

*“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, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.” (Acts 2:46-47)*

## The Rule and Reign of God in the Family of God

- God’s rule and reign in a renewed covenant, focused in Jesus, and marked by radical change
- The Triune God births a movement powerfully devoted to one another
- The social radicality of the early church

## The Sustaining Heart of the Family of God

- Apostolic Teaching
- Fellowship
- Breaking of Bread
- Prayer

## The Acts of the Holy Spirit in the Family of God

- The wonders of the apostles
- The wonders of the community
- The compelling nature of the early family of God

## Living Family as Jesus Followers Today

- Living “at Home” in Jesus Christ
- Becoming a Loving “Community of Recognition”
- Loving Our Literal Neighbors

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you experienced a true sense of “family,” whether with you blood family or others? What was that like?
2. This week we continue our sermon series, “Essential Church,” by looking at the life of the early church in Acts 2:42-47. Whether on your own or with others, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you, and then read that passage aloud.

3. *Background: This passage in Acts is sometimes overused as an idealized picture of the church. What we really have here is an example of what it means to be a Jesus community, specifically here in the Jerusalem church.*
4. When you read Acts 2:42-47, what captures your imagination about this early group of believers?
5. Of the different elements of the church’s life mentioned in verse 42, which in particular stands out to you? Why do you think this was important for the early believers?
6. There are “wonders and signs performed by the apostles” (vs 43) but also notable wonders in the way the early believers relate to one another in verses 44-45. Why do you think they lived in this way?
7. What do you think it might look like for Christians today to live in this way?
8. The character of the community described in verses 46-47 is compelling to those around them. Why do you think that is?
9. What is one thing God speaking to you personally through this week’s study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and then pray about what you shared. If you are on your own, write it down, pray about it, and consider sharing your thoughts with someone this week.

## DIG DEEPER:

### Exploring Faith

- What do you find attractive about the early church described in Acts 2:42-47?

### Growing in Faith

- Commit Acts 2:42-47 to memory. Reflect on these verses this week.
- Consider the fourfold description of the hallmarks of the church in Acts 2:42: teaching, fellowship, bread-breaking, prayer. Which of these might God be inviting you into in a deeper way?
- Where are you currently experiencing this type of community in the church? If nowhere, how will you seek to join a community of faith to experience this?

### Centered in Faith

- How might God be calling you to cultivate family in the local church in some way? Who could you invite into this type of living community with you?
- Consider exploring a further resource, such as the Bible Project video “Pentecost: Acts 1-7” ([bibleproject.com/videos/gospel-acts-1/](https://bibleproject.com/videos/gospel-acts-1/)).