



## A New Community

## WEEK 4

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### Look Back (10 minutes)

- In his sermon on last week's scripture passage, John 13:31-38, Pastor Crantz said that the way to become people who love one another is to learn to preach the gospel to yourself each day. What did he mean? Do you agree with him? Why or why not?
- Discuss the implications of the new commandment Jesus gave. How did practicing this commandment impact your actions in the last week?
- What neighbor or friend will you invite to church, a service opportunity, or event?

### Read Aloud

Passage for this week: **Acts 2:42-47**.

### Head (15–20 minutes)

#### OBSERVE THE TEXT AND THE AUTHOR'S MAIN POINTS

- What four disciplines did the earliest followers of Jesus practice?
- What are some of the results of practicing these disciplines that are apparent in the scripture passage?
- How would you describe the community in this passage? When/where have you experienced a spiritual community like described in this passage?

## Heart (15–20 minutes)

### ENVISION HOW THE TEXT—WHEN APPLIED—MIGHT TRANSFORM YOUR INNER LIFE IN TERMS OF YOUR THOUGHTS, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIORS

- Are you inclined to be a “Lone Ranger” Christian rather than participate meaningfully in community? Confess that to God and ask Him to draw you into a healthy community.
- In which of the four disciplines are you naturally strong? Weak?
- In what ways do you find the community in this passage convicting? Ask the Holy Spirit to lead and guide you as you reflect and pray about this.

## Hands (10 minutes)

### APPLY THE TEXT BY MOVING FROM INWARD REFLECTION TO OUTWARD ACTION LOOKING FOR WAYS TO LIVE THE TEXT OUT IN OUR LIVES TO SERVE OTHERS

#### Reaching Upwards: Growing in Your Relationship with God

- Verse 47 indicates that members of this community enjoyed the favor of the people around them. Is that typical of Christians today? Do you enjoy the favor of the people around you? Discuss how this can happen in a secular setting such as an office.
- Which of the four disciplines will you select to focus on to deepen your relationship with God? Why? What steps will you take to do this?
- How is God moving in your heart towards entering into community life in a way you have not done before? To strengthen your community bonds (and to encourage others to do so), join a Sunday School, Small Group, or D-Group. For more information on any of these groups, see the FPC website ([fpchouston.org](http://fpchouston.org)) or
- contact Sara Buskirk, Equipping & Sending Coordinator [sbuskirk@fpchouston.org](mailto:sbuskirk@fpchouston.org).

#### Reaching Outward: Investing in Your Neighbors

- Verse 47b says that God continually added to the number of people in their community. In which of the four practices is FPC strong? Weak? How can FPC do a better job of practicing the disciplines in this passage?
- How can you keep growing in your knowledge of Christ and spreading the good news? Watch the FPC Worship Bulletin or go to the church events page on the website ([fpchouston.org/events-calendar/](http://fpchouston.org/events-calendar/)) for opportunities to pray for, participate in, or volunteer in the next Alpha class or an Outreach/Missions project.
- Women: Ask a neighbor or friend to join you for the Women’s Prayer Retreat On Friday February 2 (6:30-9:00 pm) and Saturday February 3 (9 am - 3 pm). For more information, contact Sara Buskirk, Equipping & Sending Coordinator, [sbuskirk@fpchouston.org](mailto:sbuskirk@fpchouston.org); register at [www.fpchouston.org/ministries/adults/womens-ministry/](http://www.fpchouston.org/ministries/adults/womens-ministry/)

## Reaching Beyond

- If you like gardening, want to alleviate poverty, and help the environment, bring your small group and/or family to Main Street Ministries Community Garden conveniently located next to First Presbyterian Church. Volunteers are needed to plant and harvest vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers on Saturday morning, February 3. Contact Madie Weir, Missions Coordinator at [mweir@fpchouston.org](mailto:mweir@fpchouston.org) for more information.
- Calendar February 8 from 12 - 1:30 and join others on a Local Mission Field Trip to Generation One. This is a Third Ward educational ministry for early childhood and youth that empowers children and families to thrive and reach their full potential. Contact Madie Weir, Missions Coordinator at [mweir@fpchouston.org](mailto:mweir@fpchouston.org) for more information.
- What other ways can you reach out beyond your normal boundaries and share the love of Christ to others?