

## The Priority of Presence

---

**Scripture passage:** Read aloud Acts 6: 1-6 and Acts 2: 43-47

These verses describes the way the first followers of Christ devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship with one another, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer. They met and fellowshiped together to praise God and to know and experience the Gospel. It is a pattern of Christian community for us to follow as well.

### Discussion Questions:

1. Do you agree that in order to be a disciple, a follower of Jesus, you can't do it alone? Why or why not?
2. What are some reasons why people attend weekly worship? What are some reasons that keep people from attending weekly worship? Consider the reasons people do or do not attend a small group or Bible study?
3. What do you see as the value of *presence* in worship? In a small group or Bible study?
4. What aspects of worship are most meaningful to you? What factors influence your experience of worship?
5. Describe a time when you felt deeply connected with God's people in worship?
6. What does *presence* mean to you?
7. What do you see as the value of *presence* in worship? In a small group or Bible study?
8. How does *presence* with others in worship, a small group or Bible study prepare us to be disciples of Christ?

### Moving Forward:

Our presence in Christian community and in corporate worship really matters. It matters because it assists in forming us into the likeness of Christ. It matters to others because by being present we have the opportunity to encourage, strengthen, challenge and bless others in Christ. It matters because it prepares us to become agents of God's persistent love to the world.

### Closing Prayer:

Gracious and loving God, you have designed us to be in relationship with you and others. Continue to connect us in worship and fellowship. For each of us, continue to guide our spiritual growth as disciples of Jesus and allow us to participate in the growth of others. Amen.

**Prepare:**

Read Chapter 4: Money Matters: *Financial Generosity*.

Get together with your prayer partner to share your prayer needs for the coming week. Pray together.