

## At That Place

Acts 2:41-47

There is no other place I would rather have been and no one else I would rather have been there with than at that place.

The atmosphere was void of the pressures of seemingly endless demands. There was no feeling of pretentiousness or need to meet someone's expectations. Being in the presence of someone who genuinely cared and was really interested in where you were at the moment provided a *safe place* in which to simply thrive in the moment.

The blaring noise and empty laughter in the restaurant were silenced by rare, personal transparency as the two couples shared their unique battles in life as freely as they shared from each of their dishes of uniquely prepared foods. The entire evening was one that provided a certain kind of safety in camaraderie, of encouragement in support, of confidence in authenticity, of uniqueness in diversity in a room where no one else had any *idea what was going on*.

The *place* was not so much the restaurant but an emotional/spiritual presence. The *people*, as dear and important friends as they are, were not the object so much as their authenticity and trust and the unconditional relationship that created a common bond transcending all those *things* we may not have had in common.

No, there is no other place I would rather have been and no one else I would rather have been there with than at that *place*.

*At the place and with those people . . .* something the vast majority of those we know would love to find. Those we work with, we live next door to, we go to school with, we randomly bump into at the mall, all would love to find that *place* and those *people*.

People are looking for that *place*—that emotional, spiritual atmosphere—where they can find something and someone with whom to “eat and share” in the midst of an impersonal, demanding, and driven culture.

That *place* and those *people* were first discovered in the first century. Here we find people at a place in their lives that transcended their escapes from the temporal and present demands of everyday life and provided a relationship that gave purpose, security, trust, transparency, unconditional acceptance, continual encouragement, and an anticipation that bonded them together in a *place* they did not want to leave. It was a *place* where each was so taken by the overwhelming love of God that they were transformed. The result was not only a dynamic bond among themselves but a magnet to those who had *no idea what was going on*.

It was called the church. Does that church, that *place*, exist today? Perhaps we need to rethink some things about the “church” as we look at the *place* defined in Acts 2:41-47.

## Life Response

1. This week MEMORIZE and MEDITATE on 1John 1:3-4, “. . .*what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.*”
  - (a) List in chronological sequence the most outstanding points in these two verses. (There are at least seven.)
  - (b) How would you define the source and substance of “joy”?
2. Based upon this passage, how would you define the two dimensional aspects of authentic “fellowship”?
  - (a) What significance did the apostles teaching having on the 3000? What was the content of the teaching? What does it say about the character and love of God?
  - (b) How would you define the cause/effect of Acts 2:42 (the centrality of a vital relationship with God) and Acts 2:43-47 (the manifestation of that relationship with one another)?
3. How do we rethink “church,” the “place” God wants us to be outside the confines of a building and specified time we meet in the building? Base your thinking on passages like Rom. 12:9-21; Phil. 2:1-8; Eph. 5:15-6:9 and Col. 3:5-25.
4. Think about those “*who have no idea what is going on*” who are around you and watching you. Who are they? What do they see that would draw them to “*that place*”?

*“Oh Lord, Thou art what I’m longing for! My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? Oh, for Thy touch, Thy life, Thy beauty: let it come now, Lord, even as I pray.” - Oswald Chambers*

### **A CAUSE/EFFECT RELATIONSHIP THAT ESTABLISHED THE PLACE**

- ⊙ Acts 2:42      The Cause: the apostles teaching regarding the life, death, burial and the resurrection.  
    . . . The resurrection is the foundation of hope. Rom. 6:4-6; 2 Tim. 1:8-11
- ⊙ Acts 2:43-47      The Effect: The response to the apostles teaching.  
    . . . The natural compulsion from the resurrected life which personified hope.

### **3 Unavoidable Ingredients that Constitute the Place**

Key word: Fellowship/koinonia; common bond, intimacy, etc.

- ⊙ A VITAL FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD
  - √ Apostle’s teaching: centered on Resurrection
    - Learning about Him
    - Learning to know Him
    - 1 Pet. 1:1-7
  - √ Revealed two things
    - Man’s failure – rejection of Christ
    - Man’s hope – regeneration of Christ
  - √ Becomes my sole focus and grid for life
    - Col. 1:18
    - Eph. 1:5
    - Psalm 104:33-34

#### **Focus of prayer**

Psalm 25:1-5  
:139:23-24  
:143:10

- ◎ A VITAL FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER
  - √ Rooted in and defined by one's relationship or fellowship with God
    - 1 John 1:1-4
  - √ Nourished and developed through His Word
    - Romans 12:9-25
  - √ Results in intimacy with one another
    - John 15:13
    - Acts 2:43-46

**Focus of prayer**

John 17:21-24  
 Eph. 4:13-16  
 Col. 3:12-14

- ◎ A VITAL FELLOWSHIP WITH THOSE SEEKING GOD
  - √ Not inward but outward focus
    - Matt. 9:35-38
    - It's intrinsic Acts 4:20
  - √ It's the purpose and way of life
    - 1 Cor. 10:31-33
    - 1 Thess. 1:6-8

**Focus of prayer**

1 Tim. 2:1-4  
 2 Thess. 3:1-2  
 Eph. 6:19-20

**Resulted in . . .**

The Place – the incarnational life of God lived out in everyday life through everyday people.

People who have been transformed by God, Holy Spirit to impact their world.

People who wanted to be no where else.