The Life of a Healthy Church

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 13 October 2024

Preacher: Joey Snodgrass

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! Thank you for joining us. I'm grateful for the music ministry of our church, both adult choir, passion choir, kids praise, kinder praise, kinder praise, thankful for John and his leadership, ultimately over all of those things.

It's a blessing to be in a church that takes music seriously. Music and singing are commanded of us by the Lord, so they should be taken excellently and deserve to be done with excellence as we communicate what is good and true and beautiful in an aesthetically pleasing way that's pleasing to the ear through music.
As of Monday, I am now officially bootless. Got out of my walking boots. Thank you. So, major fashion upgrade for me, being able to wear two dress shoes instead of a boot.
All of my right pant legs are horribly wrinkled, so I have a lot of ironing to do. But it's a pleasure for me to preach to you guys this morning, to be with you as we study the Word together. Michael, our pastor, is away down at Trinity in Dallas this morning.
Many of you know by now of the difficulty their church is facing, so if it comes to mind, please pray for Michael as he's bringing the Word to them this morning that he would do so in an encouraging and helpful way.
[1:27] If you would take out your Bibles and open with me to the book of Acts. We'll be in Acts chapter 2, verses 42 through 47 this morning.

As you're turning there, I just want to remind us that Jesus loves the church.
Jesus loves his church. The New Testament describes the church as the bride of Christ. The church is the people for whom Jesus laid down his life.
Jesus died that his church might live. He laid down his life for the salvation of the church. He gave his life for the salvation of his people.
But he cares for his church in a full and complete way. He does not just care for the church's salvation. He also is deeply concerned about her sanctification, her steady growth in holiness.
[2:38] He doesn't just save the church and leave us on our own, but he saves us and is with us as we continue to grow in holiness.

Jesus loves the church. And the church ought to love Jesus. And the way the church shows its love for Jesus, the way the church makes return to Jesus and gives worship to him is through obedience to him and service to each other.
None of us are here to glorify ourselves or we shouldn't be. But just as that last song, all things should be unto the Lamb. And as we think about our lives as Christians, we shouldn't just want to be pleasing to the Lord as individuals.
We want to be pleasing to him as a church. We want to be and continue to become a holy church. And the way we evaluate our progress in that, the way we evaluate any church is on the grounds of what the New Testament teaches and shows us about the church.
And so we can say, is this what the church is supposed to be like? Is this what the church is supposed to believe? Are we who the church is supposed to be?
[3:57] Are we doing what the church is supposed to do? And in our passage today at the end of Acts 2, we get a close-up and personal view of the first church.

We see that their community and ministry, we see what those things were like. We will see what motivated them. We will see what daily life was like in the early church.
And just like Adam and Eve in the garden in Genesis 1 and 2, we get a brief glimpse of what humanity was created for. And in Acts 2, we see why Christ created the church.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

But first, how did this church come into existence? How was this church born? Well, at the beginning of Acts 2, it's the day of Pentecost. And so many Jews, not only from Jerusalem, but from surrounding countries and cities, would be inside the city gates celebrating the first fruits of the harvest, giving glory and praise to the Lord for his provision.
And so the city would be flooded. The streets would be overflowing with people as they came into town to celebrate this holiday. And the Holy Spirit fell on the 120 disciples that were gathered there praying.
[5:13] And as they received the Spirit, they began to speak in tongues, which were actual languages. And people from the nations of the world were gathering because they were hearing the mighty works of God proclaimed in their own language.

And so the church was born out of a sermon. Because Peter used this opportunity to preach, and his theme was Christ from the Old Testament.
And the Jews there are cut to the heart as Jesus is working through the sermon that's being preached. And verse 41 of chapter 2 says, So those who received his word were baptized.
And there were added that day about 3,000 souls. As Jesus is preached and proclaimed, Jesus himself is present to bless.
Jesus births and subsequently builds his church through the preaching of the word. And just as all things in the beginning were created through the word of God, so the new creation, the church, is formed through the word of Christ.
[6:19] And these 3,000 souls that believed were immediately baptized and immediately brought into this community. And so this one day of apostolic ministry brought in more souls than Jesus' entire earthly ministry.

The disciples were receiving power from the Holy Spirit, and Christ was present to bless them in a profound way by pouring out salvation on his people. And as we come to our passage, the narrative shifts from a description of a particular day or a particular event to more of a generalized description of the life of this church.
And what we see is it was incredibly healthy and indescribably powerful. This church was steadfastly devoted to Christ and sacrificially devoted to each other.
And Christ was present with them. Nothing defined this church except for God and his word. There were no gimmicks. There were no worldly strategies.
They didn't even have a building, and yet they had everything they needed to be pleasing to Christ.
And Luke includes this description in his narrative, not merely to describe what was taking place, but he gives this to us as an example of what church should be for all the churches that would come later through the pages of history.
[7:49] And so if we imitate the example we see here, we too will experience the presence of Christ to bless us as he saves his people. Let me read our passage for us.

Acts 2, beginning in verse 42. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.
And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all as any had need.
And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people.
And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. Let's pray. Our Father, as we turn to your word, I pray that you would open our eyes that we may behold it clearly.
[8:52] I pray that you'd be with our minds and aid our understanding, and Holy Spirit, be with us. Help us interpret the word that you inspired Luke to write. I pray our church would imitate the example we have here.

Not for our own sake, but for the cause of the Lamb. For your glory, O Lord, and for our good. And it's in Christ's name we pray. Amen. We'll break this passage down into two portions.
First, the church's devotion. And secondly, the results. The church's devotion we see in verse 42. Verse 42 begins, And they.
The they is a reference not only to the 120 original disciples, but now to this roughly 3,000 that were added to it. Pentecost birthed the church.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

This isn't just a group of individuals who have shared an experience, like we would at a concert. Because Christianity is, while it's personal, it is not just individualistic.
[9:58] To believe in Jesus and repent of your sins is to be brought into the community of the church. And so what we see from the outset, this first church is a gathering of saved people.

And this is why we have membership class. We want to, so far as we can tell, only include in our membership those who have been saved by Christ.
The lost are welcome. The lost are welcome to hear the preaching of the word and hear the singing, but what we do here is not tailored for them. Church, the church gathered, is intended for the edification of the believers.
And it says they devoted themselves to, and we find four things they devoted themselves to, listed out in verse 42. But this was a continual devotion. This is something that was an ongoing part of who they were.
And the first thing they devoted themselves to was the apostles' teaching. The church was built on the word of God given through the apostles.
[11:05] And this church was devoted to that teaching that was coming through the apostles, which for them was the explanation of Christ from the Old Testament scriptures.

They devoted themselves to this teaching that was coming through them. Teaching is the lifeblood of the church. And so maybe you've heard people say things like, I don't need doctrine, I don't need theology, I need Jesus.
I don't need to learn more, I need to live on what I already know. Or I don't need more head knowledge, I need this heart knowledge. And while I'd acknowledge the importance of living out what we know and loving Christ for what we know, the way to grow in holiness is through knowledge of God.
And knowledge of God comes through a study and contemplation of His word. And this is never a completed task while we're on earth. There is always room for us to grow.
And this devotion to the apostolic teaching isn't just something that was for this early church but not for us. This should still mark our church to this day. Now we don't have apostles with us today, so what does this look like?
[12:19] How can we share in this devotion? Well, the apostles' teaching is what we call the New Testament. Their teaching is inscripturated for us. Their teaching is recorded and deposited for us in the New Testament.

And so the way for us to devote ourselves to the apostles' teaching is to submit to the written word of God. And many people will look back at the book of Acts and say this was a spirit-filled church. We need to do what they did. But by that they mean that they'll attempt to replicate the miracles and the tongues and the prophecies and all kinds of strange things.
Now I agree that the book of Acts was a spirit-filled church, no doubt. But what does the spirit-filled church commit themselves to above everything else? The teaching of the word of God.
Where the spirit is truly present, people will be drawn to the word of God. There is no such thing as a spirit-filled church or a spirit-filled Christian who neglects the word of God.
[13:27] And some churches are so focused on replicating these gifts or experiencing these feelings brought about by the spirit that they drift away from the word of God.

But a truly spirit-filled church is drawn to the Bible. This was a Bible-studying church. They also committed themselves to the fellowship.
This word for fellowship has a really wide range of meanings. It really just means to share or to partner, whether that's in life or in friendship or in sharing your possessions or in sharing your food, just kind of friendship in general, having things in common, a sharing of life.
And the Greek authors, when they use this word outside of Scripture, use this word to describe the shared life of a husband and wife. There's intimacy, there's a commonality, there's a common purpose behind this word.
And this church devoted themselves not only to the Lord but to each other. And I think for some churches, there's a tendency to choose one or the other.
[14:37] We either devote ourselves to the word or to each other. The biblical model is that we do both. And certainly on Sunday mornings, what we're doing now, the primacy should be on the study and proclamation of God's word.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

But we shouldn't do that to the neglect of knowing one another and sharing life with one another. It was through this fellowship that they would stimulate each other to love and good works, as Hebrews 10 says, to holiness and faithfulness.
And what we see later in this passage is this fellowship wasn't necessarily something formal. It wasn't necessarily something that would show up on the church calendar or that they would announce at the beginning of service.
They wanted to be together. They were friends. And Lacey and I have had our 10-year reunion and there's a lot of organization that went into it.
I wasn't involved in that, thankfully, but enjoyed the result of it. And so many people were posting on the Facebook group, like, we should do this more often. Like, nah, we shouldn't. Let's not.
[15:42] They're like, we need to see each other more often. And Lacey and I's immediate response was, if there's anyone you want to see, you'll arrange to see them. And that's what we see in this early church.

They were making arrangements to spend time with each other. This wasn't something formal, something they needed to be commanded to do. They were genuine friends. These close friends enjoyed the love of God and celebrated the love of Christ together.
They gathered together to hear God's word, but also throughout the week to enjoy each other's company as they followed Christ together. And again, the Bible does not envision the possibility of a Christian who is disconnected from a church.
Christianity is lived out in the fellowship of believers. The Bible doesn't have a category for a Christian who is just trying to love Jesus by themselves but isn't meaningfully connected with other believers.
And we can fall off the horse either way with this. Some of us have tendencies to isolate ourselves and be like, I just want to read and study and not be slowed down by anyone.
[16:51] I can read the Bible on my own. I can pray on my own. I can sing on my own. I can make this on my own. Others of us have a tendency to depend on the church for our spiritual life in an unhealthy way, to the neglect of some of those things.

I don't need to read the Bible. I'll go to church and listen to sermons. I don't need to pray on my own. We'll pray at church. I'll be with believers there. So we each personally need to be devoted to the truth and devoted to the fellowship together.
Third, the third devotion was to the breaking of bread. Again, this is general language here that is used in the Bible itself to just eating food together.
And we see it in this passage later described that way. The Jews would start their meals by breaking a loaf of bread and praying to God a prayer of thanksgiving. And so this is just a general reference to eating food, but it does say the breaking of bread here.
And given the fact that verse 42 says they were devoting themselves to these things collectively, I think this is best read as a reference to the Lord's Supper. They collectively were devoted to sharing this communion meal that commemorated Jesus' death and anticipated his return.
[18:07] This is important to the life of the church because Jesus commands it. And secondly, it gives us opportunity to meditate on what Christ accomplished on the cross and what he will one day accomplish when he returns for his people to establish his kingdom on earth.

But it's important for another reason. It's an opportunity for us to confess sin. It's an opportunity for us to reflect on our own hearts and see if there is any unconfessed sin in us.
It's an opportunity to examine our hearts, which ultimately leads to the health of the church. And then their fourth devotion was and the prayers.
prayers. Certainly Christians are commanded individually to pray, but again, this has a corporate or congregational feel to it. And so they were devoting themselves to their times of prayer together as a church.
Whether led by an apostle or a preacher or in small groups, together as they prayed for one another, they devoted themselves to prayer. And prayer is a thing that can be so easily neglected by us as a church today because it's so difficult to see the effects of lack of prayer initially.
[19:21] It's so difficult to perceive if we are devoted to prayer, but they were committed to its importance because they recognized their communion with Christ. And it's right that they were committed to this.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

Some of the last promises that Christ makes to his disciples on earth were concerning prayer. Ask anything in my name. And it'll be given to you.
And so they took him at his word and devoted themselves to prayer. So that's the fourfold devotion of the church. Secondly, we see its results.
Its results. And we see this in verses 43 through 47. Now it's important to note that they weren't chasing after these results. And we should not chase after results either.
Outcomes are something we cannot control. You know this as a parent. You cannot control what your child does with their life. You have a certain amount of influence.
[20:23] You cannot control outcomes. And so we should not chase these results for results' sake. And the original church wasn't either, but they did see tangible results.

And many of these results naturally follow from the devotions we read about in verse 42. But there are other things that God was uniquely doing in this moment of history. We see three primary results.
Number one is awe. Awe. And if you have the ESV, there's a footnote because the word used here is fear. Verse 43, and fear or awe came upon every soul.
This wasn't a momentary panic. This was a lasting sense of astonishment and wonder at what God was doing.
I take this to be a positive feeling, a positive effect. And the closest thing I can compare it to is the feeling a husband has when his wife is in labor.
[21:24] There's a sense of astonishment and wonder, a sense of anticipation and thankfulness and also a tangible sense of fear, knowing things could go wrong.

Things could not turn out as we expected or hoped, but regardless of what happens, our lives will be forever different. It's all those feelings of wonder and astonishment that I think are encapsulated by this word.
And who is every soul? Is this every soul within the church? Or every soul in Jerusalem? I take it to be every soul that encountered them in Jerusalem. They were seeing this new movement that God was in the midst of and standing back in astonishment as a new era was dawning on the history of the world known as the church age.
And in Acts 5.13 we also see this as Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit and were put to death for their lie. It says the church was held in high esteem by everyone but none of the rest dared to join them.
There was a sense of deep wonder and fear connected to what God was doing in the midst of his church. The life of this church was so genuine and pure that everyone was impressed by them.
[22:44] They weren't impressed by their buildings or programs or the charisma of the apostles. They were impressed, their souls were impressed by the nature of what they were seeing. And this impression was only multiplied by what Jesus was doing through the apostles.

It says many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And who was the one ultimately doing these things? It was Christ working through his apostles.
Acts 1.1 Luke says in the first account I wrote to you everything that Jesus began to do. Implication the book of Acts is what Jesus is continuing to do. And so these wonders and signs were being done through the hands of the apostles by Christ.
And we read about several of them in Acts 3 we see one Peter heals a lame beggar by the temple. And these are called signs. They point to something.
They point to the truth of their message. And every time there's a miracle performed in the book of Acts they use it as an opportunity to proclaim the gospel.
[23:55] It's not an attraction just for the sake of entertainment or a flex of power but an opportunity to declare the gospel message. And even while these things are going on the apostles are healing people the apostles are raising the dead the church did not devote themselves to these signs and wonders.

They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles. The apostles were Christ's primary human agents. There are two other people though who are said to do these wonders and signs in the book of Acts.
Philip and Stephen. And so Jesus was working in this unique way through the apostles and their associates to give validity to the truthfulness of their message.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

He did these things through the apostles. And so the implication is when the apostles go away these wonders and signs will go away as well. And that's what we've seen throughout history is that this was a unique time in the history of the church to confirm the truthfulness of the message.
And we don't need them anymore because we have the full New Testament. We have a way of confirming if someone is preaching the true message of the gospel. And so these wonders and signs were temporary.
[25:16] It doesn't mean the Lord is not doing miracles today. He is. And the primary miracle he's doing in his church is saving his people. We see it in verse 47. We also see it in our church every time there's a baptism.

We are celebrating the miracle that Christ has done through his church in saving a soul. So the first result was awe. Secondly, we see generosity.
Generosity. We see this in verses 44 and 45. The unity they shared wasn't just a philosophical harmony. It wasn't just we agree with each other or we like each other.
Their unity was very practical. And this generosity was the practical outworking of the fellowship that they experienced. And we learned that fellowship is costly.
Verse 44, all who believed were together together and had all things in common. They were together, they knew each other, and they had all things in common.
[26:17] This word for common is the same root word as the word for fellowship. And so they shared what they had, and this is exemplified for us and explained in verse 45. But before we get to verse 45, we need to ask, do we have deep relationships here?

Do we have meaningful connections in our church? Whether you're new here and new to the area, or whether you've lived here your whole life and belonged to this church for 30 plus years, do you have these kind of together relationships that the book of Acts describes?
And the reason we need to ask ourselves that question is because it's highly possible to love the idea of community more than the actual believers you're surrounded by. It's possible to say, I want a deep community, I want an authentic community, but when it comes to the actual people in our church, we're like, ah, just a different one though.
One man phrased it excellently, he said, to live above with the saints we love, oh, that will be glory. But to live below with the saints we know, that's a different story.
And we recognize the value of community, but when we see each other we see sin in our lives. We remember difficulties relationally from the past.
[27:44] Do we have these deep loving relationships here? You have a responsibility to form relationships. And if what I'm about to say next applies to you, I hope it comes across in love, but if you only show up for service on Sundays, you will not have these friendships.

Sundays are important, critically important to our health as believers, but fellowship is not the primary goal. Here we're trying to be built up in the word, and so be plugged into Sunday school, be invested in people's lives outside of Sunday morning, and you'll experience the joys of this fellowship.
Verse 45, they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all as any had need. This is an explanation of what verse 44 was talking about. They didn't want stuff they wanted to serve.
They didn't want loads and loads of possessions. They wanted to love their spiritual family. Now why was this necessary? Why was such radical generosity required? Well, there were a lot of people coming into town.
Many of them were the ones that got saved. And so now if they go back, they're leaving the only church that exists. And so they're forced to stay here. Many of them brought provisions just for their journey to Jerusalem.
[29:01] Those would quickly run out. And so the church stepped up and met those needs with radical generosity. Regenerated people are generous people.

This wasn't imposed on them. They did this willingly. And I'm continually amazed by the generosity of you guys, of our church. Not just in giving to the church in general, although that is commanded by the Bible, but just in person-to-person love and fellowship and harmony.
I'm continually blown away by that expression of love. And it's an amazing thing to think that our church can run just on donations.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

Can you imagine if the government made taxes voluntary? Just pray about what you owe on taxes this year. We would be in debt. Oh, well, more debt. Yet the church exists through the loving generosity of its people.
Now, everyone trying to support communism or socialism will use Acts 2.45 as an example for biblical support. So, is this communism? No.
[30:11] They still possessed private property that was theirs to decide what to do with. The group didn't collectively sell their things and pool the resources. Is this socialism?

Were the rich divesting themselves of their wealth and redistributing everything? No. This giving of possessions was voluntary. This was generosity. It was not forced. And they were not only giving away their present money, they were also giving away their futures, some of them.
They were selling fields. They were selling houses. They were selling property. Dave Ramsey would be horrified by this. They were giving up their future in order to lovingly sustain their family members in the present.
We can sum this up by saying they did not covet. They weren't covetous. They were lovingly generous. And they did this as any had need. They were together and would hear of needs arising and they would sell stuff to meet those needs.
Their desire for loving and serving each other had overtaken any desire for comfort or security. And this is an important reminder for us because we are so accustomed to judging the success of an organization based on how well and how quickly our personal needs are met.
[31:30] That's why we love Chick-fil-A. They're so quick. They meet our needs and it's their pleasure. We're used to judging organizations like that. We cannot take that mindset to the church.

Jesus himself came to serve. To give his life as a ransom for many. And so we need to get rid of that mindset when we come to church and not be like, did anyone serve me today?
How well were my needs met today? Rather we need to ask ourselves who we served and how well and glorifying to Christ our worship was. The third result was a new daily routine.
A new daily routine. We see this in verses 46 and 47. It says day by day. And if you look down towards the end of verse 47 you see that phrase day by day again.
This brackets this last section. Day by day they were attending the temple together because they were gathering there for worship. They didn't cut themselves off from life in the Jewish community.
[32:33] They were gathering in the temple for the hours of prayer and gathering there for worship and breaking bread in their homes. These were just regular meals in their homes.

And giving someone a seat at your table is a profound show of love. It's such a warm experience of friendship to share a meal in someone's home. And so we see they regularly met together in large groups in the temple and in smaller groups in their homes.
And again some of us want to prioritize one of these over the other. There are some people that are like our church needs to be bigger. It's too small. And others say our church is actually already too big.
We need to go back to house churches. House churches are the way forward. Well this church had 3,000 members in it. And Luke makes no comment about the size.
What the Bible prioritizes is faithfulness. Faithfulness to the word and commitment to each other. And they did this with glad and generous hearts.
[33:34] They received their food in their homes with glad and generous hearts. And this is a verse that you can hear. This sounds like laughter. This sounds like joy. This isn't a glib superficiality so I'm not saying we have to be fake.

I'm not saying we have to pretend like nothing is wrong in our lives or in our world. But we also shouldn't look like someone just put soap in our coffee. We need to smile. We need to laugh with each other. This is warm fellowship.
And it might be strange to us that they were so happy. They weren't seeking happiness for happiness sake. They were seeking to serve each other. But ironically that's how happiness is attained.
If you pursue happiness for the sake of happiness you will never reach it. But if you lovingly give your life away for the sake of others you will find true joy. Verse 47 they're praising God and having favor with all the people.
They're continually worshiping the Lord and the people of Jerusalem received them warmly. This wasn't a sealed off community. They loved God and they loved their neighbors and this might

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

explain their rapid growth because just a couple chapters later we see the number of the men came to about 5,000.
[34:49] And so as people were seeing the love that they poured out that hearing the truth they were preaching they were attracted to this community and it's just what Jesus promised by this all men will know you're my disciples.

You have love for one another. Their life together was a powerful testimony to the truth of the message. Now we can't control for this public reception.
Sometimes this will be met with praise sometimes it'll be met with persecution. This church in Jerusalem experienced both but we are called to be faithful. Verse 47 and the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.
Jesus is the one who is doing this. Salvation is of the Lord. Jesus promised in Matthew 16 I will build my church.
And here we see as these Christians were living out their life in community Christ was making good on that promise as he was building his church one soul at a time. And this is one of the most miraculous things that Jesus continues to do through the church today.
[35:58] While the apostles have left us along with their gifts, Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever and continues to be with his people as they seek to be faithful to him.

He will continue to build his church through the miracle of salvation. So did this church just sit on their hands though? Did they just gather to worship and not be concerned about outsiders?
No, the Lord was adding to their number daily because they were preaching the gospel daily. The Lord was saving people continually because they were continually proclaiming the gospel and we see that evangelism flows out of a healthy church.
Evangelistic events and outreaches can be helpful but the powerful testimony of a church that loves the Lord Jesus and loves the gospel far outweighs the effects of any stand-alone event.
So verse 42 is a beautiful picture. They devoted themselves to these four things but they didn't do so to the neglect of outsiders. They didn't become so inwardly focused that they failed to preach the gospel to those outside the church.
[37:05] And if we could summarize all of this in just one word, it would be love. This church loved the Lord Jesus and they loved their neighbors.

They loved Jesus, they loved each other, and they loved outsiders. What identified this church, what identified Christ's followers was not a list of rules, not a dress code, not a list of who they could or couldn't hang out with, not legalism, but love for the Lord Jesus.
And that love overflowed and permeated every aspect of their life as a church. It led them to obey Christ from a pure heart. And this is the essence of a healthy church.
And if you had to choose between a church that was 100% pure doctrinally, but had no love, or a church that had some issues to work out theologically but was filled with love for Christ, you'd be better off in the long run choosing that second option.
Because where people love Christ, he is present to bless them and the theological kinks will get worked out. I'm not talking anything heretical, but love should mark the church.
[38:20] Love should mark Christ's people. And that doesn't lead to just out and out acceptance of all kinds of sin, but it leads to a purity and devotion to the Lord and to one another.

If we imitate this example we have in Scripture today, we'll experience the presence of Christ and the power of his ongoing work. But what is maybe most striking about all of this is just how normal it is.
How mundane all these activities appear. This is just daily life. Nothing super heroic.
They were just faithful through normal everyday activities. And this is Christianity. This is what faithfulness to Christ looks like. Being obedient day after day.
Being faithful to him day after day. It's most often not spectacular. It's so routine. It's so normal. It's so everyday. But it's faithful.
[39:24] And this is refreshingly simple. And what's also beautiful about this picture is that the majority of this ministry was done by the members. Certainly the apostles played a key role in laying the foundation for the church, but so much of this ministry in verses 42 through 47 is done as Christians live out their Christianity in community.

What a gift Jesus has given us in the church. Jesus loves his church. Jesus laid down his life for his church.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

This is the community that he gave his life to create. He could have just saved us and sent us out as individuals, but he has grafted us as sinners into his beloved and glorious people.
So let us love him. Let us strive to make and to keep his bride faithful. And so do you love the Lord Jesus? And do we love each other?
And is that demonstrated when we show up to church? And is that demonstrated throughout the week? Let us be people who are devoted to the word of Christ found in the Bible.
[40:37] faithful and let us be faithfully devoted to loving and serving each other. This is the life of a healthy church. Let me pray for us.

Our Father, we thank you and praise you for your founding of the church. Acts 20, 28 says that this is the people that you purchased with your own blood.
It's the people for whom Christ died. So Father, I pray that we would love your son, Jesus Christ, as he's displayed for us on the pages of Scripture, as he unfurls your glory, as he is God made flesh.
And I pray that we would love your church. Christ is no longer physically present with us, but the physical manifestation of your wisdom and your glory is on display through your church.
So Father, I pray for our local church that we would be faithful to imitate this example we have in Acts 2. We would love your word, we would love each other, and we would love outsiders. It's for the glory of the Lamb we pray.
[41:54] Amen. Love you guys deeply. You are dismissed. What's up?

Do you have junior teaching this week? Do I... Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week?
Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week?
Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching this week? Do you have junior teaching fathers and junior teaching fathers in new past book after fathers in new

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host