

A dramatic sky with a sunburst and a rainbow over a sea of clouds. The sun is partially obscured by clouds, creating a bright glow and rays of light. A faint rainbow is visible in the upper center of the frame. The lower portion of the image is filled with a dense layer of white, fluffy clouds.

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Church Growth

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Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. -Acts 2:47

- Praising God is an important part of church fellowship. When we come together as a group, we should glorify God by praising Him. *Psa. 149:1 Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.*
- Dancing, singing praises, and playing instruments is our way of praising God. God is glorified by these methods when we are sincere. *Psa. 150:4 Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.*
- The fact that the New Testament does not condemn musical instruments indicates that the Old Testament practice was continued in the New Testament church. *Eph. 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*





- 'Having favor with all the people' is saying that they approved of one another. Because the world disapproves of true Christians, we need like-minded believers as friends. *John 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*
- One of the most important benefits of the local assembly is being accepted by those that believe truth. This act counteracts the need and desire of the world's approval and gives us Godly contentment. *1Cor. 15:33 Do not be deceived: Bad company ruins good morals.*
- When we shun fellowship or avoid the gathering of believers, we open up ourselves and our homes to worldly desires and affirmations. This behavior births compromise and weakens our stand for Christ. *2Cor. 6:14 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*

- God added to the church daily. When people come to faith in Christ, God's desire is that they be apart of a fellowship of believers. *Heb. 10:25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*
- The great falling away is taking place because many have lost the desire to fellowship and attend church meetings. *Acts 2:42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*
- When children grow up without the fellowship of Christian peers, they are pressured to seek the approval of worldly peers which can change their goals and desires. *Prov. 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*



SUMMARY

Church fellowship should be a place where we come and praise God as a collective body. Before we posture ourselves to receive from Him, we should offer Him a sacrifice of praise and sing about how thankful we are for all He has done! Praise should not be routine, it should be our heartfelt desire! God is great and we owe Him praise and honor. When we praise God together, we grow closer together. When we come together in worship unto God, we are united as a body. We also approve of one other's presence when we come together with singleness of heart. This is the type of atmosphere that God longs to inhabit.

Many are falling away from this model because of all the deception and corruption in many churches today. However, we must not let what others do discourage what God has set as His standard. The early church model was intentional and was never meant to cease or become outdated. God wants us in fellowship and wants our children empowered by the presence of other like-minded children. God wants us to borrow strength from one another. This may require financial sacrifices and extreme measures to achieve, but what better effort to invest our money and time in than to raise our children in an environment where they can grow up with like-minded friends and families.

Heb. 3:12 Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.

Heb. 3:13 But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Heb. 3:14 For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end;