

This session focuses on the beautiful picture of the early church and how their activities together give us the blueprint for our vision of loving God more, loving God's family more, and loving our neighbors more. Our life together as a community of believers is our greatest witness to the good news of Christ's love for the world.

SESSION 2

Our Next Vision—
Big Movement and Little Moments

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

—JOHN 13:34-35

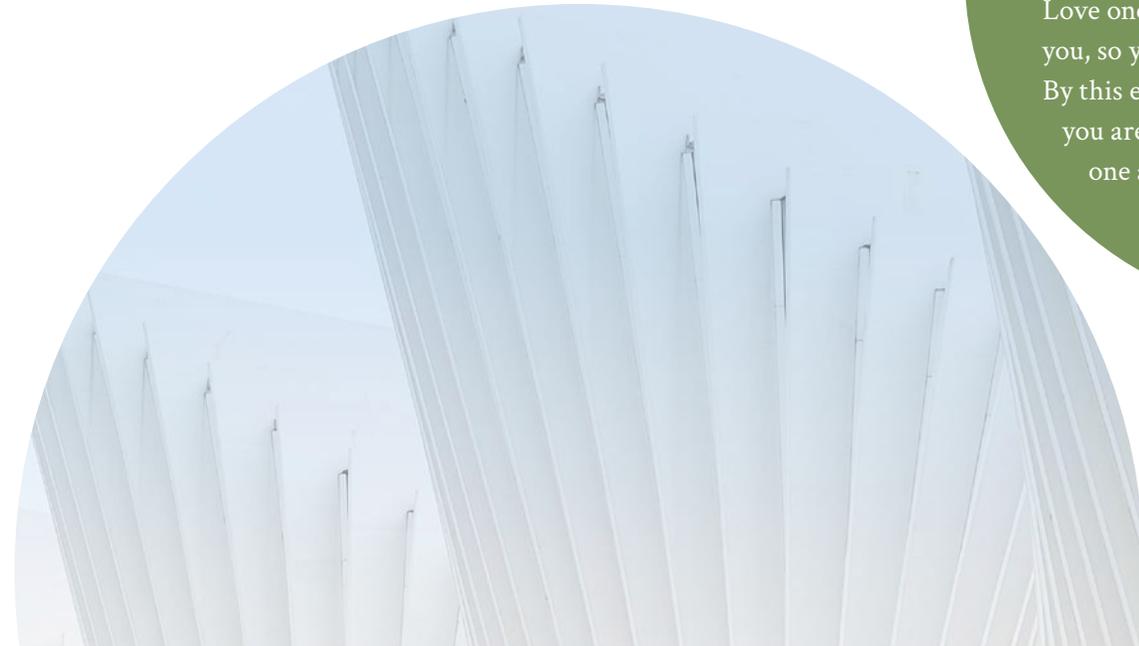


ACTS 2:42-47

Read Aloud in Your Group

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had

need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.



Love God More

Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment.

—MATTHEW 22:37-38

Love God's Family More

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

—JOHN 13:34-35

Love Our Neighbors More

"Love your neighbor as yourself."

—MATTHEW 22:39



FOR DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTORY QUESTION: In ten words or less, answer the question, “What is a church?”

1. Read Acts 2:42-47 aloud. List all the actions that the Acts church was doing together, as described in this passage.

This is a beautiful description of the early church and yet a challenging one for us today. In the past year, which of these activities have you participated in?

2. At Calvary, we seek to love God more, love God’s family more, and love our neighbors more. On a scale of 1–10, where would you put yourself today?



3. Which of the three loves comes more naturally to you and which is more challenging?
4. Share stories and practices / habits with one another:
 - What has been helping you to love God more?
 - What has been helping you to love God’s family more?
 - What has been helping you to love our neighbors more?
5. How are these three loves interrelated and how do they impact each other?
6. What are some steps you can take or spiritual practices you can engage in to help you grow in each of the three areas? Brainstorm a simple practical list together.

Then pick one practice to try this week. Share with each other and pray together for the Holy Spirit to help you! Be sure to report back next time so that everyone can be encouraged.



TAKE 5

A SNAPSHOT OF THE EARLY CHURCH

Brian Howard, Teaching Pastor

ACTS 2:42

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer.

On one of the shelves in my office, I have a picture of my family from a wonderful trip we took together a few years back. My wife and I are smiling, and my kids are laughing as they enjoy the fun of a family vacation. I often look at that photo and while I recognize that not every moment of our life as a family is that picturesque, it is a precious snapshot of the joy, unity, and love I want for my family.

Acts 2:42-47 gives us a similar snapshot of the early church. While the book of Acts will describe all kinds of dysfunction, drama, heartbreak, and sin in the ranks of Christians, this passage gives us a snapshot of the church at its best. This week, we want to reflect on that snapshot as we dream about the kind of church God is calling us to be now and into the future. As we move toward 2030, this passage helps shape the kind of church we become!

The text begins with the devotion of the church to four habits. The first is that they listened to the apostles' teaching. In our context, we listen to that same teaching every time we read the Word of God or listen to it preached. The church we see in the future is one energized by both a love for and knowledge of God's Word.

It is important that our Bible engagement be shaped by both knowledge and affection. If all we have is knowledge about the Bible but no deep affection for God's Word, then we will slip into a kind of legalism where we know the Bible but not the God of the Bible. If all we have is affection for God's Word but not knowledge, we will slip into sentimentality where we like certain verses but don't know what they mean. For our church to thrive, we must be a place where the Bible is known, loved and above all, believed.

In what way can you grow in your knowledge and affection of the Bible this fall?



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