

Isolation and individualism are not Christ's ways. Christ brings believers together as a family. We should meet together regularly in homes as small groups and corporately as the Church. Worshiping together, serving together, reaching out together, praying for one another, strengthening each other with the Word of God, and helping one another by using our spiritual gifts are ways we experience *Koinōnia* and it is the way Christ designed His Church.

- Read John 17:20-22. Exactly what is Jesus praying to happen in and through us?

- Why do you think the world sees Jesus best through the love of His people?

- Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Where do you most struggle in showing love to other believers?
(As an exercise to make you think, attempt to read it while replacing the word love with your name. Example: Dennis is patient, Dennis is kind....)

- List the benefits you experience from being connected in fellowship with other believers:

Each day of the week I am asking you to read the scripture and in a journal or notebook answer the following two simple questions:

- *What God Said to Me: (My Discovery from His Word)*
- *What I Said to God: (My Prayer Response)*

Daily Bible Reading for the Week:

- Day 1: John 13:1-35
- Day 2: 1 John 4:7-21
- Day 3: 1 Peter 4:7-11
- Day 4: 1 Corinthians 12:1-31
- Day 5: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

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Pastor Tim Wood

Footsteps of Jesus: Christ and the Cross John 19:16-24

The theme of John's Gospel – John 20:31

God is always in control

Prophecies fulfilled

1. Took charge of Jesus

2. Hurried his execution

3. He carried his cross

4. He went out

5. Crucified him

6. With him two others

7. Dividing his clothes

Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews

Discipleship Study

Jesus said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me." Luke 9:23

A disciple's life of following Jesus can be summed up in the disciples cross illustration to the right. In this illustration, there are five essential principles disciple's life; Christ, the Word, prayer, fellowship, and witness.

Obeying each principle will lead the follower of Jesus to put into practice the ministries of a disciple.

Each week leading up to Easter, we are studying one of the five aspects of the Disciples Cross. Today, we will begin to look at how we as followers of Christ need to be in relationship with those around us.

The Disciples Cross

Fellowship with Believers: Our Horizontal Relationship with People

An obedient love relationship with Jesus will lead me into love relationships with people. I will long to fellowship with those who will build me up in faith and pray for me. Likewise, I will minister to them.

- John 13:34-35, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
- 1 John 1:3, "We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ."
- Hebrews 10:24-25, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."



The Disciples Cross

We were designed by God to be in an intimate relationship with others. In the early church (see Acts 2:42-47) we see that they experienced real fellowship with one another. The word fellowship here comes from the Greek word *Koinōnia* which implies a deep sense of belonging to one another. This same word is used to describe the relationship we experience with Christ in communion and with the Holy Spirit's presence in our life.

As Christians we should hunger and thirst for the kind of deep, authentic relationships the early church experienced. As the Holy Spirit works in us He leads to love and care for one another the way Christ has demonstrated. The kind of fruit the Spirit produces in our life (see John 15:5 and Galatians 5:22-23) will dramatically change the way we respond to one another.

Jesus never intended for you to live your life in a vacuum. You cannot live the balanced Christian life if you neglect loving relationships with others. If you try to live apart from the fellowship of other believers, called the Church, you will not experience fullness of life in Christ. The Lord has placed us into the "Body of Christ" (the Church) because sustaining life outside a body of believers is difficult. But if we stay connected to people in fellowship and if we love one another, we gain strength from one another. And as Jesus pointed out in John 13:34-35, it is throughout our love that the world will come to know Him.

- Read John 13:34 and John 15:12. How serious is Jesus about us loving one another?
- What is our love for one another supposed to look like according to Christ?
- What does that spur in your heart about feelings toward other believers in your life?