

Together in Covenant Renewal

Acts 2:40-47

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As we hear about the renewal plans, receive them with a right heart and consider them with the right motivations. Our response to these plans must tie back to the glory of God, us being a covenant community as a church, and the gospel.

Being a Covenant Community means being:

1) Together in Challenging Circumstances

The book of Acts records what happens after Jesus' death and resurrection. After Jesus' ascension, the disciples obey Jesus' command to return to Jerusalem (Acts 1:12-23) to wait, alongside 120 other believers (Acts 1:15), for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit fell upon the upper room and rested upon every believer that was there. Strange signs and miracles began happening, and a great multitude of people gathered to find out what was happening. The apostle Peter, moved by the Holy Spirit, started to preach the gospel to the people, and about 3,000 souls were saved (vv40-41). The Bible celebrates the three thousand coming to faith without any fuss – although the sudden addition of 3,000 new believers must have posed a huge administrative challenge. God's covenant community will constantly be together in challenging circumstances. As a church and covenant community, we must face the pandemic season and all the challenging circumstances that come with it together! Acts 2 leads us to respond with this: "This isn't the first time; it won't be the last time." Be at peace. We will get through this together!

2) Together in Changing Plans

v42 – In response to the conversion of 3,000 new believers, the apostles calmly responded by putting first things first. Most important was discipling the new believers, by teaching, encouraging fellowship (the sharing of all common things), communion, and prayer. The apostles continued to

evangelise (v43), discipling the new believers to see that being God's covenant community is to be a missional covenant community. All these had taken place at the temple and in the homes of believers (v46a) – a picture of how a covenant community adjusted and adapted to challenges and change. God's covenant community must fluidly adjust to changing plans – together.

Agape's Renewal Plans

1. A new Sunday service experience

2. Meeting in homes to worship together on Sunday mornings

3 Phases:

Phase 1: Piloting (Oct-Nov) – Just go and try!

Phase 2: Pioneering (Dec) – Let's go and do!

Phase 3: Planned (2021) – It's time to fly!

3. Sunday service to start at 10 A.M.

3) Together in Covenant Renewal

We need to carry out these plans out of a covenantal love for God and one another. Not only did the believers invest in their community (v42), they also shared in the results as a community (v43). They were displaying covenantal love toward one another (vv44-45), giving not just their possessions to one another, but also their time and life (v46).

A Call to Action

#1 Stick Together – Take time to adjust to these changes at your own pace, but don't pull away and disengage from the community. Watch out for self-righteousness in your own heart.

#2 Question your boundaries – Ask questions about the boundaries you have placed upon your life, personal space, and time.

#3 Look to God for His resources – If we desire to grow as a church and covenantal community (v47b), we must look to our

covenantal God for His resources to meet every need that we have in these plans!