

THE CHURCH CONTINUED...

**Life-Forming Discipleship****A Note to the Parents/Teachers**

One of our desires as a church is to see one another continually be formed more and more into the image of Jesus, as we journey together in discipleship. This is something that takes place in our personal time with the Lord, but it also must include a communal effort of formation. Thank you for being part of the formation of our kids as they learn to know and follow Jesus more closely.

- **Big Idea:** Each of us are being formed and shaped by something. Jesus invites us to be formed by him, the one who made us. This is how we find the fullness of life!

Starter**Evidence of Grace**

- Ask kids to share ways they've seen God at work lately. Anything, big or small, which is good is from God. Take time to thank God together.

Ask:

- What are some of your routines you have each week? Each day? Do you think those things affect the type of person you become?
- If you ate ice cream every day how do you think it would shape you? If you worked out every day how do you think that would shape you? Do you think the other things you do shape you emotionally, mentally, physically, or spiritually too?

Sing Together

Lesson - from Acts 2:42-47

When the first followers of Jesus saw him come back to life through the power of the Spirit, and then were filled with the same Spirit themselves, they began to live radically different lives than they had before. They also began to form and shape their lives in new ways.

They devoted themselves to the teaching of Jesus' apostles and to fellowship together, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles (those who first walked with Jesus). All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 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, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

There were things they actively did to help them learn to follow Jesus better and more closely each day. They studied, listened, and learned. But they didn't do it alone. They did these things together, eating and being in one another's homes, and giving to one another, sharing whatever they had. These actions, in partnership with the power of the Holy Spirit within them, formed them into a community that others wanted to be part of.

At times, they went back to their old ways. Each of their lives had been formed by so many other things in the past and it was hard to break away from that. Some would slip back into their old ways of lying, or stealing, or judging others harshly, or arguing. Some would slip back into their old ways of selfishly keeping what they had to themselves. Some would slip back into their old ways of worshipping idols even. But, the Spirit of God and the community living together would remind them to come back to being formed by the ways of Jesus.

Paul once wrote, *"Don't be conformed to the ways of the world, but be transformed into the image of Jesus by the renewal of your mind."*

This was a reminder that the ways of the world seek to form who we are, but Jesus, the one who made us in the first place, should be the one who ultimately forms us into the people he wants us to be. Jesus was there at the beginning, when the first human was formed out of the dust of the earth and God's breath gave him life. And Jesus is the one who came to earth in the form of man to reform us back into God's image when we had turned to sin. The way he lived and taught showed us the right ways to live and be formed, and his death and resurrection has given us the power to actually live it out, because his Spirit is now with all who trust in him!

[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]

- What patterns or habits are forming your life?
- What people are you around often who can shape the way you think and live?
- What are some of the things the early church did to form themselves around the ways of Jesus?
- How can we do that today as a church?
- How has Jesus' life, death, and resurrection given us the power to be formed into new people who live the lives God created us for?

Breakout Time

Pray:

God, help us to be formed into your image more and more each day — to look more like Jesus, in the power of your Spirit. Thank you, Father. Amen.

Craft:

- Use the following coloring page.
- Let the kids play with Play-Dough and ask them to form it into something that represents what God wants to shape us into. Let them get creative and ask what they're forming. Feel free to help give ideas if they are stuck.

BLESS Activity

This week, ask your family how you can practice the **Listen** rhythm.

How can you purposely take time this week to listen to God's voice and allow His word to form you?



Yet you, Lord, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are
all the work of your hand.
(Isaiah 64:8)