

POWER HOUR

2/9/2025

Lesson Text:
Acts 2:43-47, 4:32-35

Background Scripture:
Deuteronomy 15:4-11 &
Luke 12:32-34

Devotional Reading:
Acts 6:1-7; 1 John 3:16-18

"FELLOWSHIP AND SHARING
AMONG BELIEVERS"

NLT TRANSLATION

Golden Text: *44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. Acts 2:44 NLT*

Time: A.D. 30

Place: Jerusalem

Acts 2:43-47 NLT

43 A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. 44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. 45 They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. 46 They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— 47 all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

Acts 4:32-35 NLT *32 All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. 33 The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great blessing was upon them all. 34 There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them 35 and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need.*

INTRODUCTION

Since Christ said that "the poor always ye have with you" (John 12:8; Deuteronomy 15:11), some have concluded that it does little good to try to alleviate such a pervasive problem as human poverty. But if Christians took that approach, we would never attempt to help the hurting, comfort the grieving, or aid the sick either. God's people

are to have a special concern for those in need. We should have this concern because God does.

This week's lesson takes us back to church life in its original form. History reveals that the church did not continue in this communal mode for long because of changing circumstances. Timeless principles of fellowship can be derived from the early Jerusalem experience, however. This week's lesson has sought to mine those principles and apply them to church life today.

Christians of any time and culture should love each other and be willing to sacrifice for the common good. Christians who relate to each other in this way project a powerful witness to the unsaved world.

1. Awe at the wonders of God (Acts 2:43).

Each member of the first church was filled with fear, or awe, at the wonders of God performed by Jesus' apostles. Members of local churches today also should be filled with awe at the wonders of God among them. They should be filled with awe when each new birth into the family of God occurs, when fervent prayer changes things that human effort cannot, and when a brilliant sunset fills the sky with colors and patterns from the celestial Artist.

2. Provision for the needs of members (Acts 2:44-45).

The first church made provision for any needs among the membership. They had such a love for one another that they willingly and freely gave of their possessions so that all the needs in the church would be met.

Do our churches today routinely provide for any needs of their members other than spiritual ones? The pattern set by the first church in Jerusalem should be evident in churches today. Christians would not need to rely on state welfare institutions if their churches undertook to meet their members' physical needs, as did the first church.

3. Worship services full of joy (Acts 2:46-47).

The believers gathered daily to worship God in the temple courts. The church, however, differed markedly from the Judaism of those in control of the temple. The Christian fellowship of the believers manifested itself particularly in fellowship meals conducted in various homes. When a Christian has an opportunity to fellowship in a small group, this part of the family of God can become his accountability team and

prayer partners.

Joyfulness and generosity of heart were two of the outstanding characteristics of the early Christians. These traits should be evident in every church today. Worship should be a time of joy and of giving to further the gospel.

4. Unity among the believers (Acts 4:32-35).

The most outstanding characteristic of this Spirit-filled church was unity, a sense of oneness. This was manifested in the sharing of material resources. To meet the needs of poor Christians, the more wealthy believers sold their lands or houses and brought the money to be used for the common welfare of the church. The apostles supervised this ministry of love, which was carried out not based on financial equality but based on personal needs.

When have you ever heard of a member of a local church selling his or her property to provide for needy members of the church? We know this practice went on in the first century. When we closely examine the roots of our local evangelical churches today, we learn that the first church from which we all spring had wonderful ways of demonstrating their unity as believers.

Those in Jerusalem saw for themselves that the followers of Christ were different from the Jewish religious leaders. Unlike the austere Pharisees, the new church was a warm and vibrant community with a highly developed awareness of and concern for people's needs. May the lost who see our churches today see something more than mere stale religiosity.

POINTS TO PONDER

1. God's displayed power should always produce a spirit of reverence and awe in His people (Acts 2:43).
2. In God's family, personal blessings are meant to be used for mutual benefit (vss. 44-45).
3. A desire for corporate worship is only natural for God's people (vss. 46-47).
4. Any true church growth comes from God alone.
5. True belief is demonstrated by both spiritual and practical acts of sharing (Acts 4:32-33).
6. God often supplies the needs of His people through the gifts of His people (vss. 34-35)

CONCLUSION

An immediate sense of belonging to one another is noted among the early Christians in the days following Pentecost. God was actively working in and through the apostles, and as people believed the gospel, they found a new and immediate fellowship and sense of belonging to one another.

This phenomenon continues even to this day. Many testify that upon coming to faith in Jesus, they feel closer to and more at home with their Christian brothers and sisters than they do with their natural family.

QUESTION(S)

What "wonders and signs" were performed (Acts 2:43)?

Where did the earliest Christians meet?

In what way did the saints aid those in need?

What does it mean that the believers had "favour with all the people" (vs. 47)?

What is the meaning of "of one heart and of one soul" (Acts 4:32)?

Once the property was sold, where was the money brought? How was it distributed?

How can and should we help those in need today?

What challenges do we face in trying to help needy people?

ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON

Next week's lesson is "*Lydia's Hospitality*"

Lesson Text: **Acts 16:6-15**

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