

Sermon Date: August 25, 2013
Acts 2:41-47
Community Created by the Spirit

1. Read Acts 2:42-47 to get a feel for the section.
2. Acts 2:42 is commonly referred to as the four marks of the early Christians. Doug termed this “heaven crashing into earth.” Read the following comments from N.T. Wright about this verse:

*“The four marks of the church, 1) the apostles teaching; 2) the common life of those who believed; 3) the breaking of bread; and 4) the prayers go together. **You can’t separate them, or leave one out, without damage to the whole thing.** Where no attention is given to teaching, and to constant, lifelong Christian learning, people quickly revert to the worldview or mindset of the surrounding culture, and end up with their minds shaped by whichever social pressures are most persuasive, with Jesus around as a pale influence. When people ignore the common life of the Christian family...fellowship, they become isolated, and often find it difficult to sustain a living faith. Where people no longer share regularly in ‘the breaking of bread’ they are failing to raise the flag which says Jesus’ death and resurrection are at the center of everything. And whenever people do all these things but neglect prayer, they are quite simply forgetting that Christians are supposed to be heaven and earth people.*

(Acts for Everyone, Part 1, N.T. Wright, pg. 44-45)

- a. Look at each of the four marks. What risks does a church face if any one of these is absent or neglected?
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3. Our current Western culture can be very much about the individual and having our own space. The scene described in Acts 2:42 is different than the way our culture lives. It’s set apart from mainstream.

What does it **realistically** look like for us to live out our lives in the world while at the same time living as a community of people committed to Christ? How can we be not taken out of the world or exclusive from the world, yet live our lives in Christian community in such a way that different than our culture?

4. The Trinity can be described as God in three Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit who model intimacy and relational love between one another as an example of the love relationship They

have with us. How is this section a beautiful picture of how the life of the Trinity gets reflected in humanity?

5. Acts 2:43 reads “And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe...” When have you experienced a sense of awe in your Christian life? Do you have a memory of a specific event that left you in a state of awe then or even now as you think about it? Please share with one another for encouragement.