

Devoted to Breaking Bread Acts 2:44-47

As this is the week of prayer for Christian unity, as Churches Together in Felixstowe, we are following themes based on Acts 2:44-47 called All Things in Common. This is Day 3 where we focus on the theme of Devoted to the Breaking of Bread.

44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who 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 favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Central to the concept of unity is fellowship. The Greek word for fellowship is one you may have heard of before: *koinonia*: common, having in common, sharing. It's a common word in the NT. When Paul in 1 Cor 10 says "The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ" he uses the word *koinonia*. It's a sharing in the body - we all participate, share, in it. This is the idea in Acts 2:42. The fellowship, fellowship was sharing. They shared their lives together.

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

Fellowship was so important to the early church that they met all the time. They were healthy Christians. They were desiring together to commune, have fellowship - to worship God and to get closer to God.

The question I want to ask you is - do you see the Church, do you see fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ as THE place to develop and mature your commitment to Christ? The trouble is that so many Christians simply don't. The basic aim of fellowship is to be in an environment where sincere love can be expressed. In the interaction of true fellowship believers have the opportunity to share God's grace - to be the means by which God can impart faith, encouragement, comfort, healing and instruction to one another.

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God
Colossians 3:16*

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Heb 10:25

Christianity is not a sole occupation. It isn't for loner rangers. We commit to Christ, we commit to one another. We are in God's family. We are God's children. Do you want to grow as a Christian - then commit yourself to learn from one another? We grow as part of a fellowship. The idea of fellowship so filled their lives that they were meeting together at every opportunity .

What do we mean by meeting together? Do we mean Sunday worship? Do we mean house group? It's this and so much more. Church isn't about coming to things organised as a church, but love and friendship towards one another. When they were meeting in each other's homes and breaking bread together, they weren't necessarily having a service - they were just meeting as friends, as spiritual family and they talked about Jesus one another. Over the years I've learned as much through sharing informally with my Christian friends as I have in a church. There was no distinction between church and any other form of fellowship. They met, they talked and broke bread.

What do we mean by break bread? At the most basic it was having a meal. But we know that Jesus Himself gave us a particular meal - bread and wine - so that we might remember His broken body and shed blood, which is at the very heart of our Christian faith. Without His death on the

cross we cannot know God, we cannot have forgiveness of sin, or hope of eternal life.

Bread and wine were the tea and biscuits of the first century. If people came to your house, that's the snack they got offered. We make Communion a mystical act. We do it on set occasions with all due ceremony. To them, taking bread and wine was just kind of what they did anyway. Every time they met with one another open and the bread and wine came out, they remembered Jesus in a simple and ordinary act. And we're going to do that this evening.

As we break the bread and drink the wine, we're going to remember that it is our God who has drawn us together by His grace, His beloved Son has died for us; suffered his body to be beaten and tortured, allowed His blood to have been shed for us so that by faith we might know forgiveness and eternal life.

Let's give Him thanks and praise as we remember Him this evening.

Prayer

*Preached on January 20th 2011, MRBC Felixstowe
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Prayer Meeting
© Mark Reid 2011*