

Introduction

- ① When you think about the needs of others around you how do you typically feel (overwhelmed, indifferent, compassionate, something else)?
- ① What comes to mind when you hear the word *service*?
- ① Do you typically think of service positively or negatively? Why?

Discussion

- ① What stands out to you about the way those described in today's verses met the needs of those around them?

There are needs all around us. No matter who you are or where you live, you don't have to look far to find another person in need nearby. Our responses to these needs will vary from person to person. In today's verses, we see that the first church cared for one another's needs in a compelling fashion.

Read Acts 2:42-47 and 2 Corinthians 8:15.

- ① What about the picture of the early followers of Jesus in Acts 2 is compelling to you?
- ① What do you wish could be true in your life that is described in this passage? What makes that hard to attain?
- ① When has someone served you in a way that humbled you with gratitude? How has that encouraged or prompted you to serve others in a similar way?

In both passages that we've read today, we see that the early followers of Jesus cared for one another in a counter cultural way. Where there were needs, individuals stepped up willingly to meet those needs and gave from their abundance so that no one would be lacking. It is hard to imagine others living together in this way, no matter the historical period. It is especially hard to imagine this today when people seem to be "looking out for number one" more than ever.

❓ How would our neighborhood be different if people lived together in this way?

❓ What makes it hard for you as an individual to live in this way with others, regardless of how they respond?

It is hard to deny that the picture from Acts 2 is beautiful. There are few who would say they don't desire for the world to be open to service and caring for one another in this way. Yet, actually practicing this way of living is extremely hard. This is only amplified by the fact that we often don't trust the motivations of others and want to protect ourselves by burned by a lack of good will on the part of others.

❓ What do you know about how Jesus served people? Is it possible that people could ever out serve Him, no matter how much of their lives they gave away for His sake? How does this reality stir in you a desire toward greater service of others?

Conclusion

❓ In Acts 2, the followers of Jesus served each other in amazing ways. It's important to realize they didn't do this in isolation, but as a group. How can we serve one another as a group?

❓ How could we serve those in our community? What are some ways we might pleasantly surprise our community through our service? School? Business?