

DAILY READINGS

Sunday	Acts 2:42-47
Monday	Acts 3:1-26; Psalm 105:11-17; Proverbs 21:18-20
Tuesday	Acts 4:1-22; Psalm 105:18-26; Proverbs 21:21-24
Wednesday	Acts 4:23-31; Psalm 105:27-34; Proverbs 21:25-27
Thursday	Acts 4:32-37; Psalm 105:35-45; Proverbs 21:28-31
Friday	Acts 5:1-11; Psalm 106:1-6; Proverbs 22:1-3
Saturday	Acts 5:12-16; Psalm 106:7-14; Proverbs 22:4-6

DEVOTIONAL: READ ACTS 2:42-47

At the beginning of Acts, everything is new. Jesus had ascended into heaven, the Holy Spirit had arrived, and the church had begun. This was a new way of living for a new people having been given new life! In Acts 2, Peter preached his Holy Spirit empowered sermon and 3,000 people came to know the Lord. The Jerusalem church was born. Acts 2:42-47 gives us a picture of the early church and key insights into the activities of the earliest followers of Jesus.

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching. They were hungry to learn about the Messiah. They heard teachings of how Jesus completely fulfilled the Messianic promises of the Old Testament.

Beyond just learning, they had fellowship. They were together. They enjoyed having companions in their new faith-walk with Jesus. They prayed together and observed communion, referred to as the breaking of bread.

They served each other sacrificially. They gathered at the temple for worship and teaching, and then they went into their homes to share a meal. They were glad to share and grateful to receive, as each contributed what they could. Day by day, more and more people wanted to be a part of this new way of life.

Still today, Christians gather to hear God's Word, the Bible, taught and explained. Believers still break bread together and remember what Jesus has done. We still share with those in need and try to care for those in our community of faith. We still gather in homes and share meals together, generously offering what God has given us and gratefully receiving what others bring. The church still makes a positive contribution to neighborhoods and communities, and God is still adding to the numbers of those who know Him. May we be characterized this same way in our churches, communities, and personal lives today!

REFLECTION

How is the Jerusalem church, experienced in Acts 2:42-47, similar to your church experience? How is it different? What could you personally do to make your church more like that one?

Why do you think the early Christians met in the temple (large group) and in homes (small group)? What are some things that can only be accomplished in a large group, and what are some things you can only do in small groups?

What areas do you see practiced in the early church that you could engage in more? What steps can you take this week to pursue that?

DISCUSSION

What has your experience with church been like?

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for giving Your Church a mission and giving my life a purpose. My King, give me a fire for Your kingdom. Give me an urgency to see Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Lead me to obey the tug of Your Spirit on my heart, following the example of early believers.

Lead me to place the needs of others above my own for Your glory. Lead me away from distractions and desires that are not Yours. Don't let my heart become selfish or materialistic, but show me how to be generous with the blessings You have given me. Give me an undivided heart, passionate to pursue Your will.

Your will is to build Your kingdom through broken people who humbly surrender their lives to You. Lead me to love You and others according to Your will, not mine! Please create in me a heart that simply desires You, Lord. Continue to establish and grow Your Church throughout the entire world. Amen.