

What They Did (To Have What They Had)

Seven-Fifteen Service

Series: Community, Pt 4

We've defined community in the church as requiring us to lose our identity because God desires "a people".

Culture – “inter-active” distinguishes between culture & community; authentic community demands “interaction”

- In interaction, in community we live closely with one another and change occurs
- To be a part of a culture means that something is always being “cultivated”
- 78.4% of all Americans consider themselves as Christian – possibly a part of a culture, but not part of community

“Are we willing to do what they did to have what the early church had?”

- So many things are desirable, but we are not willing to do what it takes to get the results we desire.
- ACTS 2:42-47 – if we look at what the church did, regarding this as a “manual” of what the church is to be about, what the church is to be doing.
- We find the goal of authentic community in these verses and the keys of how to come into such community.

They “devoted themselves...” – strong word describing the commitment, the passion, the determination in their investment; no casualness.

- Devoted to the “teaching” – the teaching of the apostles was reflective of Jesus’ teaching about the Kingdom.
- We tend to emphasize the benefits of the kingdom rather than the authority of the King. The focus on the Kingdom will bring a shift that the gospel is about Christ – His sufficiency, his power, his greatness, not our pain, need or weakness. It is a heavenly kingdom
- “The fellowship...” – something deliberate, very specific; with a definite article. Fellowship has to be deliberately engaged in; they wanted to be together – this was the baseline for how that church did life.
 - “One of the key factors of church health is that are consistent ways for the church to fellowship on a regular basis...this is why small group ministry is so effective.” (Peter Wagner)
 - Week in, week out – an ongoing need to engagement with others; fellowship is inconvenient.
- “The breaking of bread...” – there was something significant about sitting at a table and interaction takes place over food. Eating together is a symbol of covenant; an occasion for fellowship.
- “Prayer” – again an opportunity for doing something together by way of being together to seek God. We have a prayer problem that can be addressed only “in the Holy Spirit” in order to pray fervently, powerfully.
 - You fall in agreement with heaven and your prayer gets answered. A dynamic prayer life means coming into communion with God, coming into alignment with Him and with His will.
 - God agrees with Himself. The key to a dynamic prayer life is to fall into alignment with what God is doing & wants to do.

- To get aligned with God, we must empty ourselves of all that is not in alignment with him.
- We need to begin with “agreement” by finding what God is in agreement with. We need to hear better so that faith will come.
- “They met together every day” – they were together in large meetings, small meetings,
 - We enter into this at GCC in 3 ways – encountering, experiencing and extending – where all 3 are happening on a regular basis, these open the door to God’s blessing & joy. By living in all 3 of these, we align ourselves and see God deliver & release us.
- None of this is convenient, but we have an opportunity and need to join in all these activities.