

**Launch** – What does it mean to “Be” the church, instead of just attending church?

I have heard people say, “We just want to get back to the basics of church, just like the New Testament Church. We want to be just like the church in the New Testament.” Or do they? What was distinct about New Testament Churches and what we will call American Churches today? How are they the same? How are they different?

**Explore** – Discuss how the following verses provide examples of how all churches should function, and what they may experience.

1. Matthew 5:11-16

**Example:** New Testament Churches will be persecuted for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ without compromise. Discuss the type of persecution that American Churches face today. How is the persecution of New Testament Churches and American Churches the same? How is it different? What does this say about American Churches?

2. Acts 1:14; 2:1; 2:36-37

**Example:** They were in “one accord.” Working, Worshipping, Praying, and Learning together.

3. 1 Peter 4:12-19

What other verses come to mind that demonstrate what all biblical churches should look like?

**Apply** – How can you apply what you just studied and learned? What sticks out in your mind about how churches are supposed to function? What surprises you about how churches function?

- What needs to change or cultivated in your individual life, or in the life of your church to demonstrate what it means to function according to the will of God?
- What steps could you take to allow this application to take place?

**Prayer** – Ask your group to pray for you to take steps to demonstrate what it looks like to “Be” the church.