

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sermon: “Life Together” Dave Sattler NSAC February 4, 2024

Series: “Lessons from the First Church” Text: Acts 2:42-47

Sub-texts: Matthew 6:19-20; John 13:34-35; Hebrews 10:23-25

I. Introduction:

- Revisit Sunday’s discussion question(s): Who first introduced you to Jesus? What drew you to Church?

II. READ: Acts 2:42-47

III. Questions on Text:

1. What were the first believers devoted to? (v42)
2. Discuss what’s meant by the “apostles’ teaching.”
Pastor Dave said, “Its important theological features include the conviction that Jesus was both fully human and fully God, that Jesus lived, died, and rose again, and, that the only way to salvation was through repentance and faith in Jesus.”
3. Describe the fellowship the early Christians enjoyed. How was this different from social networks in the 1st Century?
In the 1st Century, to be born *female*, or of certain *ethnic* backgrounds, to be *sick*, to be a *child*, or to be *poor* meant one’s life ‘ceiling’ was very low; barriers between you and the rest of society were large. The fellowship believers in the First Church enjoyed begins to redefine kinship in the 1st Century—beyond gender, age, race, class, and socioeconomic status.
4. “We grow in our faith journey with Jesus through relationships with people different from ourselves.” For you, how is this true/not true?
5. What was the impact of wonders and signs? (v43) Discuss.
6. Discuss the communal living and sharing of possessions of the first Christ-followers. (v45-46) How does this sit with you?
7. How might living the Jesus Way “rewire” how we think about money and possessions?
8. What relationship did Jewish Christians have with their Jewish faith roots? (v46-47a) How does Christianity build on Judaism?
9. Talk about the impact of the First Church? (v47b)
Pastor Dave said, “Godly loving churches grow. People are drawn to Jesus by church communities like this.”

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IV. Life Application Questions:

A. *Deep Christian community comes at a cost.*

- How does mention of the First Church's deep community sit with you?
- Read and discuss Hebrews 10:23-25. What are we called to do?
- Identify and discuss some of the "risks" and "rewards" of engaging in beautiful and messy church community.

B. *Christ-followers are called to be generous.*

- Talk about our human struggle with wealth—whether we have a little bit or a lot of it.
- Read Matthew 6:19-20. What does Jesus say here about the relationship between "treasure" and our hearts?
- If you were in church and saw the Video: "Story of CIRCLE OF CARE Community Houses" take some time to discuss.
- Pastor Dave said, "Our property, our possessions need to come under the sovereignty of God. And tremendous freedom comes when we are generous with them." What might practicing generosity look like for Christ-followers?

C. *Christ-followers ought to be marked by love.*

- Read and discuss John 13:34-35.
- Discuss what Tertullian of Carthage, a 2nd Century Church Father claimed: "It is our care for the helpless, our practice of loving kindness that brands us in the eyes of many of our opponents. 'Only look', they say, 'look how they love one another!'" —Tertullian in Stark, p86-87
- What makes loving one another difficult?
- Richard Lewis offers this definition: Church is "a community of people who stand firm in the truth over against raging currents of opposition and who present **living proof of a loving God to a watching world.**" How can we grow deeper in love for one another? And, what might be the impact? Discuss and pray together.