

The believer's sharing (Devin Spivy)

What do you think about when you hear the topic "The believer's sharing"? We can find great examples of this in Acts 4:32-37.

I'd like to tell you a little about my summer. I went to the National Scout Jamboree along with 50,000 other scouts. My group consisted of 36 boys from the Mobile Area. We went to West Virginia for zip lines, rappelling, biking, whitewater rafting, and many other adventurous activities. The reason I share this with you is because I think it relates to the Believers Sharing that Luke talks about in Acts. First of all in Acts 32 it says ³² ***"The group of believers were united in their hearts and spirit. All those in the group acted as though their private property belonged to everyone in the group. In fact, they shared everything."*** The believers in Acts gathered for one purpose- to become closer to God – and were of one heart and of one soul. Well, when we were at the Summit, you could say we were united in our hearts and spirit because we were all there for one main reason- to have fun and have our own adventure. The Summit website states that "The Summit is a place that takes kids to the limits of what they think they can do, and then go further."

We also shared what we had; whether it was food, water or sunscreen: if you needed it we would share it. Also, we worked together in groups to take turns cleaning, picking up the food, and cooking. It says in Acts 4:34 ***"There were no needy people among them."*** At the Summit, we all got the same amount of food – from the youngest scout to the leader -you got the same. This was a great opportunity for us to work together and become closer.

Many of you can probably relate to a trip or event you have participated in that was much like this. You may share food found in the refrigerator at home or at work. If you go out to eat with friends, you all pass around appetizers or the dessert. But how many of us can relate to the type of sharing that Luke is talking about in Acts 4? When hearing of a brother or sister in need, have you invited their family to stay in your house? Have you offered to give them land to build a house? If you own or manage a business, have you offered them a job?

I believe what Luke is talking about here is a lot more than just putting a little extra in the collection plate if you get a raise at work or come in to some extra money. These early Christians opened their homes and their lives to their brothers and sisters. I don't want to discourage anyone from contributing weekly with their monetary donation to meet the needs of the church but what Luke is talking about here is so much more than that. These early Christians shared everything – if someone was sick, they all shared in the caregiving – which means they all knew about it because they were in daily contact. If someone received good news, they all shared in the joy; and yes, when a brother was in need financially, they all worked together to meet that need.

I think, until we share the heartache, the joy, the love and the hard work, we will never know about the true needs of our brothers and sisters, that type of sharing only happens with the ones you love and you trust - the ones that will have your back as you rappel down a mountain and hold your hand as you pray about a sadness. God surely commands us to share our possessions, to take care of the widows and orphans, and while that certainly includes their material needs, I hope that we are connected enough as God's children to see the other areas we as believers must – and should want – to share.