



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions

The Early Church Series, Lesson 52

Lesson Title: The Infant Church

Take Home Point: Don't be a big baby. Grow up in Jesus.

Warm-Up:

A friend of mine proudly wears the label "agnostic." One day he told me his teenage children seem to be taking on his belief system. Since my friend values independent thinking, this disappoints him. "I haven't encouraged or discouraged them regarding religion," he told me, "I just want them to choose their own way." I asked if he fed them when they were babies. "Of course," he answered. I asked why. He said, "So they could grow up!" "Well," I responded, "what makes you think their inner beings don't need care and feeding to grow up, too?"

Read: Acts 2:42-47

Observation (What happened?):

In verse 42, what four things did the believers do to grow in the Lord?

From the rest of today's reading, what were the results of these activities?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

How were relationships strengthened by the believers' activities? What relationships were strengthened?

What do you think was their "single purpose" mentioned in verse 46?

Insight:

What do you suppose the disciples taught the new believers in the early church? Well, based on their lifestyle, I'm sure some very specific words of Jesus were spoken early and often. John 8:31: "If you live by what I say, you are truly my disciples." John 13:35: "Everyone will know that you are my disciples because of your love for each other." John 15:8: "You give glory to my Father when you produce a lot of fruit and therefore show that you are my disciples." Teaching, loving, sharing, bearing the fruit of joy, and bringing Christ to others – these qualities demonstrated that the first Christians were growing as Jesus wanted them to. And what do you suppose their single purpose was? No doubt it was John 15:12, "Love each other as I have loved you." Read all of John 15 to see how Jesus provides what we need to grow in him and live for him.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

Think of one place in your life where you are growing in the Lord. Thank him right now for his wonderful kindness to you.

Pray for your church to live out Acts 2:42, so God can bring the same results to those around you.