

Scripture: Acts 2:42–47

⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ And awe^[a] 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, 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 with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Lifelong Discipleship Formation

It is written:

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.”

So, in this powerful statement we know that what we are looking for in Spiritual Formation is not just Christian Education, but Christian Transformation.

Maria Harris was an internationally acclaimed religious educator. She has held prestigious lectureships and was the recipient of numerous awards. Her book *Fashion Me A People*, first published in 1989, remains a popular text in seminaries and theological schools.

She writes:

“They (those in leadership in the church) are realizing that the church does not have an education program; it is an educational program.” —Maria Harris, *Fashion Me A People*, page 47

You see spiritual formation is not just an informational or instructional program of the church. It is a life changing process.

In our passage for Sunday, did you hear the results of listening to the instructions of the Apostles?

We are told: *“And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.”*

This then is **lifelong discipleship formation**:

It is a continual and expanding relationship with God that connects our lives with the godly work of the Gospel. Likewise, it wasn't as a byproduct of the effort of the growing number of disciples. Rather, it was through the experience of: *“devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”*

When I have talked about events in the life of the church, I almost always hear about a meal that was shared. Ash Wednesday, The Joyful Feast of Christmas, The Thanksgiving gathering all had a component of “sharing bread.”

Similarly, when we have Bible studies, fellowship, eating, and prayer we are promoting and being centered on the work of God's Spirit in us.

I then invite you to worship on Sunday morning in person, or online to hear more about this life changing way we meet God in our lives. And then at 3pm please, join us via Zoom through using the following link:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/91027008186?pwd=MStPSVZoMTR2YXRZSGZtZ2duZUU2dz09>

If you can't make the zoom meeting, we would love for you to email us at office@aberdeenpres.org or mail your responses to the following questions:

I ask you what are the highlights of your participation at AFPC?

How do you receive the awe that comes from the teachings, fellowship, eating, and praying we do as a community of faith?

How have you seen your prayers answered by God, and how did the church support you in these times?

What do you hope will deepen your relationship with God through Jesus Christ our Lord and how can this be strengthened by the body of Christ the church?

What other aspects of spiritual formation as previously defined impact your relationship with God through Holy Spirit?