



March 9, 2020

Being a part of a home fellowship that is learning and growing is exciting. With this growth happening in our fellowships, how can we each help *keep* it growing? One way our fellowships keep growing is by the loving care we put into helping one another live the Word. In our fellowships we undershepherd, lovingly care for, all who want to grow. Whether we are new to God's Word or long-standing believers, we help each other learn and grow and develop. We care for each other as a family.

God's Word gives clear Biblical principles on how to faithfully and lovingly care for each other in our growing fellowships. The believers in the first-century Church made these principles their pattern of life. Looking at their example gives us a clear pattern to follow.

Acts 2:42,46:

And they continued steadfastly 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.

These believers continued daily with each other in three vital principles of life: doctrine, fellowship, and prayer. In our growing fellowships, we help strengthen each other in these same principles of life. This is part of undershepherding; this is caring for each other as a family.

The believers continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine. This is the first principle we'll look at that we can help each other with. In our home fellowships, the doctrine, the right teaching of God's Word, is abundantly available. God's Word is like spiritual food. Just like we wouldn't want a family member to miss out on a great meal, we don't want anyone to miss out on the greatness of God's Word. So we help each other get to where the Word is taught. This may involve providing a ride or calling a new believer to remind them of what the fellowship is doing this week.

In our home fellowships, we look for ways to give for the joy of helping others learn and live God's Word. We can volunteer to teach, to coordinate, to help set up, or to give in other ways that help make the Word, the right doctrine, available. We can all contribute to the sweet environment where the Word is taught.

The second principle from Acts 2 that we can help each other with is fellowship, or full sharing, with God and with one another. We enjoy being together for a variety of occasions, staying in touch on a daily basis. As we learn how to live the Word that is taught, we can share with each other what has helped us, knowing that it may help others who desire to grow too.

Another aspect of fellowshiping is to share meals together. In Acts 2:42 we see the phrase "breaking of bread," and in verse 46 we see "breaking bread." This is referring to the believers enjoying meals together. Providing good food for various fellowships and activities gives us another enjoyable way to be together and share hearts. We can discuss our learning and understanding of God's Word and gain insight and inspiration from one another. This is a wonderful way to fellowship together and care for one another. Expressing what God has worked in our hearts is such an enjoyable way to be strengthened and encouraged by our fellowship one with another.

1 John 1:3:

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

Praying together is the third principle we see in Acts 2:42. When we meet in fellowships, we can be examples to others of how to pray according to God's Word. What a great way to faithfully love and care for a growing fellowship.

1 Corinthians 14:15:

What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.

We pray for ourselves, each other, and our leadership according to the promises of God, and He brings His Word to pass! We teach others in the fellowship to do the same. Burdens that are too heavy for people to carry on their own can be shared in prayer and lifted to God. Noticing when someone may have something on their heart and offering to pray with them can be comforting, healing, and life changing.

Believers in a home fellowship care for one another like family, faithfully and lovingly helping one other with learning the Word. As we grow and develop ourselves daily in doctrine, fellowship, and praying together, we will help our home fellowships keep growing!

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