



## Part 1: What the First Church Teaches the bridge About Growth

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### FACILITATOR'S NOTE:

#### How To Prepare For Leading Your Group:

- Dedicate some time before leading to pray for your group and arrange the discussion questions in a way that suits their needs and the time given to meet.
- Review the Bible verses and “Big Idea” of the message to help you gain clarity around the heart of this week’s message.
- Use the discussion questions as a template. **You do not need to use all the questions given.** Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion in a way that honours God, engages the group and helps your group apply the Bible passage and the speakers “big idea” to their life.
- You are not the answer. Your responsibility is to facilitate the discussion and keep it on track. The questions are meant to spark conversation as your group interacts with the content of the message. Encourage interaction with the content as opposed to “answers” to the questions. It is ok to disagree and have different views in a way that honours God and values your group members’ **own journey with God.**

#### How To Use The Discussion Questions:

- Start your groups discussion with the “Check-in” question to help your members reflect back on their week and follow up on last week’s message. It is ok if no one remembers the last week or applied the content. The weekly reminder for feedback may lead to application becoming a habit.
- Read this week’s scripture passages **together** (ask for volunteers) and guide your group through the “discuss” questions to initiate meaningful dialogue around key concepts or insights from this week’s message/passage.
- Move your group discussion to a deeper level by leading them through questions in the “apply” section. Use discernment to customize these application questions to meet the **needs and dynamics** of your group, moving from ideas about the message to the application of the message to your members life / current circumstances.
- Connect with God together as a group through prayer. This can be in the form of **prayer requests or prayer practices.**
- If you routinely do not have enough time to pray together, **try starting your meeting with the prayer section.** Many leaders have found that giving the group a cut off time to end the discussion (set a timer) and transition to prayer is very effective for time management (usually the last half hour of the meeting).
- Prayer is so key to the application of the passage and transitioning the message from the head to the heart. An open honest time of prayer will help members in your group feel cared for and more involved.
- Commitment to a time of prayer together as a group is key to a healthy group experience, spiritual growth, and the application of Scripture.

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<p><b>CHECK-IN</b></p>	<p>How excited are you for the move back to the bridge's building?</p>
<p><b>BIG IDEA</b></p>	<p>What lessons can we learn from the First Church?</p>
<p><b>DISCUSS</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Read Acts 1:4,8.</b> Jesus gives us the power of the Holy Spirit. Where have you seen the power of the Holy Spirit at work in your own life? Where have you seen it at work in your experiences within the church body?</li> <li>2. <b>Read Acts 2:42-44, 47.</b> A church united in harmony and fellowship leads to growth. What grew in you when you encountered an environment like this in the church body?</li> <li>3. <b>Read Acts 2:46-47.</b> What do you imagine it was like for the first believers to break bread in each other's homes? How are small groups today similar or different?</li> <li>4. <b>Read Acts 4:24-26.</b> How does worship clarify our perspective that God is in complete control? What does this do to the way we see our problems?</li> </ol>
<p><b>APPLY</b>          How do we respond to God's teaching in meaningful ways? What might God ask of us in mind, spirit, or actions?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As you review each of the points given, which one do you find particularly inspired by? Why?</li> <li>2. What can you do to recognize the power God has given you to support the bridge community?</li> <li>3. What can you do to nurture unity and harmony in the bridge?</li> <li>4. What can you do to encourage group life within the bridge?</li> <li>5. What can you do to magnify your perspective of God? How will you commit to a regular rhythm of worship?</li> </ol>



**PRAYER PRACTICE**  
(15 minutes)

Please use **ONE** of these two options to lead your group through prayer. Choose the one that fits best with your group:

**1. Praying Scripture**

**Step 1:** Sit in a comfortable position in silence. Take a few deep breaths, allowing your mind to focus on what God has to say.

**Step 2:** Read **Acts 4:42-47** two times slowly, pausing for a moment between readings.

**Step 3:** Read again slowly, taking note of any words or phrases that stand out to you.

**Step 4:** Read these verses again, and imagine God speaking these words to you. Say it silently in your mind, or whisper it quietly. If it helps, close your eyes to bring you into an awareness of what God is saying to you.

Share with your group: *“What was your experience during this prayer practice?”*

**2. Write down prayer requests for the group.**

*Either leader or another member can write.*

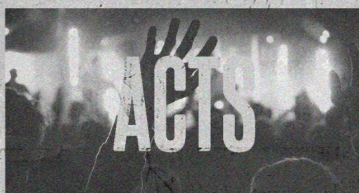
**Step 1:** Begin the time of prayer by asking each member of the group to share one thing they need help with.

**Step 2:** Explain to the group that we will be praying for each other’s prayer requests. Ask those who feel comfortable to pray for one of the requests given.

**Step 3:** Ask someone to pray first, then allow others to join in and pray afterwards.

**Step 4:** After all requests have been prayed for, the leader will allow a time of silence (approx. 1 minute), then will close the meeting by praying for any missed prayer requests and close the

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practice in a final prayer. (leader can use the following or do his/her own)

*"Lord may we discover who we are in You. Give us ears to hear your calling. Help us Lord to be obedient to use the gifts you have given us for the benefit of others. Use us to bring change to our communities, to comfort those who need comfort and to serve those you put in our path." Amen.*