

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PRAYER ATLANTA
AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY PART 1
JULY 2ND, 2017 - GABE PALMER

I. Authentic Community

A. Authentic means genuine or the undisputed original

Act 2:42-47 And they were continuing steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in fellowship and in the breaking of the loaves, and in prayers. And fear came on every soul. And many wonders and miracles took place through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things common. And they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, according as anyone had need. And continuing with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they shared food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

B. They continued steadfastly in fellowship, eating together, and praying together.

C. They had all things in common. Whenever anyone had a physical need they would sell their possessions and meet the need.

D. They met house to house and shared food with gladness and simplicity of heart. Results were people came into the Kingdom

E. Imagine our church today being described:

And they were continuing once or twice a week in many different doctrines, and in casual fellowship, saying that they would pray for one another but rarely doing it. And fear came on most souls because the economy was weak and they filled themselves with worldly news and violent entertainment. And all who believed said hello to one another and smiled and had very little in common. And they gathered their possessions and goods and some gave 10% of their income in the offering. And meeting once or twice a week in the church and rarely going to each other's houses, they shared food with only one or two of their friends, worrying about the future and having favor only within themselves. And no one was added to the church except on Christmas and Easter.

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F. Authentic community starts with us pursuing biblical Christianity.

G. Each of us has a vital part in creating authentic community.

II. The Body of Christ

A. When we become born-again we are saved into the body of Christ.

Christian community is not an ideal to be reached but a reality created by God in Christ to be lived. - Dietrich Bonhoeffer (Life Together)

Ephesians 4:11-13 *And it is he who gifted some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, and still others to be pastors and teachers, to equip the saints, to do the work of ministry, and to build up the body of the Messiah until all of us are united in the faith and in the full knowledge of God's Son, and until we attain mature adulthood and the full standard of development in the Messiah.*

B. The gifting of apostleship, prophet, evangelist, pastors and teachers are given to primarily equip the saints to do the work of the ministry, not to primarily do the ministry.

C. The work of the ministry is to edify or build up each other in Christ.

Ephesians 4:14-16 *Then we will no longer be little children, tossed like waves and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, or by clever strategies that would lead us astray. Instead, by speaking the truth in love, we will grow up completely and become one with the head, that is, one with the Messiah, in whom the whole body is united and held together by every ligament with which it is supplied. As each individual part does its job, the body builds itself up in love.*

D. The human body is a fascinating thing. God has designed the body to protect and heal itself.

E. If you cut your hand – it will heal automatically, unless you deliberately put dirt in it, or you keep picking it open. If you smash

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your thumb with a hammer, it will eventually heal, unless you keep smashing the same thumb with a hammer.

- F. Similar to how God designed our bodies to heal itself, He designed the church body to also bring healing to itself. Through His life in us we administer healing, encouragement and comfort to one another.

John 11:38-44 *Then Jesus, deeply moved again, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. ³⁹Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, "Lord, by this time there will be an odor, for he has been dead four days." ⁴⁰Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?" ⁴¹So they took away the stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. ⁴²I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me." ⁴³When he had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." ⁴⁴The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."*

- G. Jesus is the one that has given us new life but He has given the responsibility of loosening each other's grave clothes to the church.

1 John 1:5-10 *This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

James 5:16 *Therefore, make it your habit to confess your sins to one another and to pray for one another, so that you may be healed.*