

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47

In the midst of a great movement of the Spirit of God, followers of Christ are found thriving spiritually in "authentic _____".

- ✓ Devoting themselves to ...
 - The apostles teaching
 - The _____
 - The breaking of bread
 - "in their homes" vs. ⁴⁶
 - Prayer

Entering into authentic community begins with the "Connection Factor"—an intentional effort to get to know others within the body of Christ. It means that we find a way to pass beyond _____ and become willing to invest our time in the hard work of cultivating relationships.

The Strategy:

- ✓ _____

We must develop a hands-on approach in relating to the people of our church and community. Minding our own business is not an option. We are called to care and we cannot do that while remaining distant—keeping others at arm's length.

Plan or attend a _____ event!

The Connection Factor

January 24, 2010

✓ Listen

Some people are not talking, but they are also not listening. What are they doing? They are waiting for their turn to _____. And because they are not listening, they do not bless others with their conversation.

A good listener is not only popular everywhere, after a while he actually knows something.

Wilson Mizner

- ✓ _____
 - The legacy of Philemon (and his family)
 - They refreshed the hearts of the saints.

The connection factor motto: *Be a _____ not a drain.*

✓ Pray

As you get to know a person or a group of people learn to use the information you gather as a means of _____ intercession and nothing else—*confidentiality* is a must.

- ✓ _____ - _____

Make a point to seek people out to connect with them again for the purpose of checking in to see how things are going and continuing to cultivate the relationship—*remember* people's _____!

When a person makes the "GREAT DISCOVERY" of a relationship with Jesus the level of their spiritual growth is very much dependent upon the health of their connections with other Christians.

Therefore, a healthy church will strive to create environments where people can connect and establish meaningful relationships within its fellowship. This is also important for people who are not yet followers of Christ, but who are present among us and considering the Christian faith.

The challenge:

As Christians we need to move toward relationship with each other and resist the urge to play it safe and "be an Island." We can't get close to everyone but we must resist the temptation to get close to _____ - _____!