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Beyond Me: Acting Beyond Individualism

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BEYOND ME: Acting beyond Individualism

A READING BY LEE MAGNESS

This reading highlights the "togetherness" of the early Christian community as seen in the book of Acts. Voice 1 reads the scripture, and Voice 2 responds. The rest of a readers' choir or the congregation may read All.

1 2 All 2	While they were staying together, Jesus commanded them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for the promise of the Father. (Acts 1.4) Ordered together, staying together, waiting together, Promised together, preparing together. Together, just like Jesus told them.
1	So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1.6)
2 All 2	Gathered together, staying together, eating together, Questioning together, clarified together. Together, just like Jesus taught them.
2	All the apostles were devoting themselves to prayer, together, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers. (Acts 1.14) Persevering together, praying together, preparing together, Apostles and others together, men and women together.
All 2	Together, just like Jesus called them.
1	And in those days Peter stood up among the brothers and spoke (now the crowd of people numbered about 120 all together).
2	Praying together, planning together, replacing together, Crowded together, counted together.
All 2	Together, just like Jesus communicated with them.
2	Now all the believers were together, and were holding all things in common. (Acts 2.44) Learning together, leaning together, remembering together, Sharing together, caring together.
All 2	Together , just like Jesus showed them to share.
1	Day by day devoting themselves in the temple together , and breaking bread from house to house,

they were sharing food with glad and sincere hearts. (Acts 2.46) Praising together, praying together, proclaiming together, 2 Eating together, feeding the hungry together. All Together, just like Jesus broke the bread. 1 *Now those who heard lifted their voice to God together.* (Acts 4.24) 2 Praising together, praying together, proclaiming together, Persecuted together, trusting together. All Together, just like Jesus faced his foes. And after they prayed, the place was shaken where they were gathered together, 1 and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and were speaking the word of God with boldness. (Acts 4.31) Still praying together, gathered together, shaken together, 2 Filled with the Spirit together, preaching together. All Together, just like Jesus shook them. 2 1 And they were all in the Portico of Solomon together. (Acts 5.12) Meeting together, meeting needs together, meting out together, 2 Worshiping together, working together. All Together, just like Jesus met with them. 2 1 When Paul and Barnabas came and gathered the church together, they told them what God had done with them and that [God] had opened a door of faith for the nations. (Acts 14.27) Coming together, gathering together, sharing together, 2 Celebrating God together, welcoming the nations together. All Together, 2 just like Jesus welcomed all. 1 On the first day of the week, they came together to break bread. (Acts 20.7) Coming together, breaking bread together, eating together, 2 Remembering together, rejoicing together. Together, together, All just like Jesus.

Lee Magness teaches New Testament at Milligan College in Johnson City, Tennessee. His liturgical readings are a regular feature of Leaven.

