



## LC STUDY GUIDE

### Done in Sync with the Come Together Sermon Series

The Passage: Acts 2:42-47

For Life Community usage the week of 10/5/14

Intro: We were blessed to have Pastor Bruce Wall from Global Ministries Church in Dorchester speak on the importance of unity in the church from chapter 2 of the Book of Acts. In a year focused on “being all together,” it was helpful to see how voices from other faith communities can speak into ours. Which leads to our big idea:

**Today's Big Idea: We want to focus on what God can do when the Church is committed to unity, sacrifice, and worship.**

Acts 2:42-47 (NIV)

**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.

O – By this point in the story of Pentecost, Luke has described some extraordinary miracles and happenings. From there, he describes the genesis of this new community of Christ-followers in Jerusalem. What blessings/benefits can we see in a committed community?

I – Similar to the term “like-minded” in Phil. 2:1 from our previous LC study, the word for *devoted* (*proskartereo*) is a common word that describes “a steadfast and single-minded fidelity to a certain course of action.” Once again, unity becomes a predominant theme and a repeated call throughout the entire New Testament. In a chapter filled with miraculous events, why does Luke finish the story of Pentecost like this?

*(Not only is it vital for the survival of the early church; Christian unity is essential for mission, discipleship, and service. After professing that Jesus is Lord, Christian unity is the only way to advance the gospel.)*

I – The “breaking of bread” is a debated term by theologians. Some insist that it’s a “big agape feast” of food while some maintain it’s a reference to the Lord’s Supper. While we may not know exactly what Luke meant, what does the “breaking of bread” mean to us today and what virtues can all believers receive from this moment?

*(Observing the Lord's Supper is the universal practice of the global Church and the gathering of believers to eat together has always been part of Christian fellowship. Don't we always hear about the food during Life Community announcements? ;)*

I – In v. 43, Luke says that “everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.” He is inferring that “everyone” includes the non-believers of Jerusalem. Imagine you were a non-believer in Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost. What would you think of this scene and how might you respond in the coming days?

*(Answering this might help us understand how so many were added to the number of the church day after day. Also for those interested in Biblical literature, it's worth noting that Luke again picks up Joel's prophecy language and points back to Jesus' miraculous wonders in offering evidence that this was the Father's work. He's a both an excellent story-teller and thoughtful writer).*

A – What signs and wonders have we been part of—include both “miraculous” and “non-miraculous”? What can Christ's united church today do to move non-believers to be amazed or at least curious to inquire about the transforming power of the gospel of Jesus?

O – V. 45 show us the early believers' sacrificial nature and v. 46 shows us their commitment to worship. How did two such simple things become part of a foundation for a movement that would change the course of history?

*(Sacrifice, worship and unity are among what God uses to build His Kingdom.)*

A – What can we learn from the genesis of the Church and what can we intentionally apply today as individual believers, as a Life Community and as a church body?

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- a. **Please note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single meeting.** Take some time and select and reword the questions that best fit your voice and your Life Community group.
  - b. Certain questions work better for certain groups. You are encouraged to prayerfully discern what will serve your LC the best.
  - c. Complement these questions with “process questions” (what else? what more? what do others think?).
  - d. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don't rush people but encourage their participation. And avoid answering your own questions!
  - e. Timing/pacing: allocate your time and move forward gently, with a steady pace.
  - f. Application: Pace the study to conclude with “difference making” application.
  - g. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into “teaching,” rather than facilitating. It can cause people to feel distracted or de-powered.