



International Baptist Church of Manila

LIFE OF A JESUS FOLLOWER • SESSION FIVE: CONNECT – LIFE IN COMMUNITY •
ACTS 2:42-47 • 9/13/2020

MAIN POINT

At the core of Christianity is the principle that we're to live out our relationship with God in fellowship with other believers.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What would you say is the goal of the Christian life?

How would you describe what it looks like to connect with a community of believers?

What are the biggest challenges for you in doing that?

When we were born into a relationship with God, we were also given a relationship with God's family—the church. While our culture increasingly devalues church attendance, we must be more committed to God's family in the church.

At its core, Christianity is about having a relationship with God that extends to our relationships with others inside and outside of the church. In this session, we're going to take a look at the first Christian community in the book of Acts and see that for the early church living in community was absolutely essential.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| WATCH THE VIDEO, "SESSION 5: CONNECT—LIFE IN COMMUNITY".

| ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ ACTS 2:42-47.

How did the first Christian community care for and support one another?

How do our relationships with other Christians deepen our relationship with God?

What would you not know about God without other Jesus followers?

We need others to grow in intimacy with God. The early church devoted themselves to God and one another. These relationships weren't isolated but interdependent. Their relationships with one another positively impacted their relationship with God.

The word the Bible uses for fellowship means "to join in the life of another person."

Why is connecting beyond a once a week Bible study essential?

Scripture contains 40 "one another" commands (Mark 9:50; Rom. 12:16; Eph. 4:32; 1 Thess. 5:11; Jas. 5:9). Why must we have relationships with other Christians to faithfully follow Jesus?

How did the early believers support and celebrate with each other? Why is community essential in both good and bad circumstances?

We need others to walk through the ups and downs of life. God gave you other people as a gift. To reject Christian community is to spurn this gift. The early church jumped to action as needs arose. The early church was a community without need because each member played a part in serving one another. God cares so much about this community that He gave each of us gifts to care for and support one another.

We need each other to accomplish the mission. The "you" in the Great Commission is plural. Our mission to the world is truly our mission. One of the reasons people flocked to the early church was the early Christians' obvious commitment to one another.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

In the first century, many people came to faith by seeing relationships in the church. How is God using our relationships with each other to make a tangible impact in the world around us?

The Bible describes the church as a body. In what ways does the church demonstrate to the world that Jesus is real?

How has connecting to other believers in community impacted your relationship with God? What is one situation in your life now where connecting to other believers in community would help you be faithful to God?

PRAYER

Thank God for the privilege of walking together with other believers through the ups and downs of life. Ask Him for the gift of fulfilling the “one another” commands to each other, and ask that He would use this community to make His love visible in the world.

COMMENTARY

| ACTS 2:42-47

2:42 These four practices— teaching... fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayers—provide insight into the priorities of early Christianity. These same practices should be considered normative for the church today. The apostles’ teaching was probably similar to Peter’s message at Pentecost. That is to say, it focused on making Christ known by appealing to eyewitness testimony and the prophecies of the OT. Early Christians gathered together regularly for edification, prayer, and exhortation. The breaking of bread probably included fellowship meals and participation in the Lord’s Supper (1Co 11:17-34).

2:44-45 As part of their fellowship, the early church practiced a community of goods for a short time. Distribution to members of the faith community took place according to individual need. This practice did not last long, likely because it was logistically difficult and fraught with potential abuse (see chaps. 4-6).

2:46 Early Christian gatherings took place in two places: the temple complex and the homes of individual believers.

2:47 The early church was an evangelizing church. Luke recounted that every day the Lord added to those who were being saved. He did not say how this took place, but it appears that evangelism took place primarily through the gathering of Christians in the temple and in individual houses. The crucifixion and resurrection of Christ were at the heart of early Christian preaching, which called for immediate response from anyone who listened.