

Eat, Sleep, Life Together, Repeat

2021-08-22 by Ben Deaver at Tallgrass at The Well on Acts 2:42-47

Eat, Sleep, _____, Repeat

- Lift
- Game (Minecraft, Fortnite)
- Netflix (Disney+, Hulu, Peacock, etc.)
 - Average time watching TV daily—In 2017, an average U.S. consumer spent 238 minutes (3h 58min) daily watching TV.
 - "U.S. media usage - time spent watching television 2020 | Statista". *Statista*. Retrieved 29 November 2018.
 - The amount of time you spend consuming media — watching TV, surfing the web on a computer, using an app on your phone, listening to the radio and so forth — continues to go up. Nielsen said that in 2015, Americans spent about nine and a half hours each day consuming content this way. This year? The average is 10 hours and 39 minutes... Still plenty of time to sleep, if not read a book.
 - *How Much Do We Love TV? Let Us Count the Ways*, John Koblin in The New York Times, June 30, 2016—<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/01/business/media/nielsen-survey-media-viewing.html>
 - Nielson Total Audience— <https://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/report/2016/the-total-audience-report-q1-2016/>
 - Binge-watching—In the summer of 2013, all the episodes to Season 4 of *Arrested Development* (TV series) was released on Netflix, and 10% of their viewers watched the entire season in 24 hours. When *House of Cards* (U.S. TV series) and *Orange Is the New Black* also released full seasons at a time in 2013 on Netflix, high percentage of viewers watched back-to-back episodes and finished the seasons within days. Even though these series are all different genres, the truth of binge-watching remains constant widespread.
 - Matrix, Sidneyeve (5 September 2014). "The Netflix Effect: Teens, Binge Watching, and On-Demand Digital Media Trends". *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures*. 6 (1): 119–138. doi:10.1353/jeu.2014.0002. ISSN 1920-261X
 - **1 John 5:21** Little children, keep yourselves from idols.
 - We know how to commit to idols. Do we know how to keep ourselves from them?
 - As a culture, we understand devotion to something.
- Craft
- Code
- I know you're all waiting for the thing you're devoted to to pop up here.
- Eat, Sleep, Fill in the Blank, Repeat
- Facebook/Instagram
- Pornography
- Pokémon
- Concerts/Shows
- Lawncare or House
- Career
- Drugs or Alcohol

What if this fall WE did this—EAT, SLEEP, LIFE TOGETHER, REPEAT?!?!
What might that be like?

Acts 2:42-47 ESV ⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ And day by day (devoting), attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor (grace) with all the people. And the Lord added to their number (the church) day by day those who were being saved.

Pray!

Context, Concept, Consequences

Context—Early church

- Acts 2 is the birth of the church. Matthew 16 is the birth announcement.
- **Acts 2:4a** And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit...
- **Acts 2:15-21** ¹⁵ For these people are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. ¹⁶ But this is what was uttered through the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ "'And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; ¹⁸ even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. ¹⁹ And I will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below, blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; ²⁰ the sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood, before the day of the Lord comes, the great and magnificent day. ²¹ And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'
- Baby church...to now an elderly church.

Descriptive, not prescriptive...and yet...if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

- "Never in the history of the race has this record ever quite been equaled. Never in so short a time has any other religious faith, or, for that matter, any other set of ideas, religious, political, or economic, without the aid of physical force or of social or cultural prestige, achieved so commanding a position in such an important culture." —Kenneth Latourette, History of Christianity, Volume 1, 112
- Acts is the morning of the church.
- We're either in late afternoon, evening, or close to midnight. We need to revisit the morning of the church to see how it all started. Maybe we have something to learn and implement?!

Church Growth in Acts over 30 Years

- Notice quantity and quality of growth. Width AND depth!
- Thousands of new Jesus-followers and Luke highlighted a handful of key stories.
- **1:15** In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120...
- **2:41** So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.
- **2:47b** And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.
- **4:4** But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.
- **6:7** And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.
- **8:1** And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.
 - **1:8** "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
- **8:12** But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (In Samaria)
- **9:31** So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.
- **11:21** And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.
 - **11:19-20** ¹⁹ Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. ²⁰ But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus.
- **12:24** But the word of God increased and multiplied. (Tyre and Sidon after Herod died gruesomely)
- **14:1** Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed.

Width AND depth at Tallgrass at The Well!

- Tallgrass Church — Grow deep and wide.
- The Well — Drink deeply and offer living water to many.
- **14:21** When they had preached the gospel to that city (Derbe) and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch...
- **16:5** So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily.
- **17:4** And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women.
- **17:12** Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men.
- **18:8** Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.
- **28:30-31** ³⁰ He (Paul) lived there (Rome) two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, ³¹ proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.

Why were they so special back then and there? Were they more special than us?

- They were human beings... Us too.
- They had the Holy Spirit... Us too.
- They lived among tons of people who didn't know God... Us too.
- They worshiped the powerful and gracious Creator God... Us too.
- Their culture was wild and immoral and full of crazy ideas... Us too.
 - Gnosticism; Universalism; Roman Imperialism, Syncretism, etc.
- They were really enmeshed in spiritual warfare so things were exciting... Us too.

Hmm... What about us? What makes us so special?

- We have even more Scripture
- We have much more access to Scripture
- We have more church history to remember
- We have more time...no really, we do
- We are wealthier
- We are more literate
- We have more equality within our society

So...it ain't broke, don't fix it!

Concept—They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship.

1. The Apostles' teaching

- John and the Incarnation
- Peter and the Crucifixion
- Paul and the Resurrection

2. The Fellowship

- Our mystical union with Jesus and one another
 - Jesus' words to Paul when he was persecuting Him.
 - **Acts 9:3-5** ³ Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. ⁴ And falling to the ground, he heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" ⁵ And he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."
- 50+ one anothers—We need Groups to be able to live out these commands.
 - Love your neighbor is the greatest command
 - I'm not paid to do your loving of one another. I'm paid to help equip you to do that but I can't do the actually loving. I do love you but I can't do your loving for one another.
- **Hebrews 10:23-25** ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
- Them back then and there vs. Us here and now

Day by day is weird?! Eat, Sleep, Life Together, Repeat is weird?! Really?!

- Playing same video game over and over again is normal but reading, studying, and applying the same Scripture over and over again is weird?!
- Living your social life behind a screen and hoping people you don't even know will LIKE your virtual self over and over again is normal but relating to the same people with increased depth of intimacy over and over again is weird?!
- Day by day...and then the author of Hebrews says, "all the more!"
- Sacrificing to make Community happen vs. Bare minimum investment to FEEL invested

They devoted themselves to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Devoted to the breaking of bread—We celebrate the Lord's Supper, the breaking of bread, because Jesus devoted Himself to the cross.

- **Hebrews 12:1-2** Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
- **Luke 9:51** When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem.
- The consequences of Jesus devoting Himself to the cross is new life for you and life together in the church!

Devoted to prayer—They devoted themselves to the prayers.

- **Acts 1:14** All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.
- **Acts 6:4** "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."
- **Romans 12:12** Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in (devoted to) prayer.
- **Colossians 4:2** Continue steadfastly in (Be devoted to) prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

Consequences—Growth in width and depth.

- **Acts 2:42, 46-47** ⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴⁶ And day by day (devoting), attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor (grace) with all the people.
- And the Lord added to their number (the church) day by day those who were being saved.
- Because of their devotion to the fellowship, every single day someone is joining church!
- Day by day devotion led to day by day growth.
- Share Aaron's story—Came to our small group after a deployment to Afghanistan. He shared with me the scene of him holding his 9mm in the porta potty, ready to take his life. His wife had left him while he was deployed. There was so much hurt and pain under the surface. He was marginally engaged with our church and our group and eventually moved away as happens in Manhattan, KS. A couple years later he called me and said, "Ben, I wish you could see me now. Thank you for investing in my life."
- That's just one of the many stories that we don't always get to hear the consequences of our feeble attempts at life together. It's worth it, beloved church.

Khaby Lama

- Senegalese-born TikToker based in Italy famous for pointing out people who complicate simple tasks for no reason at all. He is the second most-followed TikTok account.
- Toothpaste
- Peeling a banana
- Drinking from a cup
- If it ain't broke, don't fix it.
- **Acts 2:42, 46-47** ⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴⁶ And day by day (devoting), attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor (grace) with all the people. And the Lord added to their number (the church) day by day those who were being saved.

What if... EAT, SLEEP, LIFE TOGETHER, REPEAT?

- What if we devoted ourselves to life together this fall?
- What if Eat, Sleep, Life Together, Repeat was our reality this fall?
- What if we filled our Groups with hurting and hungry friends and neighbors?
- What if we devoted ourselves to Christ and His Body?
- What if we devoted ourselves to prayer, asking God to give us this devotion?
- Get excited for life together in a Group and in the meantime, we invite you into 21 Days of Prayer & Fasting. BTW, fasting helps sharpen our appetite for these good things!
- As I invite Josh up to introduce our 21 Days of Prayer & Fasting let me pray for us.

Pray!

The Chopping Block:

The Call to Community

Bishop Timothy J. Clarke on Acts 2:42-47 at the Xenos Summer Institute

- Open your Bibles or turn on your Bibles
- Turn to your neighbor and say, "You're not gonna like this point." Hopefully you have your shot. If not, cover your mouth.
- Redig some old wells and fill our buckets with some new truths.
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—"the beloved community" = The Kingdom of God Here On Earth
- Visible, Vibrant, Viable
- I'm trying to decide if I should say this... Ok. I'm gonna say it. You told me to.
- Context, Concept, Consequences

Context

- Acts 2 is the birth of the church. Matthew 16 is the birth announcement.
 - Baby church...to now an elderly church.
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Concept

Consequences

- (because of v. 47) Every single day someone is joining church!

Three Ideologies of The Parable of the Good Samaritan

1. Robber—What's yours should be mine and I'm gonna take it.
2. Those who pass by—What's mine is mine and I'm gonna keep it.
3. Samaritan—What's mine is mine but I'm gonna give it.

Ideas:

- **1 John 5:21** Little children, keep yourselves from idols.
- Khaby Lame—Instagram dude who does the obvious thing.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPqng3mlrYQ>
 - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khaby_Lame
- **Hebrews 10:23-25** ²³ Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
- **Matthew 13:52** And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."
- **Matthew 9:14-17** ¹⁴ Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" ¹⁵ And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. ¹⁶ No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the

patch tears away from the garment, and a worse tear is made. ¹⁷ Neither is new wine put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But new wine is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved.”

- **Psalm 73:25-26** ²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
- Open Head, Open Heart, Open Hands
- Arnold Horshack
- First Church of the Fringedaire where the theme is the blessed quietness.

Acts 2:42-47 NIV ⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:41-47 MSG ⁴¹⁻⁴² That day about three thousand took him at his word, were baptized and were signed up. They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers.

* * *

⁴³⁻⁴⁵ Everyone around was in awe—all those wonders and signs done through the apostles! And all the believers lived in a wonderful harmony, holding everything in common. They sold whatever they owned and pooled their resources so that each person’s need was met.

⁴⁶⁻⁴⁷ They followed a daily discipline of worship in the Temple followed by meals at home, every meal a celebration, exuberant and joyful, as they praised God. People in general liked what they saw. Every day their number grew as God added those who were saved.