

## Jack of All Trades

Growing up on a ranch during the Depression, my Dad's parents wanted to make sure he knew how to do a lot of things well. His father taught him to ride horses, herd cattle, milk cows, mend fences and fix a broken door hinge. His mother covered things such as mending clothes, sewing on buttons, fixing meals and cleaning house.

When my Dad started a family, he passed on his parents' philosophy. There was no such thing as "woman's work" that my brother and I could get out of doing, and vice versa for my sisters. We may not have mastered *everything* Mom and Dad wanted us to learn, but we could handle most things well enough to get by, whether cooking a meal or changing the oil in the car.

In this week's passage, we see the members of the early church devote themselves to a variety of things in order to grow toward God together. As we will see as our study in Acts continues over the next few weeks, by the power of the Holy Spirit, they were able to do much more than just get by.

### Monday – Devotion

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*  
Acts 2:42.

1. Glance back over the events that precede Acts 2:42 by skimming Acts 2. How does Acts 2:1-41 lead right into Acts 2:42?
2. Are these four areas (teaching, fellowship, breaking bread together and prayer) the whole package when it comes to a relationship with God? What would you add, if anything?
3. Look back at verses 36-41. Why do you think these people were motivated to do the things listed in verse 42?

**Making it Personal** – What are you devoted to? Does it at all resemble the acts of devotion in verse 42? Where do you see room for improvement? In what ways?

### Tuesday – The Apostles' Teaching

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching . . .*

1. Psalm 119 is a song of tribute to the value of God's word, organized in 8-verse stanzas. Read the first two verses. What comes to those who follow God's teachings? Now choose any stanza of 8 verses. What does it tell you about devotion to studying God's word?
2. We no longer have the apostles around to teach us, but we do have their teachings to study. What does Paul say in 2 Timothy 3:16-17 about the value of Scripture?

**Making it Personal** – Think back over the recent events in your life. How has Scripture played a dynamic role in your life during this time? What verses have instructed, guided, convicted, or comforted you?

### Wednesday – Fellowship

*They devoted themselves . . . to the fellowship . . .*

1. Please read Hebrews 10:25. What is the warning here? What purpose does fellowship serve in our lives?

**Text Insight** – The recipients of the letter we call "Hebrews" were tempted to forsake their fellowship because of persecution and trials they were facing. The reasons we are tempted to forsake fellowship are completely different in our day. What are some of them?

2. Read Acts 2:5-11. Who joined together in the fellowship described in Acts 2:42? Do you think it was easy or hard for them to all get together as believers in Christ? Would you have found it easy to get along with such a variety of people?

**Making it Personal** – Look at Revelation 7:9-10. What does it tell us about the make-up of believers who will be in Heaven? How does it compare to the mix of people listed in Acts 2:5-11? When it comes to fellowship, what can you do to help bring the will of the Father to earth?

### Thursday – Breaking Bread

*They devoted themselves . . . to the breaking of bread . . .*

1. Eating together often means that one person is the host and someone else is the guest. Who is the host and who are the guests at the Lord's Table?
2. For the early church community, celebrating communion and sharing a meal together were often one and the same. Eating together as such requires hospitality. What do passages like Romans 12:13, 1 Timothy 5:10, 1 Peter 4:9, and 3 John 1:8 say about hospitality?

**Digging Deeper** – Sometimes we get comfortable being nice to our friends at the expense of those we don't know so well. What does God tell us in Leviticus 19:34 about strangers? How does this fit in with your usual practice?

### Friday – Prayer

*They devoted themselves . . . to prayer.*

1. Prayer was a big deal for Jesus when he walked the earth. Look at his instructions about prayer in Matthew 6:9-13. Now, take a look at John 17 for an example of things he prayed about. What stands out to you from these passages? If you were to change the way you pray based upon these two passages, what would you change? Is there a new prayer habit you feel led to begin?
2. John 17 is an example of Jesus praying in the middle of the day. What time of day did he pray in Mark 1:35? What time was it in Matthew 14:23? What about in Luke 6:12? Out of these four examples from Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, which time of day suits you for prayer time? Keep in mind that Jesus did not restrict himself to any particular time of day to go to his Father in prayer. Should we?

**For the Weekend:** Read Acts 2:42. Take some time to prayerfully consider the devoted practices of the early church community. Ask God to show you how you can grow closer to him through learning from his word, fellowship with believers, enjoying or providing hospitality, and spending time in prayer.