

10 Healthy Missional Markers *for Families*

*Adapted from the Department of Congregational Vitality's 10 Healthy Missional Markers for churches resource

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We want to get parents talking to each other about what it would look like if these 10 missional markers were central to family life. This resource is intended to set up conversation and invite idea-sharing.

1. Compelling Christian community (Acts 2:42-47)

Read Acts 2:42-47. This is a description of the early church community – it's larger than just a nuclear family system. But, what would it look like for a family to live as a compelling Christian community?

v. 42 ...they devoted themselves to 4 things:

- 1. Teaching** – in what areas of family life are you being taught? Do you model the habit of attending church? Do you study the word? Listen to others who instruct you about the gospel? Is there space for everyone in the family unit to teach each other?
- 2. Fellowship** – When does your family have fun together? How do you spend time doing the things you enjoy? What rituals do you share?
- 3. Breaking of bread** – Meals are important. It doesn't matter what you eat. Turn off the devices and share meals together. If dinners don't work for you, try breakfast. Or make pancakes on the weekends.
- 4. Prayer** – When do you pray? Usually at church, before meals, or before bed. Do your kids catch you praying at other times? How can prayer be a regular part of your family rhythms? Are there different kinds of prayer you could try?

v. 44 ...of one heart and mind – what if we as parents cast a clear vision of what we were going to be about as a family? Can favorite verses of mission statements be displayed on the walls of your home? "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Philippians 4:4-8, I Cor. 13. How does your family reconcile after conflict? Is this modeled well by the adults?

...the believers shared everything they had. How do you teach kids to share? Do parents model this? It's hard! We use the phrase "Will you be a servant and..." or "will you make a gracious choice and..." Let kids see us adults freely sharing our possessions and our time - they are watching!

v. 45...they gave to those who were in need – again, let your kids see you doing this. Find ways to do this as a family – serve meals at a homeless shelter, purchase Christmas gifts for those who are in need or through World Vision, put money in the offering plate at church, invite people over for dinner. Expand your worldview so you become more aware of the needs around you. Freely share your stuff AND your time. Not just at the holidays. May we suggest monthly...

Final note: Hopefully, this is descriptive of your church community, too. Is your family a part of a community outside of your nuclear family that models these characteristics? Are there opportunities for your kids to learn this from other adults, too?

Devotional for Acts 2:42-47

Read this passage again and consider these questions:

What were the things that the first believers did together?

How did the believers distribute their stuff?

Who were the leaders of this group?

How did God respond to this?

Is it difficult or easy for you to share your stuff? Explain.

The apostles shared meals and prayed together. Who do you share meals with and who do you pray with? Anyone outside of your family?

Does your family demonstrate this kind of community? Your church? Explain.

After reading this passage, is there anything you'd like to do differently in your family?