

Sharing Community

Key Verse: "All that believed were together, and had all things common."
—Acts 2:44

Selected Scripture:
Acts 2:43-47;4:32-35

every man had need." "Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." (Acts 2:45; 4:34,35) Later, though not part of this lesson, the Lord indicated, through some of the difficulties that the church encountered, that this practice of literally sharing all things in common was not an ideal arrangement, and so it was abandoned after a brief time.

Although in practice the arrangement of communal living was found not to be the Lord's will, the heart motivation and love which prompted it was certainly pleasing in his sight. This is shown by the following verses of our lesson, "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."

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Christian church was so strong that they felt it was appropriate, as expressed in the Key Verse, that they dwell together and share in common all their earthly possessions. The account states that they "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as

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(chap. 2:46,47) How all the Lord's people of today should strive to emulate these sentiments. We should daily desire to dwell together with unity of purpose in God's temple, feasting together symbolically on the true bread and meat of God's Word. We should have the same attitude of gladness and praise toward God. We should desire to dwell with others of like minds, going from 'house to house,' being enriched by the fellowship of kindred minds.

Another admirable quality among these early Christians was the sacrificial love shown one toward the other, that they were willing to give up their earthly possessions and have them distributed to others in need. Truly this was the love expressed by Jesus himself, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." (John 13:34) Apostle John further expressed, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." (I John 3:18) These early brethren set an example of unselfish love. The Lord blessed their heart motivations and noble intentions by bringing success to their efforts of spreading the Gospel, stating that they had 'favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.'

Further in our lesson, it is stated that the apostles, too, were the recipients of God's favor during these early days of the church. "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." (Acts 4:33) Today, the blessing of God continues to reside with those who are engaged in giving witness to his Word, have a proper heart motivation, desire to partake of the spiritual food contained in his Word, and have a sacrificial love for their fellow brethren shown by action and not mere words. Only such will share in the rewards of the faithful, and be counted worthy to be of the Christ, to bless all the families of the earth in the coming kingdom. ■