongues, was declaring, the wonders, of God. And let's just, pause for a minute, and just, consider, what it, might have been like, or indeed, be like, to hear someone, without a script, on fire, with the Spirit's power, declaring, the wonders, of God.

Maybe, they even talked, about lemons. amazement, perplexity, incomprehension, mockery, are all recorded, as different responses, to the Spirit's presence.

[24:29] And then, from 2.14 onwards, all 12 apostolic men, stood up, though Peter, was the spokesman, and we have that, wonderful sermon, full of truth, full of Old Testament, scripture, full of description, of recent events, full of revelation, as to the sin, of those present, and their complicity, in the arrest, and the brutal treatment, and heinous crucifixion, of God's own Son.

But we've got a sermon, full of hope, of forgiveness, for those who had seen, and had cheered on, that most gross, of all ever, miscarriages, of justice, in the death, of the Messiah.

the awfulness, of what they had done, and had been complicit in, dawned on many of the crowd, that day, around 3,000 people.

The genuineness, of their anguished cry, resonates in their words, brothers, what shall we do? If any of you, have ever, had, a crisis, in your life, the cry, that comes out, is, Lord, what shall I do? Now, we, as fellow sinners, stand there, with these, convicted men, and women. It was our sins, that held, Christ, there, on that cross, of shame, just as much, as theirs.

[26:03] And if we've never before, let's today, respond now, to Peter's, answer, to what we should do, in verse 38. Peter said to them, repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness, of your sins, and you, will, receive, the gift, of the Holy Spirit, for the promise, is for you, and for your children, and for all, who are far off, everyone, whom the Lord, our God, calls, to himself.

And with many other words, he bore witness, and continued, to exhort them, saying, save yourselves, from this crooked generation. Excuse me, is this kind of up to date?

Save yourselves, from this crooked generation, 20, 26. So those who received his word, were baptized, and there were added that day, about 3,000 souls, and so, the New Testament church, was born.

This was all new, to everybody. We've got over, 3,000 people, saved by the shed blood, of Christ. People indwelt, by the Holy Spirit.

People whose lives, have been turned upside down. Their attitudes, their hearts, their motives, their aspirations, their hopes, their vision, their existence, is in utter turmoil.

[27:42] But at the same time, they're at perfect peace. And they're basking, in renewal, and the glow, of God's love, and forgiveness, all at the same time.

But indwelt, by the Holy Spirit, taught, by him, fulfilling, Jesus words, of John 14, 25 to 27.

Oh, how beautiful, is this? These things, I have spoken to you, said Jesus, while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father, will send in my name, he will teach you, all things, and bring to your remembrance, all that I have said to you.

Peace, I leave with you. My peace, I give to you. Not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your hearts, be troubled, neither let them, be afraid.

And fulfilling, these words, spoken just before, the early church, developed, practices, and patterns, for living, that perhaps, should be, our example, to see, to do, and to teach.

[29:06] Now for sure, sanctified common sense, tells us, that these are different days, in which we live. We've got social security, we've got a

national health service, we've got New Testament scripture, as well as old, we enjoy liberties, undreamt of, by a people, under the thrall, of the Roman Empire, and we have, at least in this country, still, religious freedom.

Even so, making allowances, for two millennia, having elapsed, our situation's, maybe not, so different, really. We still do, have the poor, with us, as Jesus predicted.

Our health service, is significantly broken. And we've got detailed, sorry, different curtailments, of our liberties.

And there are still wars, and rumours of wars. There's still wickedness afoot, in the world. And there are challenges, which we and our children, and grandchildren, have to face, unthought of, in those times.

But what hasn't changed, is that human beings, are made, in the image of God. We have been created, with the capacity, to choose.

[30:34] And we've chosen, to disobey, God's commands. We've chosen, to place ourselves, our pride, our desires, our lusts, on the throne of our hearts.

And we, as really, as if we were, standing at Golgotha, in person, have crucified, the Son of God. By God's grace, if we've been drawn, to Jesus, by the Father, as it says, and if we have repented, and if we know, no rebirth, if we know, newness of life, based on the death, and resurrection, of Christ Jesus, and if we are now, setting out, to serve our Savior, we are looking, for that example, to follow.

And we have it, in verses 42, to 47, of Acts chapter 2. Now let's be, in no doubt, these verses, are for us. It's clear, that those people, who have come, to faith in Jesus, who have repented, of their sins, have laid hold, on Christ, who have received, the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus promised, these are the very folk, whose behavior, is described, 42 through to 47.

They are our example. So what did they do? We might look at this, under three headings. Their focus, their actions, and their growth.

Focus, actions, and growth. Their focus, first of all. What they did, they did with, unbridled enthusiasm, with passion.

[32:14] They didn't have, an interest in Christ, only one day a week, or even only, one hour a day. They were consumed, with their interest, in their Savior. 24-7 attention, as we would say, nowadays.

No cold hearts there. No lukewarmness. Jesus was there, all in all. And so full of the Spirit, were they, no quenching of the Spirit, here, that it says, they devoted themselves.

The Greek word used, implies strength, strength, steadfastness, strong attachment, perseverance. And we find, that the devotion, was to four things.

The apostles teaching, to translate it, very literally, secondly, in the fellowship, thirdly, in the breaking, of the loaf, and fourthly, in the prayers.

So, teaching, fellowship, breaking of the loaf, and prayers. And as we think, through these four activities, we should note, that these are, first of all, Spirit filled.

[33:27] They are Spirit motivated, and they are Spirit taught. There's no, this is no surprise, because that's what this chapter, is all about. The coming of the Holy Spirit, just as the Lord Jesus, had promised in the upper room.

But secondly, these actions, through the operation, of the Holy Spirit, and the very fulfillment, of promise. A promise, that started in Jerusalem, and went to Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Even, to Dumfries. And that promise, came from Christ, Jesus himself. So the believers, focused, on the teaching, of the apostles.

But, pardon me, these apostles, were not learned men. They were not, professors of theology. They were simple fishermen. Most of them anyway.

One was a tax collector. But there's no account, that any of them, were educated. What teaching, could they manufacture? Absolutely none, of course.

[34:32] But as even the Sanhedrin, and all the religious authorities, had to admit, in chapter 4, verse 13, these unschooled, ordinary men, were

confounding them, by their speech, logical arguments, oratory, and they took note, that they, had been, with Jesus.

And that is where, the teaching came from, through the operation, of the Holy Spirit. As I quoted earlier, from John 14, 26, the Holy Spirit, will teach you, all things, excuse me, all things, not a wee bit, all things, and bring to your remembrance, all that I've said to you.

And then in John 16, 13, we've got, when the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you, into, all, the truth. No half measures, without God.

And 1 John 2, 27, His anointing, teaches you about, all things. The Apostles' teaching then, is the start of that, cascade of blessing, bringing to our minds, and spirits, the very words, and direction of Jesus, written down, under the Spirit's direction, and very breath, broken down, and interpreted for us, by church fathers, and saints of old, and reformers, and puritans, and commentators, and expositors, and however inadequately, by preachers, and teachers, to this very day and hour. So that we can join, with those first 3,000, no matter, how comparatively dull, our vision, and hearing. Nevertheless, join with them, declaring the wonders of God, in our own tongue.

[36:30] The second focus, after the teaching, was on fellowship. Koinonius, the Greek word, that humanly, inexplicable, but undeniable, oneness of Spirit, when believers meet together.

You see, believers of both sexes, all ages, all backgrounds, all positions in society, all levels of intellect, all varieties of giftings, all nationalities, and colors of skin, but united in Christ. Christ. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. We neglect, to meet together, both to worship, and to fellowship, at our peril.

The blessings, of Christ-centered, fellowship, are profound, and lasting, and honoring, to our Savior. And they're a powerful witness, to the world around us, the world without Christ. After all, by this, men, shall, shall all men know, that you are my disciples, said Jesus, by the love you have, one for the other. The third focus, was on the breaking of the loaf, literally, the breaking of bread.

[37:54] Now this was not, as we might, sometimes tend to make it, in any way, superior, to the other, spirit-led activities.

But not inferior, either. We give it, nowadays, a variety of names. There's the Eucharist, the giving thanks, there's communion, literally having in common, bread and wine, which we share, called the ordinances, sometimes, that just means, something that's not optional.

Hearing the word, and breaking of bread, are neither optional, if we believe, we do them.

Sometimes, they're called, the sacraments, which, I think, rather unreasonably, tends to throw, a veil of mystery, over something, very simple, commanded by our Lord.

Sometimes, we call it, breaking of bread, which describes, precisely, half, of what happens. The second half, involves wine. And we sometimes, say the Lord's Supper, and it was, at its institution, part of that, last, ever, Passover meal, in the upper room.

This meal, to us, is an act, of remembrance, and obedience, instituted, and commanded, by Jesus, and a proclamation, of his death, till he comes again.

[39:29] And as these first believers, gathered together, they wouldn't have had, any communion silver, or sachets, of COVID friendly juice. They would have, eaten together, they'd have been taught together, they would have, fellowship together, but in breaking bread, and sharing, a common cup of wine, they've remembered, in these elements, the broken, body, and the shed blood, of their Savior, precisely, as he, had instructed, them to do.

Well, not surprisingly, the fourth focus, was to swaddle, all of this in prayer, as led by the Spirit. That prayer, would flow, from changed hearts, but if there was, a stammer, or a stutter, if words failed, as they often do, when we're, overwhelmed, by difficulties, or overwhelmed, by joy, then the Spirit, himself, would make intercession, for these believers, as he continues, to do for us, with groans, that words, cannot express.

So, how do we shape up then? There's our example. How do we shape up, in our learning, about Jesus, about our growing, in grace, and in our knowledge, of him?

How do we shape up, in our fellowship? How do we fear, in fulfilling, Jesus' command, to as often, as we meet, to break bread, in remembrance, of him?

And what of prayer life, our personal, and communal, prayer life? Do we pray, or do we leave it to others, to pray on our behalf? We simply, cannot let others' prayers, suffice, any more than we might, permit others, to eat or drink, on our behalf.

[41:28] And what about, our enthusiasm, our devotion? The challenges, to each one of us here, me included. Very briefly, verse 43, that's translated, into modern English, what it, but what it literally says, is firstly, fear, came to every soul.

Not fear, terror, but fear, godly reverence, and awe. Secondly, the apostles, performed many signs, and wonders, and I'm sure, that the spirit empowered, works of the apostles, as we go on, to see them, in chapter 3, and following chapters, contributed, to that sense, of godly fear.

But I'm even more sure, that the teaching, of the word, the fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers, contributed also. So what about their actions?

Well, they shared, everything, in common. They gave, and God loves a cheerful giver, they gave their property, and possessions, to supply the needs, of the poor. They met up daily, to have that fellowship, it says, in the temple courts.

In other places, we see that, where they met, was actually, Solomon's colonnade. That's, a covered area, that ran down, the entire length, of the east side, of the second temple.

[42:56] It was covered, over, but supported, by pillars, otherwise open, to the elements. And this is where, Jesus did much, of his teaching. And it was where, they fulfilled, their teaching.

And they fulfilled, their other priorities, breaking bread. But in verse 46, with a slight challenge, to our thinking, because it says, they were breaking bread, in verse 46, in their homes.

Well, where they did that, eating together, with glad, and sincere hearts. So, in short, focus, was not a cause, for inertia.

Their focus, their four-way focus, led, to practical action, and to ongoing focus. And this circle, was not a vicious one, but a delicious, and glorious one.

And then we are told, that, focus and action, bore fruit. That is what, we are told, the spirit produces, in our lives, if we do not, quench his activity.

[44:04] There was praise, to God. There was enjoyment, of the favour, of all the people. And this seems, to mean that, even those, who had not yet, given their hearts, to Christ, still knew, something awesome, and good, was going on.

And they smiled, on that glorious, work of the spirit. And finally, more people, came to faith.

Those who were being, saved by the grace of God. And we rejoice, don't we rejoice, when one sinner, one lost person, comes to Christ.

those days, there were hundreds, there were thousands. We may be able, to, just, we just can't get, our heads round that.

But I know, it was glorious. I know, it was amazing. What wonderful days, what a mighty, and gracious God. But, Jesus Christ, is the same.

[45:10] yesterday, today, and forever. Maybe, just maybe, we, should, refocus, react, and, regrow.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father, your word is amazing. And it's your word, of course, it's amazing Lord.

You've, you've given us, so much to learn, so much to teach us, and guide us. But Father, we thank you, that your word, tells us about Jesus, the son of your love.

It tells us about, your love, your heart, of compassion, Jesus coming to the cross, dying for our sins, paying the price, rising again, in triumph, over the grave, and sin, and the devil.

And we thank you, Heavenly Father, that he is at your right hand, interceding for us, even now.

What a glorious, and gracious God, we have.

[46:16] Heavenly Father, help us, to get nourishment, from this, to keep our focus, on Jesus, to do all the things, that you're trying, to teach us, in your word, to do, help us, to do these things, with a pure heart, fervently.

We want, to serve you Father. We know, your word tells us, we are salt, and light, however much, we may think, we are not, but we are. Help us, to see your hand, in all this, in our lives, encourage

us, by your spirit, give us, power, and energy, to serve you, as we ought, and to worship, and praise your, great and holy name.

We ask this, in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen. Amen. Let's, Amen. Amen.