**Missional Community Training:**
Prayer and Evangelism

This guide is meant to help foster conversation, not produce a set of results. It is a tool, not a solution. We understand the uniqueness each missional community has, and want to empower each leader with every available tool to equip and unleash fully devoted Disciples of Christ into the world.

## Context:

Jesus has given the Great Commission and ascended to His throne awaiting the appointed time of His return; ushering in the age of the church through the release of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. People in Jerusalem are in awe of the miraculous introduction of the Spirit indwelling in the apostles and began to ask questions. Peter, empowered by The Spirit, preaches The Gospel to the crowd, dispelling their criticism.

Acts 2: 37-47

37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” 40 And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation.” 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe[d] came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

## Leader Reflection:

### What are some of the things we see in this passage?

* We see people hearing the word and being moved by it. (Verse 37)
* Those same people begin to ask questions.

### What does Peter say to the people?

* He points them to a way to respond to his message
* To points them to internally turn from sin (repentance) and to outwardly profess belief (baptism)
* THEN, in verse 42, those new Christians devoted themselves to the teachings of Jesus.
	+ They hung out together, they ate together and prayed together.

### Where was this happening?

* It happened in their own neighborhoods and all over Jerusalem

### What are some effects of this happening?

* The Spirit is moving through the believers.
	+ In Verse 44 and 45 we see that lives are being transformed. One’s material possession becomes secondary to the needs of the community. Wants, needs, desires all are being given to God.
* They went out to the temple together to worship, (verse 46) and met together in their homes as a community.
* They were praising God and were having favor with all the people. (Verse 47)
	+ *People liked them*. People liked having Christians in their neighborhoods.

### Why did The Lord allow this?

* He is calling people back to Himself through His people, The Church.

### What are we doing today as the church?

If we see this as *prescriptive* scripture, we have completed the task: We as a church meet to worship, we meet to have meals, we help each other, and we get involved in the city and our neighborhoods. If that was the case, then why do we all end up asking questions like: -How do I “be missional”?

* How do we do third place?
* How do I do this whole discipleship thing?
* How do I get my people more invested in outward facing living?

Therefore, we have to look at Acts as *descriptive*.

### Descriptive Acts:

What Luke is describing is not a magic-Christian-community-bullet, nor is it a formula for the perfect Missional Community. What Luke is describing is what happens when we allow Jesus to be shown in every facet of our lives.

We see believers speaking truth, praying, worshiping, learning, going out into their communities, sharing meals, and praising God - all together as a group. It is not a “check the block,” it is an outpouring of the love of Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

### People can come to know Jesus by gospel community.

How you interact with your community of brothers and sisters, in union with proclamation of The Gospel, is transformational. It is why we call it “demonstrating and declaring” The Gospel.

What are we doing to reach our communities – where we work, where we live, where we hang out? Do others know there are more people like you that hang out together? People that would also willingly sacrifice help them, pray for them, and care for them as well?

## Question Christian communities might want to ask:

* Do you see your community as a platform for the Holy Spirit to save others?
	+ If yes, what are some examples of how your group has made that possible?
	+ If no, what are one or two next steps to create that platform?

Here are some questions to ask to jumpstart

* What are your groups or spheres of influence? / What are you involved in?
* Do other people in those spheres know you are a Christian?
* Do I see prayer as the starting place of evangelism?
* Do you/your MC pray for people in those spheres to come to know Jesus?
* Do you/your MC pray for opportunities to share about your God in those spheres?
* What are you/your MC doing in those spheres of influence already?

## Exercises:

Isolate two people from you sphere(s) of influence that you would consider far from God. Write their names down and put them on a fridge, front door, or bathroom mirror; anywhere you will see them regularly. In addition to when you see the note of their names, during your prayer time make a point to pray for them. Examples being:

* You can pray for them to come to know Jesus as Lord and savior
* You can pray for the Lord to soften their hearts to His call
* You can pray for opportunities to show/share Christ’s love with them

**Prayer is the easiest and best way to get involved in people’s lives.**

Prayer is communicating with the creator of the universe. Praying for other people to come into relationship with Jesus is one of the best prayers to have. Jesus, when asked about how to pray, said to pray that the will of The Father be done on Earth like it is in heaven. That prayer is aligning our heart’s desires with the desires of The Father. Which John 3:16 explains the will of The Father: to magnify Himself through the Son in the saving of His people. Paul later continues this idea in 1 Timothy 2:1 when he urges the church to pray for all people. This means all people, not just believers, or yourself, but everyone, people far and near to God. If someone is far from God, why not pray for God to reveal Himself to him or her? We know Jesus is the greatest gift we could ever receive, so why not ask for others to receive that gift as well?

## Next Steps:

However, just as Acts 2 describes Peter and the church as they gathered, prayed, and went out, do not be surprised when The Lord similarly uses you to speak to others about Him. Peter preached The Truth and continued to receive questions, because the crowd didn’t fully understand. Because we know the same can happen when we share today, we have created avenues through the church to help equip you to continue the work of evangelism and discipleship.

* Demonstrate and Declare Equipping Class.
	+ The Demonstrate and Declare class is designed to break the natural barriers we create towards mercy and evangelism, through the use of biblical principles, practical tools, and community engagement.
* Street Team.
	+ Street team is when we gather as a group of believers and go into the community seeking conversation with others to find out, “how can I be praying for you, my neighbor?” It is one of many ways for you or a whole MC to easily engage with neighbors and friends in your community.