

40AD—> 350AD.

From this moment the church began to grow.

- Sociologist Rodney Stark estimates a growth rate of 40% per decade!

Today—> estimated 2.38 billion globally! 253 million in USA

How? The grace of God... the power of the Gospel outpouring of Holy Spirit.

This passage also highlights the way their spiritual practices leveraged God's grace toward renewal.

The key practice I want to highlight was their devotion to Fellowship.

v42 Devoted... προσκατερέω (proskartereō) = stay close, persist, join together, persevere, to remain faithful, to attend constantly.

### 1. Proximity- Persistence- Passion

What is Fellowship? It's the practice of intentionally gathering together with other believers around the person and purpose of Jesus.

FOCUS. First let's look at WHY Fellowship is so important and then HOW we can practice the skills of this discipline.

WHY is Fellowship such a powerful spiritual practice? 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles...

- Fellowship stokes our Wonder v43 Everyone was filled with awe...

Gathering with believers stirs, strengthens and supports our faith

What disciples experienced w/ Jesus in flesh took new form in community.

- his presence... mediated through the people in the community
- his wisdom/ teaching... through the teaching of other believers
- his power... through the gifts and prayers of other believers
- his love... the sharing and hospitality of other believers

All of this- captured in one of Paul's key metaphors for gathered believers

1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Together... we are the body of Christ—> sacred... supernatural... relational

2) Fellowship amplifies our Witness. 47 And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Witness of gathered believers:

1. Witness of a friend is like listening to a violin. Church is a Symphony.
  - Jesus in stereo.
  - City on Hill can't be hidden!
  - My first step to faith in Jesus was in private. Second was at church!
1. Diversity of a community & the many personalities & gifts & races  
Introverts & extroverts... engineers & artists... White & Black...  
Rev 7:9. a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language...
- Unity. Something/ Someone transcends normal reasons for grouping.

HOW can we put Fellowship into practice? What are the skills and habits? Heb 10: 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

- The Habit of Gathering.

It's interesting how even back then there were temptations to stop meeting.

"habit" Gk (ethos) —> custom, pattern of behavior.

Jesus- Luke 4:6 on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.

Habits are powerful small patterns in our life that shape us.

James Clear, Atomic Habits— "Your identity emerges out of your habits."

"Each habit is like a suggestion, 'Hey maybe this is who I am.'"

What is the ethos of fellowship practiced in your life/ family?

Highlight 2 key features in Acts 2 Fellowship- frequency and space.

1. Frequency—> vs46 every day... habit... weekly.
2. Space—> vs 46 Temple courts and each others homes.

## Spiritual Practice: FELLOWSHIP

Acts 2:42-47 | Ryan Pfeiffer | Jan 21, 2024

What is your frequency of gathering here on Sundays?

Is there a space you need to step into this year? Home group? Mentoring?

2) The Skill of Listening. Ja 1:19 Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

Active Listening... asking questions. David Brooks article.

Jesus asked over 307 questions!

“I’ve come to think of questioning as a moral practice. When you’re asking good questions, you’re adopting a posture of humility, and you’re honoring the other person.” — David Brooks, [The Essential Skills for Being Human](#).