

The Power of Community
Acts 2:42-47

I. The “breaking of bread” together was worship.

- A. Jesus had said, “Do this in memory of me.”
 - 1. What were they to remember?
 - 2. Jesus broke the bread and said, “Take and eat; this is my body.”
 - (a) His body would be broken.
 - (b) But he is the bread of life.
 - (c) Because he gave himself, his life would come into ours.
 - (d) As his Spirit comes in, we are raised to life in him.
 - 3. We remember that Jesus gave his life so we could live.
 - (a) We remember that apart from that, we’re without hope.
 - 4. We remember his faithfulness (Philippians 2:8).
- B. We don’t separate the bread from the cup.
 - 1. “This is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”
 - (a) His lifeblood poured out as the true sacrifice.
 - (b) He fulfilled the law by dying our death (Romans 6:23).
 - (c) He made the gift of eternal life available to us.
 - 2. We owe him everything!
 - (a) The Lamb is worthy to be worshiped!
- C. In his death, he fulfilled God’s plan of redemption.
 - 1. It has always been there. We just couldn’t see it.
 - (a) That was true for them. It is also true for us before faith.
 - (b) At the Passover seder, the Last Supper, Jesus is the fulfillment. He is the Passover Lamb.
 - 2. He fulfilled so many prophecies and pictures.
 - (a) Abraham offering his only son.
 - (b) The divided animals that God passed through.
 - (c) Water from the rock that was smitten.
 - 3. So, we break bread to remember and to worship.
 - (a) God’s glory is his character.
 - (b) It is best displayed in the cross. “For God so loved...”
 - (c) The love of God is so big and so good!
 - (d) His grace for sinners is indeed glorious!
- D. Devotion to the breaking of bread is devotion to Jesus, to his worship.

II. On a simpler level, eating together brings us together.

- A. There is something about eating together that connects us.
 - 1. Maybe it has something to do with how conversation flows.
 - 2. Maybe it’s sharing the enjoyment of the food.
 - 3. Whatever it is, there is something very significant about eating together and its impact on community!
- B. There is a reason why we call some foods “comfort food.”

- 1. We have physical and emotional responses to food.
- C. The early church had Communion as part of a meal(see I Cor.11)
 - 1. So, it was less of a ritual.
 - (a) The quantity of bread we eat is certainly not a meal.
 - 2. The sacredness was in the meaning, not in the elements.
 - (a) The reaffirming of covenant.
 - (b) Vertical faithfulness to God.
 - (c) Horizontal faithfulness to one another.
- D. They were “devoted...to the breaking of bread.”
 - 1. Why?
 - 2. Because they were family. That’s what families do.
 - 3. It strengthened and reaffirmed relational connections.
 - 4. It strengthened their group identity as God’s people
 - 5. Back to worship. It reminded them they were a redeemed people.
 - (a) They had been set free.
 - (b) By a Savior who gave everything for them.
 - (c) He was the one who called them to love and unity.

III. Our most significant attachments form our character.

- A. Jim Wilder explains this in The Other Side of Church: Christian Community, Brain Science and Overcoming Spiritual Stagnation.
 - 1. The right side of the brain processes relationship/attachment.
 - 2. When we are attached in loving relationships it enables the left side (cognitive side) to learn.
 - (a) We incorporate values through community we are attached to.
 - 3. Group identity is the key.
 - (a) Group identity is powerful.
 - (b) We incorporate the values of the group that loves us.
 - (c) Jesus: “If you love me, you will obey my commandments.”
 - (d) Paraphrase: “If you’re attached to me, you will follow me.”
- B. That is why the Acts 2 community is so powerfully transformative!
 - 1. The four devotions work together.
 - 2. The bond of koinonia fellowship is strong.
 - (a) The people are filled with joy and excitement.
 - (b) They are happy to be together.
 - (c) They are family.
 - 3. The love and joy they share enables them to incorporate in their lives, what the apostles are teaching, the values taught by Jesus.
 - 4. Those values are their group identity (“This is who we are”).
 - 5. They are not perfect, but they even work through conflict well.
 - 6. The fruit is great!
 - (a) Lives are being transformed.
 - (b) More people are coming to faith every day.