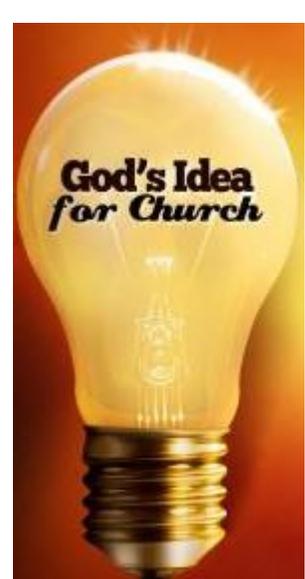
A glowing lightbulb is positioned on the left side of the image. The text "God's Idea for Church" is written on the bulb in a bold, black font. "God's Idea" is in a standard sans-serif font, while "for Church" is in a cursive script. The lightbulb is illuminated from within, creating a bright yellow glow that fades into the background.

God's Idea
for Church

Celebrating Community

Acts 2:42-47

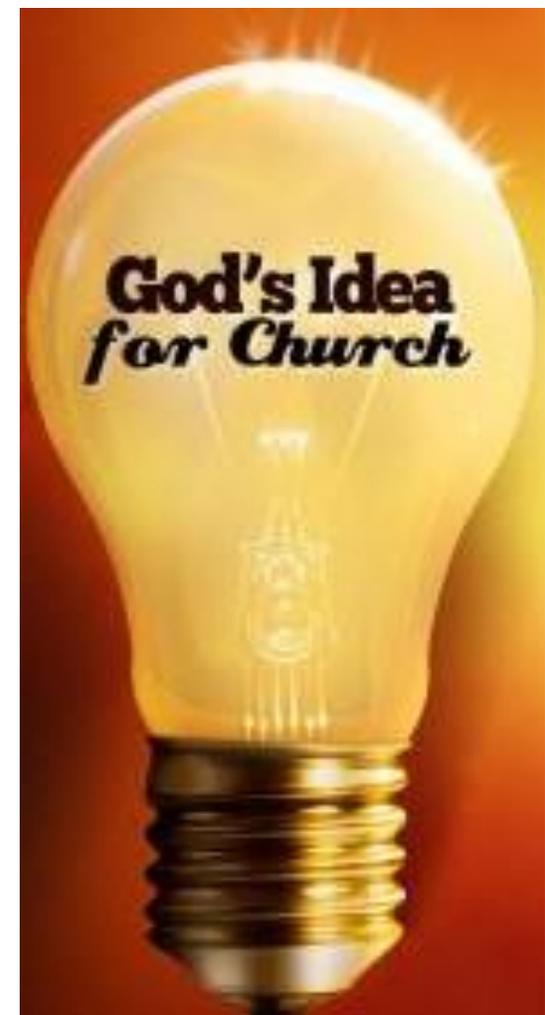
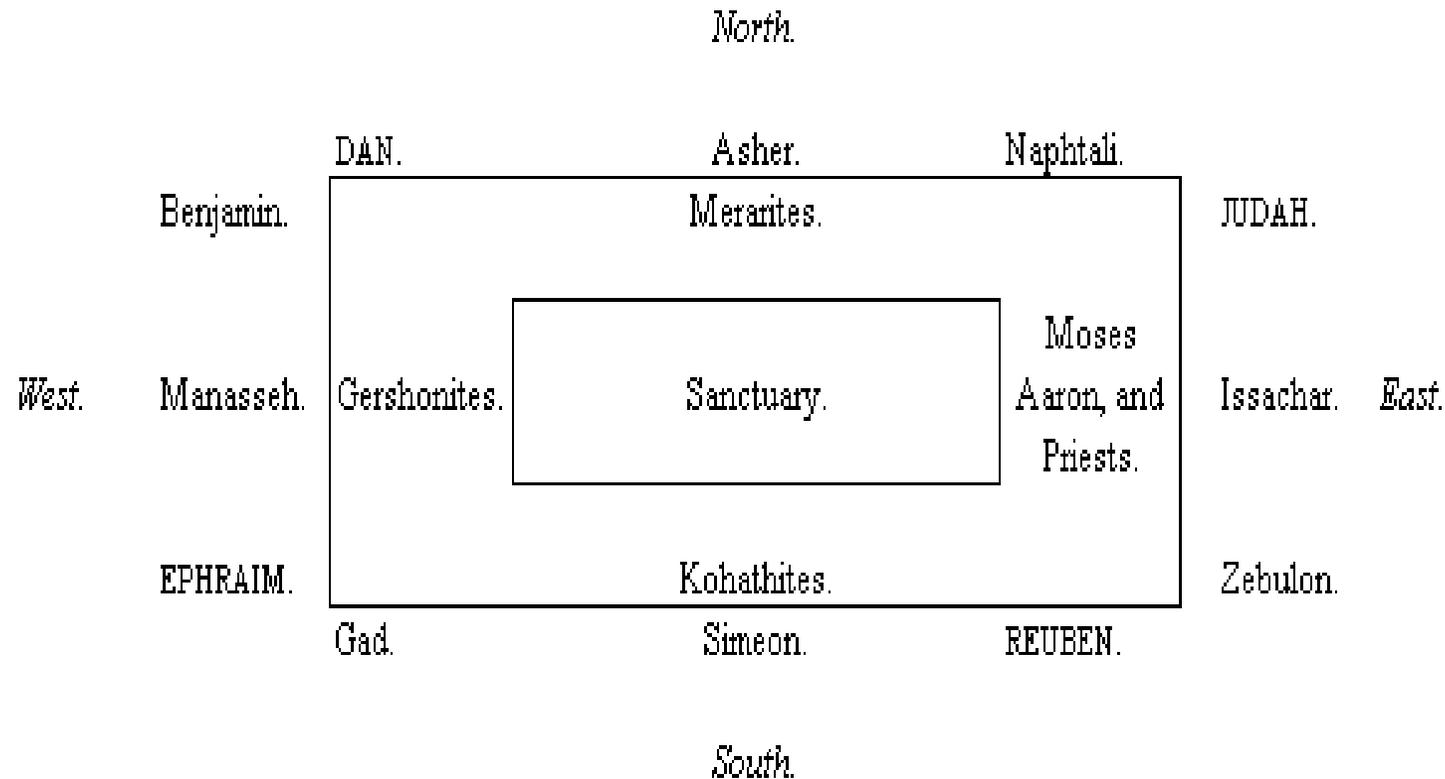


Family, Assembly, Congregation, Community

- Genesis 12:1-3 Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. 2 And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." ESV
- ASSEMBLY - The common term for a meeting of the people called together by a crier. It has reference therefore to any gathering of the people called for any purpose whatsoever (Ex 12:6; Ps 22:16 the King James Version; 89:7 the King James Version; Acts 19:32,41). The solemn assemblies of the Jews were their feasts or religious gatherings of any kind (Isa 1:13). The word *paneguris*, "a general festal assembly" (Heb 12:23), is transferred from the congregation of the people of Israel to the Christian church of which the congregation of Israel was a figure. In the same passage, *ekklesia* has the sense of calling, summoning. In classical Greek *ekklesia* was the name for the body of free citizens summoned by a herald. **In this sense the church calls all the world to become identified with it. It denotes the whole body of believers, all who are called. Or it may refer to a particular congregation or local church. ISBE**

• God's plan and design

- Community
- God ordered
- God centered





**ARE YOU
CONNECTED**

Forgetting what lies behind

One word

Communion

Unity

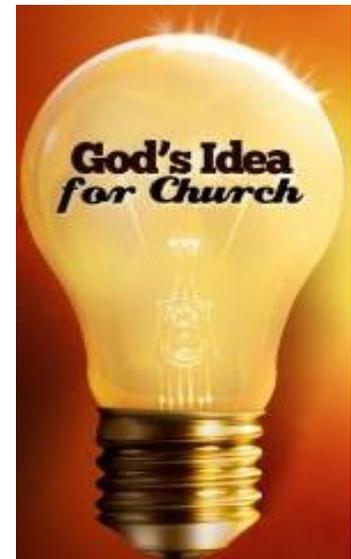
Selfless

Encourage

Determined



- Acts 2:41-47 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls. 42 And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to **fellowship**, to the **breaking of bread** and to prayer. 43 And everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. 44 And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common; 45 and they began selling their property and possessions, and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. 46 And day by day continuing with **one mind in the temple**, and **breaking bread from house to house**, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved. NASB



- Luke tells us these folks were devoted. The word “devoted” is a key word. To be devoted means "**to attach oneself**", or "**to hold firm**", or "**to spend much time in**". Their coming together was not accidental. It was not occasionally, it was intentional. They were devoted to the fellowship and the breaking of bread. They were devoted to learning and giving. It sounds like an amazing community.
- Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. There appears to be a genuine togetherness. Everyday there was togetherness. There was tremendous giving and out of that generous giving resulted in genuine care.
- There were signs and wonders taking place. Not only were they all impacted but people who saw all of this seemed to be impacted also. As a result of all of this the **LORD** was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.
- Even in ordinary living there are dynamics that happen and productivity and so on that can take place when you have people who are willing to work together. But this particular coming together in COMMUNITY had the favor and blessing of the Lord!



- How long did it last?
 - Hebrews 10:23-25 Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. 24 Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. 25 And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near. NLT
 - Firstly, the word consider means **“to fix one’s thinking, to decisively act.”** You are to stir one another - - - which is literally – – to provoke or incite someone. The definition of stir up is – – **a provocation which literally jabs (or cuts) someone so they "must" respond.**
 - So, we are to decisively act in a manner which provokes another Christ follower to love and do good works. Yet, the idea behind it is to do all of this . . . not in anger or maliciously, but to do it all in love.
 - He goes on to say vs.25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.



- Adam and Eve's sin took us from a place of ONENESS with God to oneness with self. Think about the I will of Isaiah 14 which describe the fall of Lucifer.
- You see, we live in a world which craves independence. I want to be financially independent - - relationally independent -- spiritually independent. I don't want to need you. Our country worships independence. The problem is this - - - - to be a follower of Jesus is the direct opposite of being independent. **To be a Christ follower, is actually to be dependent.**
- You cannot save yourself and you cannot make it yourself. To be a Jesus follower means you are completely dependent on the grace, mercy, power and love of Jesus, the presence of God, AND we are to be dependent on one another because we were created to be in community. **To be a Christ follower is to be dependent upon God and upon His people.**
- So, on the one hand we are called to have a personal, individual, unique relationship with Christ. It is personal because it is my relationship with Christ. It cannot be your mother's or father's or anyone else's relationship. It must be uniquely yours.
- And at the same time that we have a personal relationship with Christ, **we must have a shared relationship with Christ. It's shared because we relate to Christ within a community.**



- Let's take a few minutes and go back and see what they were devoted to:
 - Apostle's teaching
 - Fellowship
 - Breaking of Bread
 - Prayer
- Think with me for a moment. Something took place before there was devotion to any of these things:
 - Acts 2:41 Then **they that gladly received his word** were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. KJV
- In other words, they EMBRACED the Truth. And once they embraced the Truth, that Truth had such an effect upon them, that they did the things described in the passage.



- Based upon their receiving of the word look again at what was taking place.
 - They were devoted to the apostle's teaching.
 - Have you ever thought or asked what the apostle's teaching was or consisted of?
 - What about their fellowship?
 - The constant breaking of bread together.
 - 1 Corinthians 10:16-18 When we bless the cup at the Lord's Table, aren't we sharing in the blood of Christ? And when we break the bread, aren't we sharing in the body of Christ? 17 And though we are many, we all eat from one loaf of bread, showing that we are one body. NLT



- From BiOY:

- It has been a vital part of Christian worship for the last 2,000 years, celebrated almost universally by the church worldwide. Again, there has been a huge amount of discussion about what exactly Paul means. However, it seems to me that from this passage a number of things are clear:

- It is *frequent*

There is an expectation that when they 'come together' in their 'meetings' (vv.17,20), the 'Lord's Supper' will take place.

- It is *important*

Jesus tells us to 'do this' (v.24). The consequences of not doing it *properly* are very serious (v.27 onwards). 'Examine your motives, test your heart, come to this meal in holy awe' (v.28, MSG).

- It is *proclamation*

It is one of the ways in which you proclaim the gospel. 'For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes' (v.26).



- It involved both **remembering Jesus** (vv.24–25) and **‘recognizing the body of the Lord’** (v.29). Expect to encounter Jesus as you receive the bread and wine.
- **It is a participation in Christ’s body and blood** (10:14 onwards). The Greek word used here is *koinonia*, which can also mean ‘sharing’ or ‘fellowship’. It is a way for us to receive and share in the benefits of Jesus’ death.
- **It is a form of thanksgiving**. We drink from the ‘cup of thanksgiving’ (10:16).
- **It is an expression of unity**. ‘Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake in the one loaf (v.17). One of the great tragedies of church history is the way in which this great expression of unity has become a cause of division.
- **It anticipates the Lord’s return**. You are proclaiming ‘the Lord’s death *until he comes*’ (11:26).
- One of the biggest challenges today is that people have given up on corporate worship. We hear comments like, “Oh, I can worship God in my home. I don’t need the church. I can experience God in nature.”
- Yet, I’m convinced presence matters. There's power in presence. There’s power when people come together in the name of Jesus to worship, to love you, to care about you, to pray for you. There’s power in presence.

