

# ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## Part 7 – Church Stuff

### Acts 2.42-47

Maggie – what's \_\_\_ made of?

Working the text backward to see how it got there

#### Generosity (v.44-45)

- Not communism – what's yours is mine
- Not capitalism – what's mine is mine
- Christianity – everything is God's and I'm His steward / manager
  - It marked early Christians because they knew God had been so generous to them *AND* they saw the expansive need around them
  - Tithes and offerings are given so ministry can expand (not just exist)

#### Ministry (v.43)

- Outward focused life (they shared the Gospel all the time)
- Supernatural life – marked by the unexplainable activity of the Spirit

#### Practices (v.42)

- Devotion to Word
  - Ongoing submission to authority and teaching of Bible
  - “Live the life” (Xty w/o doctrine) = car without engine or frame, just tires
  - “Retelling of biblical story” = forcing the Bible to fit the culture
  - It confronts us because God confronts us – that is how we are transformed
- Devotion to Relationships
  - Why?
    - Relationships make us better (Proverbs 27.6, 27.17)
    - Relationships take away what tears down (Galatians 6.2)
    - These are ways relationships transform us
      - Epidemic of loneliness -> hurt
      - Won't fix everything
      - Takes diligence – easier to run away or run to faux friends (vs. nitty gritty of real life)
- Devotion to Communion
  - Bigger picture – devoted to Gospel
  - Picture of corporate worship
  - Telling the story again = transformation via the power of perspective of who God is and who I am, shaping our hearts toward hope, forgiveness, courage, faith, love, joy

- Devotion to Prayer
  - Transformation happens as we encounter God (2 Cor. 3.18)
  - Transformation happens as we lean less on us and more on God

#### Questions for Discussion

1. What's the greatest experience with church you have ever had? What kind of "ingredients" were involved? What was the outcome of it?
2. What role does generosity play in ministry? What are two specific examples that you can think of? How have you personally found Jesus' words that it's better to give than to receive to be true (Acts 20.35)?
3. If you could name one particular ministry that you'd like to see expand in our church family, what would it be? Why that one? What kind of resources do you think it would take to see that expansion?
4. In the sermon, Trent taught that the followers of Jesus were focused outward to the world around them. Would you say that's true of our church? Of you personally? On whom are you focused in ministry right now? What does that ministry look like?
5. Out of the four practices listed, which one needs your most attention right now? Where do you think you are the strongest? What step do you need to take to strengthen the weakest one?