



beautiful **COMMUNITY**

***A WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL CREATED
BY A TEAM OF PEOPLE AT
ADVENTURE OF FAITH***

INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY (FOR GROUPS)

Have a person stand in the middle of the room with their mask on. Have another person read the words below. The rest of the room will have to guess if the person in the middle is smiling or frowning at each word (i.e. smile if you like it, frown if you don't).

Word List:

Ice cream flavors: Vanilla, Chocolate. Chocolate, Cookies & Cream, Mint Chocolate Chip, Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough, Buttered Pecan, Birthday Cake, Strawberry, Moose tracks Neapolitan.

Pizza Toppings: Pepperoni, Mushrooms, Onions, Sausage, Bacon, Extra cheese, Black olives, Green peppers, Pineapple, Spinach

REAL TALK:

THIS IS A TIME TO BE
AUTHENTIC, WITH
YOURSELF AND OTHERS.
SHARE HOW YOU'RE
DOING WITH GOD
PERSONALLY AND PRAY
FOR ONE ANOTHER.



SERMON SUMMARY:

In Acts 4:32, we have a picture of the early church. They are united together in "one heart and soul," not claiming ownership over their possessions, but sharing everything with each other. The church wasn't a building people came to or a denomination they agreed with: it was people, focusing on the Jesus who united them, sharing everything they had, selling their land and giving away their wealth for the benefit of others. The early church was unified not because of their agreement, but despite their disagreement. They focused on their commission from Jesus and they helped each other follow Him as best each person could. In their fellowships, they didn't behave as acquaintances, but as family -- living out Christ's sacrificial, unconditional love for each other.

Our modern church context is so much different. We choose the places we fellowship based on proximity or demographics or that one really specific belief that we just can't forgive anyone for not agreeing with. We want our church to be comfortable; we want our church to 'feed' us and to be engaging. We don't want it to be boring and if something doesn't quite fit what we're looking for or doesn't feel just right, then we can find a new fellowship group or a different building to go to. This idea would have been so foreign to the early church.

For our church to live like the early church, we all need to be all in. We go all in with each other because we're all in with Jesus. We obey His great commission by living in covenant relationships with each other and committing to sacrificially, unconditionally love each other. Living like the early church is neither simple nor easy, especially in 21st Century America. But whenever we commit to deeper relationships with each other, we find a deeper relationship with God and live more fully into His design for our individual and corporate lives.

GOD ENCOUNTERS:

JOURNAL, THINK ABOUT, OR
DISCUSS WITH YOUR
GROUP HOW YOU HAVE
ENCOUNTERED GOD IN YOUR
LIFE THIS WEEK.

WORSHIP SONG:

CLICK IN THIS AREA FOR A
HYPERLINK TO YOUTUBE OR
SEARCH FOR:

GIVE ME JESUS - SHANE &
SHANE

When I am afraid
Oh, when I am afraid
When I am afraid
Give me Jesus

READ:

Acts 4:32-37

- IN YOUR OWN WORDS, WHAT IS THE OVERALL MESSAGE OF THIS PASSAGE?
- WHAT STANDS OUT TO YOU AS WE READ THOSE VERSES?
- WHY DO YOU THINK GOD THOUGHT IT NECESSARY TO INCLUDED THESE VERSES IN THE BIBLE?
- HOW DO WE LIVE OUT Acts 4:32-37? WHAT WILL IT TAKE?
- HAVE YOU SEEN SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE MODEL THIS WELL? EXPLAIN.
- WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO LIVING AS THE EARLY CHURCH DID?

PRAYER:

Father,

In this age of consumerism, where we are continually tempted with advertisements for "the next best thing," help us to recognize that everything we own comes from you and belongs to you. We desire to be thoroughly connected to you and be unified with our brothers and sisters, that our lives will reflect the love we have for you and for one another.

Help us to be willing to share with those in need, just as the early church did. We know that the world doesn't understand this expression of love but it is the essence of what you have taught us. May your Holy Spirit ignite this church, this body of believers, creating a light so bright, that it cannot help but permeate our community and our world.

In your precious name,

Amen