

The Early Church: Authentic Community Acts 2:42-47

Shortly following the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus a group of 120 of his followers becomes a group of over 3000 people...in a single day! Imagine the excitement, impact, and confusion that must have been part of the experience as people from different parts of the world, different cultures and even different languages are now part of this work God is doing through His Spirit in Jerusalem. The church is born and begins to function in a way that is unexpected and even shocking to those looking on.

Thinking it Through

“The great unifying theme at the conclusion of the 20th century is the triumph of the individual.”
– John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene

“Relationships: we all got ‘em, we all want ‘em, what do we do with them?!” – Jimmy Buffett

“... we will never realize the likeness of Christ in our aloneness; we will never transform the world as individuals; we will never discover the fullness of life in Christ if we stay solo.” – Julie Gorman

“The final frontier may be human relationships, one person to another.” – Buzz Aldrin

The religious community is essential, for alone our vision is too narrow to see all that must be seen. Together, our vision widens and strength is renewed.” – Mark Morrison-Reed

“Men are free when they belong to a living, organic, believing community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealized purpose.” – D. H. Lawrence

“Our society is not a community, but merely a collection of isolated family units.” – Valerie Solanis

“As Christ is the hope of the Church, so the Church is the hope of the world.” – Charles Spurgeon

Working it Out

1. Describe one positive community experience you have been a part of. What made it unique?
2. Aside from the biblical rationale, why do you personally think it is important to be a part of an intentional community?
3. What are some specific obstacles to authentic community? What does it take to overcome those obstacles?
4. How can believers relate to one another in such a way that they positively influence the world around them?

Prayer Points

Father, you have adopted me into your family. Where am I resisting deeper connection with your people? Help me trust your design for community and open my life to others with humility and generosity.

Jesus, you gave yourself for me and for your church. Where am I holding back instead of loving sacrificially? Shape me to reflect your grace, truth, and self-giving love in the way I live with others.

Holy Spirit, you formed the first community of believers and filled them with unity and boldness. Where do I need your help to pursue authentic community? Empower me to be present, honest, and committed, even when it's hard
