

DEVOTED TO JESUS

To Connect with Others

1-23-22

- The book of Acts tells us the story of the first century church. It didn't begin as an institution. It began as a movement.

ekklesia (Church) actually means: an assembly or gathering.

1. A **simple** message.
2. An **expanding** mission.
3. A **serious** devotion.

- **Devoted** means: To be earnest towards, to persevere, be constantly diligent, or to attend tirelessly all the exercises.

Acts 2:42-47 - They **devoted themselves** to the apostles' teaching and to the **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread and to prayer**.⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles.⁴⁴ All the believers were **together** and had everything in common.⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need.⁴⁶ **Every day** they continued to meet **together** in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate **together** with glad and sincere hearts,⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Harvard University Medical School did research and found that the two most powerful and meaningful experiences in life are **achieving** and **connecting**.

1. Achieving has to do with our accomplishments - winning contests, pursuing career success and financial milestones, and reaching our goals.
2. Connecting has, of course, to do with our relational world: the people we are close to and love.

John 13:1-2, 4-6 - Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, **He loved them to the end.** NASU... ² The evening meal was being served... ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

Acts 2:42, 46 - They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship... ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts...

1 Thessalonians 5:11 - Therefore **encourage** one another and **build each other up**, just as in fact you are doing.

- **Encourage** means: To call near, invite, invoke.
- **Build up** means: To be a house-builder, construct, confirm.

What do you do when you build community with others?

1. By _____ for each other.

A. Hurts, pains, and health

B. Spiritual Growth

Romans 15:13 - May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:17 - I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

2 Thessalonians 3:5 - May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

2. By being _____ with each other.

- _____ your mistakes.

Ephesians 4:25 - Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

Two benefits:

A. Emotional _____ from pain.

James 5:16 - Therefore **confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed**. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

B. Power from God to lift _____.

James 4:10 - Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

James 4:6 - But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

3. By _____ others to grow spiritually.

1 Timothy 4:7-8 - Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, **train yourself to be godly**. For **physical** training is of **some value**, but **godliness** has value for **all things**, holding promise for both the **present life** and the **life to come**.

Challenge:

- If you are not in a community group, find one today.

wi-fi password: lrccguest

Four Easy Ways to Give:

In Person: Place your offering in an offering box at either exit.

Our App: Search for "Laurel Ridge Community Church" on iOS and Android.

Online: laurelridgechurch.org/give

Bill Pay: Setup LRCC on your bank's Bill Pay. Questions? Call the church office.

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