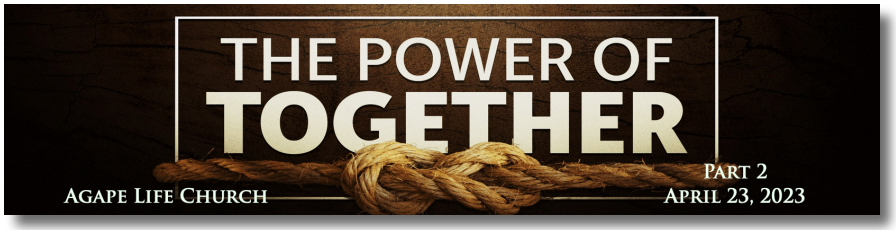

The community continually committed themselves to learning what the apostles taught them, ***gathering for fellowship****, breaking bread, and praying. Everyone felt a sense of awe because the apostles were doing many signs and wonders among them.* ***There was an intense sense of togetherness among all who believed;*** *they shared all their material possessions in trust.* Acts 2:42-44 Voice

We Are Better Together

The New Testament Christians were compelled by God's love and desire to be with each other in the presence of the Lord. **They understood that they were better together** – deeply connected through shared **conviction**, passion for God's **purpose**, and a **deep love** for each other that changed lives and the world around them.

To devalue what God has given us in relationships is to lose sight of one of the most fundamental principles of our purpose as believers together: to find spiritual family to find strength and purpose together.

I will build my Church. And the councils of the unseen world shall not overpower it. I shall give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 16:18 Weymouth

Togetherness is about Conviction, Not Convenience

This is not the time to pull away and neglect meeting together, *as some have formed the habit of doing* ***because we need each other!*** *In fact,* ***we should come together even more frequently,*** *eager to encourage and* ***urge each other onward*** *as we anticipate that day dawning.* Heb.10:24-25 TPT

The Church Is God's Family 1 John 1:3-4

The great benefits of the church are realized as we become Christ-like in our behavior **because we choose to be faithfully committed to our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.**

We must recognize **we can't do it alone**. 1 Corinthians 12:27

The essence of the Christian life, is _____ with God and with His people! This is how God made it to work!

Core Point: There is a strength to being part of the Christian community. There is a deeper fellowship to be realized that many Christians are not seeking or finding. We find in scripture the examples of early believers we should follow, for meaningful and powerful Christian fellowship.

When God restored people back to Himself by the work of Christ, He made us part of His spiritual family! God knew what we needed, that's why He doesn't just call us to believe; **He calls us to belong.**

The Church is the Citadel of Truth in a Dark World

...so if I am delayed, you will know how ***everyone who belongs to God's family ought to behave. After all, the church of the living God is the bastion, the strong foundation of truth.*** 1 Tim 3:15 CEV

Definition; **bastion** - ***a stronghold*** *into which people* ***could go for shelter during a battle****. The projecting part of a rampart or other fortification,* ***a well-fortified position; a stronghold or citadel.***

The Benefits of Gathering Together

1. An impartation of **God's _____ is released**.
2. A sense of **spiritual security** is strengthened.
3. A **celebration of our new identity** in Christ!
4. A bond **of true comfort for the weary.**
5. An experience of **true love and acceptance.**
6. The power of spiritual **_____.**

Everything we do as a church family **gives spiritual support to the truth we have as our common bond in Christ.**

"Help carry each other's burdens. In this way you will follow Christ's teachings" (Galatians 6:2).

We all have burdens to bear and difficulties to endure. Belonging to God's family provides us with the strength to get more done **and the support we need to get through troubled times.**

7. The power of spiritual **strength and warmth**. Ecc. 4:9-11

That warmth you feel inside your heart as we worship together, that's your coals being stirred. That's your passion for Jesus, your love for God and for people being rekindled. When you first gave your heart to Jesus, He lit a fire in your soul.

Belonging to a church family that you worship with and fellowship with fans the flames and keeps you spiritually strong and spiritually warm.

8. We **become focused** on our purpose together **to be salt and light to _____ around us.**

Togetherness is essential for our faith to grow and relationships to thrive. We can still deepen our relationships and have the spiritual impact today that the first century Christians had on the world, by rethinking and rediscovering **the power togetherness** truly gives.

Core Statement: I believe in the power of togetherness! I will pursue the value found in the fellowship of the spiritual family God has made for me. I know I can't do it alone. God wants to use me to be a blessing to His church and His higher purposes for my life!