

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

OCT. 12/13 - ACTS 2:42-47

GETTING THINGS STARTED

Did anyone do a more thorough study of the Holy Spirit in Scripture? (A Next Step idea from last week's study guide)

What did you discover?

How has it helped you understand the Holy Spirit?

Last week we did a group 'check-in'. Everyone could share:

The one word that describes the state of their heart/spirit.....and why.

The one thing bringing you greatest joy these days.....and why.

The one thing that is burdening you most these days.....and why.

The one thing you need prayer for.

Has there been change for you since last week? Did you learn anything or discover anything through this last week in regards to what you shared? Would you like prayer?

READ TOGETHER

Acts 2:42-47

DISCUSSION

- Take a few minutes to share your impressions of the message and scripture from this weekend.
 - Were you challenged in your understanding? Confused or frustrated? Was it helpful?
 - Did it prompt you to think differently about community? In what way?
- Last week we discussed the "watershed" moment in the Early Church; Pentecost. This weekend we discussed the resulting community that was formed.
 - What is the most striking quality of the Early Church Community to you as you read this passage?
 - What do feel is a quality that is largely missing in Christian fellowship and community these days? Why do you think this is the case?
- Many times we approach this passage as the recipe for community... if we "do" everything we see in this passage we will have Biblical community. Instead, this passage and all the qualities we see in this community are the result of the Holy Spirit's power and filling.
 - Sometimes when we just "do" all the actions or check off what we think we are supposed to do as Christians off a checklist... we end up manufacturing very legalistic community. Describe a time that you felt this way about a community or fellowship... *that it seemed to lack the heart or the life of Christ.*
 - How do you think as a church we can take steps forward in experiencing true community as we see in our passage?
 - If what we see in our passage describes true community, as we were created to experience, how do we practically seek out the Holy Spirit, and become filled with the Spirit?
 - Describe what you believe a life of "ongoing" surrender to God and filling of the Spirit looks like.

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- Share with each other what change you long to see in yourself as it pertains to this topic.
 - o *Is it something you need to finally surrender? Is it to gain a Godly perspective of money and possessions? Maybe it is to be more accepting and loving towards others...*
 - o What is a next step you can take in this area?

- Share what you long to see developed in your group as you all mutually submit to and become increasingly filled with the Spirit
 - o *Maybe the prayer and dream you have is for increased engagement throughout the week, or to grow as a group in numbers. Maybe it is to together learn more deeply about the Spirit's role in your lives so you may experience this community more and more! Maybe it is to see increased radical inclusiveness or generosity.*
 - o What is a next step your group could take in this area?

PRAYER

One of the obvious qualities of the Early Church was their commitment to prayer. They longed to talk to God and hear from Him. Take some time to bring what has been discussed today before Him.

As you close your time of prayer, have someone pray the prayer below and encourage everyone to pray along with them silently. It is a prayer of surrender and of a desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

“Lord Jesus, I am yours. All of me. Forgive me anew today. Everything I am I offer to you. I sacrifice the things that I thought were important, and I commit myself to what you think is important. I long to live the life I was created to live, and I know I cannot experience this fully without our Spirit. Fill me today, in this very moment”.

NEXT STEPS

Honestly, the most fruitful Next Step we can take after this message is to let the prayer (above) be our prayer every day. This week, pray this prayer when you wake up and when you go to bed. You can print it off and put it somewhere as a reminder.

Surrender to Him and ask Him to fill you with His Spirit!

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