

Aim of lesson

To look at the lives of the members of the early church and consider how they relate to the lives of Christians today.

Bible background

Acts 2:42-47.

Outline of lesson

Early believers

Introduce the topic for today, which is to consider what life was like for the members of the newly formed church. Read together Acts 2:42-47 and have the class use the beginning of the worksheet to identify some of the activities of the early church. Draw out in discussion why they did each of these things. Ask some of the class to draw a picture showing the life of the early believers; the other members of the class can try to guess what it is intended to represent.

Make a list of the activities mentioned in Acts 2:42-47 and discuss whether each forms a part of the lives of Christians today, and if so, in what way.

While I was in Jerusalem ...

Consider with the class what it would have been like for those who had come from other countries and had heard Peter speak on the day of Pentecost. Let the class refer back to the list of places in Acts 2:8-11 and choose to be someone from one of those places. They can then check on the map where 'their' country is, and consider how long it must have taken to get to Jerusalem and back. Have each write in the space on the worksheet what he or she would say of their experience in Jerusalem at Pentecost to family and friends when back home.

Ask the class to take the part of the family and friends back home and write two or three questions that they might ask the person who came back. As each of the class reads their statement of what happened while they visited Jerusalem, the rest of the class can ask questions to draw out more information. You may like to have some useful questions ready so that you can encourage them to think in more detail about the step 'their' character had taken.

Fellowship

The word 'fellowship' in the workbook is for the class to invent an acrostic to describe the fellowship of the early church. Fellowship involves sharing so ask the class to think of the things that the disciples had in common. Words or phrases can be used, for example: Followed the teaching of Jesus. Each was baptised. Listened to the apostles' teaching, etc.

Digging deeper

A growing church

This section shows how the numbers of believers grew in the early church, and shows why the Jews and others were baptised.

Relevance to our lives

Each member of the class could take one aspect of the fellowship of the early believers and interview a brother or sister about how that aspect of fellowship operates today. Alternatively your class could attend a breaking of bread service and note which aspects of fellowship are seen there.

Prayer

This would be a good opportunity to discuss with the class how much they are 'devoted to prayer'. Does prayer get squeezed out because they are too tired or too busy? Ask them what they think being devoted to prayer should mean in practice, and be prepared to share your experience of building a discipline of prayer.

Other suggestions for activities

- The class could write a drama based on the visit to Jerusalem and return of one of those converted on the day of Pentecost.
- A musical class may like to write a song about what fellowship is. The ideas from 1 John 1:3 could be included as well as the more practical details from Acts 2. The class may find it easier to use a well-known tune.