



December 26, 2016

From holiday get-togethers to casual gatherings, some of my favorite memories from over the years involve food—the breaking of bread with friends and family. These are times I cherish, not because of the food present but because of the fellowship that comes with it. Breaking bread together with believers promotes full-sharing fellowship, keeping God first, and reaching out to others.

God places an importance on believers breaking bread together.

Acts 2:42,46,47:

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

God mentions breaking bread twice in this section of scripture that outlines the beginning of the Grace Administration and the expansion of the Christian Church, emphasizing the importance of eating together.

The Eastern expression “breaking bread” indicates eating together. It was common for the disciples to eat together when they visited one another in their homes, not necessarily because they were hungry, but because it was the custom. In our culture too, many times when we invite someone to our home for a visit, we eat a meal together or offer them snacks or beverages to bless them and to add to the fellowship.

Breaking bread together can catalyze fellowship, or full sharing, between believers. Mealtimes present a tremendous opportunity for us to teach, share, and show that we care for each other. It's during these times together that so many of the heart issues of life come up and we are able to minister the Word of God to one another, to share the truths of the Word we know, and encourage one another.

Just as food is vital to our physical bodies, this time with fellow believers is a vital part of living God's Word together. In fact, one of the last things Jesus Christ did before his crucifixion was to have a meal with his disciples.

Matthew 26:20,26:

Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples....

Likewise, one of the first things he did after his resurrection was to join two troubled disciples on the road to Emmaus, ministering to their hearts and breaking bread with them.

Luke 24:30-32:

And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

These times of full sharing were very important to the disciples who would be representing Christ in the world after his ascension.

Breaking bread together with believers who love God and His Word can help us keep God first. The first-century believers we read about in the Book of Acts kept God first by continuing together daily in learning the Word, eating meals together, praying, and sharing fully of their hearts and lives. They had daily responsibilities just like you and me, but learning and sharing God's Word together was at the center of their lives.

Acts 2:42-46:

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

And fear [respect] came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.

They would have prayed before each meal, been respectful of one another, and planned each mealtime so that everything was decent and in order and edifying (I Corinthians 14:26,40).

Inviting people to break bread with us brings them into our homes where they can see the standard by which we live, God's Word; this provides an excellent opportunity to reach out to others. We can invite people into our homes for meals. We can direct the conversation to the Word. And people can see the quality of the Word we live.

The disciples didn't just break bread with each other once or twice a year on special occasions; they continued in it daily—they faithfully carried out this practice. As we follow their example, breaking bread and fellowshiping together according to God's Word, we can reap the same benefits they did, sharing the Word together, helping to keep God first in our lives, and adding to the Church daily.

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