

# Upside Down | the character of the Jesus movement

## Why is Change so Hard?

Acts 2:37-42

July 16, 2017

**Review:** What truth about God did you speak to your friends last week?  
What did you learn about God's mercy in His answers to Job's complaints?

**Introduction:** If you follow Jesus, you're a part of a movement. You're in with others. The movement of Jesus is about the people. Jesus invites us individually but deploys us corporately. House by house, Luke tells us, the Lord added to their number those who were being saved (Acts 2:46-47). It wasn't about the buildings; it was about the people. The biblical word for 'house' (oikos) meant family. Jesus added to their numbers when his followers lived like his family with one another and with their neighbors. The movement wasn't defined by their ideas or rules but by the way they lived together, by the way that Jesus lived in their shared life. The book of Acts invites us to stop coming to church and start being the church. Summer in Seattle offers a wonderful opportunity: Our neighbors are coming out of their houses. Will we welcome them into his? If we do, maybe they'll stay what the Greeks said, "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also..." (Acts 17:6).

This week we reflect on the first essential part of movement – getting started!

**Pray:** Father, we rely utterly on your grace and the Holy Spirit to be a part of the Jesus movement. Help us to understand more. Amen.

**Read:** Acts 2:37-42

### Discussion:

1. Peter's first sermons to the people in Jerusalem all contained heart-felt "words of warning".  
Are words of warning effective? How?

Have you ever received words of warning on important issues?  
Did it make a difference?

Have you ever given a word of warning?

2. The believers joined together in fellowship along with "devoting themselves to the teachings of the apostles". Does fellowship enhance/help teaching? How?

3. The believers also "broke bread together".  
What is it about breaking bread that helps in movement and to resist stagnation?

What have you noticed during eating together as believers?

4. The believers "devoted themselves to prayer". How is prayer important to "movement", since unlike fellowship and eating together, it is not action-based?

Reflect on the role that fellowship plays in prayer.

**Application:** In verse 39, the promise is for "all who are far off".  
Do you have a way to participate in that promise?

**Pray:** Father, we are grateful for the church and the mysterious dynamic at its beginning. We pray that this will continue in our present time. Amen