

The Next Chapter

VITAL SIGNS and VITAL DEVOTIONS

Acts 2:42-47

Our bodies need two kinds of actions to stay alive and well: One kind consists of involuntary actions like heartbeat, breathing, digestion, etc. Some of these serve as vital signs of life. The other kind are voluntary actions like eating, drinking and exercising.



Just like our bodies, the church needs two kinds of actions to stay alive and well. One kind does not depend on our choices as much as the acts of God’s Spirit. Think of these as the *vital signs* of a healthy church. The other kind consists of things we do. Think of these as *vital devotions* of a healthy church.

Acts 2:42-47 tells us that, after convicting and converting a crowd of people, the Holy Spirit formed those people into a community, the first Christian church. This community was no ordinary community. It wasn’t created by a committee of people who decided to form a religious society. No, it was the creation of the Holy Spirit working in and through the new believers.

Acts 2:42-47 shows how the acts of the Spirit (vital signs) and our actions (vital devotions) work together to keep a church alive and healthy.

Vital Signs of a Healthy Church ...

- Life Changing Power – 2:43
- Spontaneous Generosity – 2:44-45
- Contagious Worship – 2:46-47
- Spirit-Driven Growth – 2:47

Vital Devotions of a Healthy Church ...

- To the Apostles' Teaching – 2:42a
- To the Fellowship – 2:42b
- To the Breaking of Bread – 2:42c
- To Prayer – 2:42d

The vital signs of a church may not be under our control, but they are directly related to our devotion. Devotion to God's Word is key to God's power. Through our devotion to the fellowship, the Spirit creates a culture of generosity. When our worship is Christ-centered, it becomes contagious. If we don't pray, we won't grow, either numerically or spiritually.