

Community

Emphasis: cultural trend, Spirit emphasizing, biblical

The Bible is lived out more in Community than individually.

Corporate Functionality to Church

why Unity and Division are significant

Early Church immediately entered into Religious Community

Why? corporate experience of Culture of Heaven

(Ac 2:1) ¹When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

(Ac 2:42-47) ⁴²And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. ⁴⁶So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

(Ac 4:32-35) ³²Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. ³³And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. ³⁴Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, ³⁵and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

Communes: commandment vs culture (careful with cultural application)

neither emulate nor disregard, but apply Principles within current culture

(principles reinforced elsewhere in scripture)

Key Principles:

- 1. Gathered Together - large and small gatherings**
- 2. Doctrine - agreement around Word**
- 3. Prayer**
- 4. Practical Care**
- 5. Natural Growth**

History:

communes short lived, scattered because of persecution (Acts 1:8 mandate)

Paul: Asia Minor/Greece - house churches, elders (doctrine), relational

church buildings - eventually institutional

monastic movement - relational but insular

Moravians - perhaps best example of balance

1st American colony - quickly traded communal for capitalism

How do we Apply these Principles with Balance in our Culture?

Gathering Together

(Heb 10:24-25) ²⁴And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵**not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

assembling together is a mandate

purposes:

1. care
2. provocation
3. encouragement
4. protection

context: approaching Day - sin (next verses), deception (Prov 18:1)

Why both Large and Small Gatherings?

accomplish different things

have different weaknesses

Membership Definition Change

adapting to current culture

pursuing Biblical Community (relationship)