

Acts 2:41-47 - Fellowship True North Core Values Series 2018

41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Intro: Coco's story – to Guy friend's freshman year!

A) That was a monumental year in my relationship with Jesus and my connection to the church.

C) Professor Ronald Sharp who teaches a class on friendship at Kenyon college in Ohio -

"It's **not** about what someone can do for you, it's who and what the two of you become in each other's presence"

C) That year – that statement became true in my life

Time spent with that group and with my buddies

1) We grew in our relationship to Jesus – our Commitment AND Our Service

D) **QUESTION: What kind of impact are you and your friends having on one another – in your relationship to Jesus?**

In the beginning of the early Church – We see a group of people who were so committed to Jesus and each other – Met Daily

A) V.42 Continued steadfastly - It describes a steadfast single-minded fidelity to a certain course of action.

B) It means to persist obstinately in a task, to keep on with devotion,

1) to continue to do something with intense effort, to give unremitting care to a thing.

C) They continually devoted.... 6 things – Core Values

They continued steadfastly in:

1. **Apostles doctrine:** Teaching that centered around Jesus
2. **Fellowship:** Sharing in common their life in Jesus
3. **Prayer:** A dependency in following Jesus
4. **Communion:** Remembering the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ
5. **Worship:** Praising Jesus
6. **Evangelism:** Telling others about Jesus

Today we are looking at Core Value #2 Fellowship

A) Fellowship = To Share in common.

➤ **Fellowship involves relationship and partnership**

B) Relationship - How are we connected – what do we share in Common?

1) **We share in the same salvation.** - Sinners saved by grace

C) **Connected by Blood – Sure some of you guys like me Blood brothers when you were younger –**

1) **Fingers – smeared your blood together – Pack**

D) We are blood brothers and sisters – connected by the Blood of Jesus that – Cleanses us from all sin

1) **Share in Common – Blood Bought –**

E) **Salvation purchased not by material things – silver or gold – PRECIOUS BLOOD OF JC**

We share in our transformation.

A) **Broken in the process of being transformed – none of us have arrived we are all still a work in progress**

B) **We share the same guide for life.- God's word**

C) **We share the same love for God. We love him because he first loved us**

1) **We share in the same Spirit – Holy Spirit in our hearts** [2 Corinthians 13:14](#)

D) **We share in the same mission – Share Jesus with a lost and dying world**

Note V44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common,

A) Remarkable statement – people from different countries, regions, languages, economic background, - very different

B) They had all things in common because the thing that united them together was Jesus!

C) Example - Different guitars – different sounds - Some have a deep rich tone - others light and bright

1) Bass guitars – electric guitars

D) 10 Guitarist on the stage – the thing that is going to make them sound great – not horrible

1) **All tuned to the same tuning fork - - same key**

That is what happens to a group of people who come together and allow their lives to be tuned to Christ

A) Through the Study of God's word – submitting their hearts to the Holy Spirit – Unity that develops

B) There is an attractiveness that is the result!

C) People are longing for Community

In February of 2018 – Columnist David Brooks wrote an article in the NY Times entitled – Emerging from the wreckage

A) To prepare for the article – Brooks went around the country interviewing students at some of the most prestigious campuses in America.

B) His first observation in his interview was this: **this is a generation with diminished expectations.**

C) The Reason: Their lived experience includes the Iraq war, the financial crisis, police brutality."

1) In other words – a series of moments when the big institutions failed to provide basic security, competence and accountability.

D) One Harvard student told me. "We're the school shooting generation,"

1) Another said: "Wall Street tanked the country and no one got punished. The same with government."

He also said that the one question that seemed to overshadow the rest was this one: How do we create lasting relationships?

A) One student lamented "We're more connected than ever but we're more apart,"

B) Students expressed a hunger for social and emotional bonding - David Brooks "Emerging from the wreckage – NY Times February 2018

C) People are longing for community – In the early church they found that community in Jesus

D) Living in Desperate times – Roman oppression – different walks of life

1) They found their connection in someone greater than themselves – JESUS

In a Recent Time Magazine Article entitled "240 Reasons to Celebrate America Right Now"

A) Number 77 on the list was the waffle House restaurant chain!

B) Anyone ever been to a waffle house? Nothing fancy – sort of an old dinner Vibe

1) Open all night – 24-7 – you can always get a meal

C) FEMA has a so-called Waffle House Index for disasters; **if the locations are closed, you know things are bad."**

D) In the article Those who sing its praises do so not because of the food but, according to one customer, **"There's no ego, no pretension ... it's welcoming to all."**

E) Daniel Humm, the proprietor of the high-end New York restaurant, Eleven Madison Park reported from his visit, **"It was a reminder of how important hospitality is. We just felt so taken care of."**

Four words that sum up the attractive thing about the Waffle House – Authenticity, Simplicity, Consistency, and Hospitality

A) Those four words should mark the Church: Authenticity – no pretentious – not pretending – Broken people process transformed

B) **All Sinners saved by grace! – All in this process – none of us in perfect**

**C)Simplicity – Not about buildings and programs
– It is about Jesus – Keeping Him the focus**

D)Consistency – You know – Kids cared for and loved – you know worship – Jesus Focused – You know Word is going to be taught

E)Hospitality: You know that you are going to be encouraged and taken care of – YOU MATTER – in the body!

So the early Church was connected by Relationships – But also by a partnership!

A)It is interesting that throughout the NT this word Fellowship – Koinonia in the Greek is connected to Sharing, giving and service

⁴⁴ And all that believed were together, and had all things common; ⁴⁵ And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all *men*, as every man had need.

B)There were all these displaced people – so they shared readily with one another

C)Fellowship is more than a sentimental feeling of oneness – more than Chips and Guacamole – pancake Breakfast

D)Fellowship comes through giving. **True fellowship costs!**

I think the most beautiful illustration of this in the Bible is found in 2 Corinthians 8

A)During a time when the Church in Jerusalem was going through a difficult time/ a famine hit Judea hard

B)The Churches in the region of Macedonia – pitched in financially to help their brothers and sisters in Jerusalem –

1)Paul mentions their generosity in 2 Cor 8 – making note that even though they were poor they gave freely

Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: ² that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. ³ For I bear witness that according to **their ability, yes**, and beyond **their ability**, they were freely willing, ⁴ imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the **gift and the**

fellowship of the ministering to the saints. ² Corinthians 8:1-4

C)They saw it as part of their fellowship with the body of Christ

They implored Paul the idea being the urgently begged Paul to let them give to the needs of others

A)They viewed the opportunity as a privilege a gift and part of their fellowship

B)Now Why would people who are poor and needy themselves be so eager to give to help others? –

1)Definitely doesn't seem natural - V.5 gives us the answer

⁵ And not *only* as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, and *then* to us by the will of God. 2 Corinthians 8:5

C)They gave of themselves first to the Lord – I belong to Jesus – therefore – All that I have belongs to Jesus –

1)Jesus what do you want me to do with my income?

D)Paul speaking further of their willingness to share and give in Chapter 9 said this about the impact it would have

"They(The recipients) will glorify God because of your submission flowing from your **confession** of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your **contribution** (*koinonia*) for them and for all others." 2 Corinthians 9:13

To the church in Philippi Paul spoke of their Fellowship as a partnership in the gospel

³ I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, ⁵ for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now. Philippians 1:3-5

E)Being a part of the Church is recognizing I have been brought into a partnership with something bigger than myself – **the gospel - The Cause of Christ**

Ask ourselves - what is my role to play in that partnership in the gospel –

A) what do I bring to the table

B) What gifts – what resources – Am I a worker – or I am an encourager

1) Am I one who is going to be able to go out on a missions trip

C) Or am I one who is a SENDER – resources to help send others

D) Realizing – We together are partners with each other and with the Lord in the mission –

1) bring Jesus to the World!

E) So many people never know the joys of Christian fellowship because they have never learned to give themselves away.

It is the consumer mentality that permeates our culture– that has really hurt and weakened the church today

A) People look for a church - what is in it for me. What am I going to get out of this, who is going to reach out to me

B) They often end up disappointed because – Church is seen now as an Experience –

1) you can leave reviews on Yelp – google FB

C) The experience wasn't good for me – or the experience was great for me

1) Problem with that mentality is – it is all about me!

D) Misses the point of partnership in something

1) Misses – I am part of a body and I have a function

Something changes when you come into a community of believers realizing – I am here not just to get something- but to give something.

A) I am playing my part in the body of Christ – I want to see how I can contribute

B) That is when we are most like Jesus is when we are giving of ourselves in order to bless and build up others

C) In a recent TED Talk – TED stands for Technology Entertainment and Design

1) Ted talks view on line – short 18 minute talks that are devoted to spreading ideas, and inspiration... Business ministry – society

In a recent TED Talk John Sutherland, an officer in London's police department, explains a principle in forensic science called Locard's exchange principle.

A) Developed by Dr. Edmond Locard, known as the Sherlock Holmes of France, this principle has a simple premise: **every contact leaves a trace.**

In other words, every criminal leaves a trace behind him.

A) One forensic expert put it this way: Wherever he steps, whatever he touches, whatever he leaves, even unconsciously, will serve as a silent witness against him.

B) Not only his fingerprints or his footprints, but his hair, the fibers from his clothes, the glass he breaks

1) the paint he scratches, the blood he deposits or collects

C) This is evidence that does not forget.

Sutherland explains how this principle applies not just to forensic science but to all human relationships

A) Every time two people come into contact with one another an exchange takes place.

B) Whether between lifelong friends or passing strangers, **we encourage, we ignore, we hold out a hand, or we withdraw it.**

C) We walk towards or we walk away. We bless or we curse... **every single contact leaves a trace.**

1) So The way that we treat and regard one another matters.

D) So what is the trace going to be that you and I leave behind? Quote Dr. Ronald Sharp again

1) What are we going to become from being in each others presence?

Hopefully – More like Jesus!

That is what true fellowship that centers around Jesus results in – It leaves a trace of Jesus

A) It promotes the Love of Jesus – the heart of Jesus – the cause of Jesus to reach a lost world

B) Listen our fellowship needs to reflect this attributes – if it doesn't then we are doing it wrong

C) I want to be a part of a community – where this is the focus – You? –

1) Friendships that impact each other in our Love for Jesus – our desire to serve Jesus – that together – impact the world for Jesus

D) That is the type of community that I believe the Lord wants CV to be!

1) Pursue that – Continue steadfastly with single-minded fidelity toward that course of action- AMEN!

Here today visiting – new to church and Christianity

A) Or maybe it is been a long time – left a church – disillusioned by the Church

B) You are thinking – I want to be a part of that type of community

C) Note: CV is not a perfect community – by any stretch – but we are in that process of being transformed – by Jesus

D) To become a part – starts with Joining yourself to Jesus

1) Sinner – need a savior