



SECTION 1: PREP IT

LESSON OVERVIEW

Let's eat. It's really hard today, as it was back then, to separate church and meals shared. Think about all the functions of the local church and how they are connected to breaking bread with one another. Potluck dinners, Friday fish fries, wedding receptions, and funeral wakes are just some of the examples of churches connecting fellowship and food together. In the early church the body of believers would gather together to participate in the practice of breaking bread with one another.

Now was this just a mentioning of the Lord's Supper in Acts 2 or just typical, everyday meals? (1 Corinthians 11:17-34). It was most likely a combination of both. These meals took place in regular homes or in areas surrounding the temple. There is a strong connection between the practices of Christ and His final meal with His disciples. Looking back, the disciples would see the symbolic importance of the events of the Last Supper and would instruct the early church to mimic these practices. The

remembrance of Christ's death, the ability to serve one another in love, the opportunity to demonstrate humility toward one another regardless of class or birth, would all be opportunities for the Church to live out a full expression of Christ through their fellowship with one another.

Prayer would also be a very important and essential function of the local church. Prior to this time and place, prayers were executed with a routine precision. Corporate prayer was limited in Jewish religious practices. However, the Church placed an elevated importance on prayer. Throughout the book of Acts Luke gave examples of the Church and its leadership praying on a regular basis. The practice was significant and today is still a mark of Christ's Church. These essential functions of the local church made up a great portion of life and ministry in the early church.

PRIMARY SCRIPTURE

ACTS 2:42

SECONDARY SCRIPTURES

ACTS 1:14, ACTS 2:46,

HEBREWS 10:25, MATTHEW 14:19

KEY WORD:

FELLOWSHIP | The gathering of Christians who share a faith in Christ, a desire to be more like Him, and a mission to tell the world about Him

KEY THOUGHT:

A vital part of church life is fellowship, especially eating and praying together.

KEY VERSES:

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.

Acts 2:46-47

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- The students will know that eating (fellowshipping) was a regular practice of the early church.
- The students will know that prayer was a regular and important practice of the early church.
- The students will know that these practices were frequent and instrumental to the progress of the early church.

YOUR OBJECTIVES

You know your students. Following the lesson, what learning objectives do you want to accomplish tonight?

1.5 SECTION 4: DISCUSS IT (SMALL GROUP)

GETTING STARTED QUESTIONS (TAKEN FROM THE ESSENTIALS)

TIME:

Describe the best meal you have ever eaten. Why was it good?

Do you find the practice of praying strange? Why or why not?

Taken from Days 3-7 of the Bible Study

DAY 3

READ: ACTS 2:42-47

The early Christians didn't go to church. They did life together in all kinds of ways. They thought of themselves as belonging to Christ and to each other. They rearranged their schedules and their finances and their relationships to be there for each other.

WORK IT OUT:

How is your experience of church life like the early church? Do you wish it could be more like that? What would have to change?

DAY 4

READ: 1 CORINTHIANS 11:23-25

At the meal we call the Last Supper, Jesus showed the disciples — and they later showed the rest of us — how to use a meal to remember His death for our sin and to tell other people about it. The earliest Christians made a habit of doing this together. We now call this practice *Communion*.

WORK IT OUT:

How does participating in Communion help you to remember what Jesus sacrificed to pay for our sins?

DAY 5**READ: MATTHEW 6:5-15**

Jesus' command didn't mean Christians should never pray together, though prayer is often something we do alone in private. But Jesus was clear that we should never use praying together as a way to make ourselves look spiritual or important to each other. Prayer shouldn't be a performance.

WORK IT OUT:

Are you ever afraid to pray with others because of what they will think of you? Are you afraid you won't pray well enough? How could you make praying with the people you care about less about you and more about God and others?

DAY 6**READ: ACTS 12:11-12**

Acts 12 tells the story of Peter's rescue from prison. It happened while the Christians were praying together. That's what we do when there's a crisis: We pray together.

WORK IT OUT:

Whom would you call to pray for you if something terrible was going on in your life? Who would call you?

DAY 7

What is one truth that you learned this week? What are you going to do about it?

1.5 SECTION 5: EVALUATE IT

FACILITATION HELP

Pray for your students. Just as the early church prayed for one another, commit to praying regularly for your students. Lift them up to the Lord by name. Have a long discussion with God about your students. Talk with God and ask Him to share His plans for their lives with you, that you might partner with God to grow and mature their young faith. Write their names in the cover of your Bible. Make a list on an app and pray through their names. Keep the names of your students in front of you and frequently in the constant discussion between you and God.

EVALUATION

What went well ... what didn't go so well? Record how the night went and spend some time as a leadership team discussing this on a regular basis. Continual evaluation helps to refine what you do and continues to help make this the best night of your students' week.

Prep It —

Play It —

Teach It —

Discuss It —

FOLLOW UP

Sometimes it's hard to remember all the prayer requests and things going on in the lives of students. Use this space to record prayer requests, students' contact information, meeting times, and information. Or use it for your students to copy down when their next game or concert will be.

[illegible]