



Sermon Discussion Guide for Groups

Devoted to the Fellowship

Preached by Daniel Grothe

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Summary

Have someone in your group read the following summary aloud.

This sermon, drawn from Acts 2:42-47, focuses on the early church's practice of *koinonia*, a Greek word meaning fellowship, participation, and cooperative community. Pastor Daniel explains that when the Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost, people from different nations, cultures, and backgrounds were brought together into a new kind of society, defined not by biological bloodlines but by the blood of Jesus Christ. This new community was marked by devotion to teaching, prayer, breaking of bread, and sharing life with one another.

The sermon highlights two key practices that have historically shaped the people of God: generosity with their lives with their resources. Drawing from Deuteronomy 15 and Acts 4, Pastor Daniel illustrates how God's people are called to care for the poor, the widow, the orphan, and the foreigner. Pastor Daniel challenges us to reject the illusion of self-sufficiency and embrace the *koinonia* as a 'colony of heaven in a country of death,' living generously so that the Lord continues to add daily to those being saved.

Key Passages

- Acts 2:42-47
- Deuteronomy 15:4-11
- Acts 4:32-34

Opening Prayer

Open your session in prayer, using the words below or your own

Heavenly Father, we come to you today as a group of people who want to hear from you. We ask that you open our hearts and our minds to what you want to speak to each of us through your Word. Just as the early church devoted themselves to fellowship and to one another, we ask that you would draw us closer together and closer to you in this time. Holy Spirit, be our guide. Where there is pride or self-sufficiency, soften us. Where there is fear or isolation, bring courage and connection. May this discussion not simply be an exchange of ideas, but a moment where you move among us and shape us into the people you are calling us to be. In the name of Jesus, **Amen**.

Getting Going

Allow time for each member to answer the following questions before moving on.

What is one of your favorite memories of a time when a community or group of people really came together and took care of one another?

Discussion Questions

Answer as many of these questions as time and interest allow.

1. Pastor Daniel described koinonia as a 'new society' formed by the Holy Spirit, bringing together people from vastly different backgrounds. What does it mean that your identity in the church is defined by the blood of Jesus rather than by your background, culture, or family?
2. The list of nations present at Pentecost included people who were historical enemies. How does the Holy Spirit's work of bringing divided people together challenge the way you think about unity within your own church or community?
3. Pastor Daniel said, 'The Holy Spirit is always leading us to friendship.' What does that stir up in you, and where do you sense the Holy Spirit nudging you toward a friendship you have been avoiding or neglecting?
4. Great Grandmother Cora said the Great Depression was the best decade of her life because of the simplicity, community, and genuine need for one another. What do you think it would take for your own life to reflect that kind of interdependence, and what gets in the way?
5. The sermon argued that American individualism aims for a place where you never have to depend on anyone but called that an 'illusion.' Where do you see this in your own life, and how does the gospel challenge it?

6. Deuteronomy 15 commanded Israel to be generous with the poor in their communities, promising that God would bless them as they gave. How does this Old Testament principle connect to the way you think about your finances and resources today?
7. The pastor shared stories of the women's clinic, housing for homeless mothers, and a friend who gave his home freely. What is one practical way your small group or you personally could share your life or resources with someone in need this season?
8. Eugene Peterson described the church as 'a colony of heaven in a country of death.' How does that image change the way you see your life, your workplace, your neighborhood, or your relationships as a mission field?

Making It Personal

Take the opportunity noted below to apply this week's sermon to your everyday life.

This week, identify one specific way you can practice koinonia, either by sharing your time, your resources, or your encouragement with someone inside or outside the church. It could be as simple as inviting a neighbor to dinner, giving financially to a ministry that serves the poor, or reaching out to someone in your church community who may be isolated. Come back next week ready to share what happened when you leaned into generosity.

Key Takeaways

Commit to memory one point from the message before dismissing.

- The church is a “koinonia” – a new society formed by the Holy Spirit, where people are united not by bloodline or background but by the saving blood of Jesus Christ.
- The Holy Spirit is always leading the people of God toward genuine friendship and interdependence, breaking down the walls that culture, politics, and history have built between people.
- Generosity with our lives, including our time, presence, and relationships, is a foundational practice of the gathered people of God, modeled in the early church's daily rhythms of meeting together.
- Generosity with our resources has always been central to God's design for His people, from the edges of the fields in Deuteronomy to the shared possessions in Acts, and it remains a powerful witness to the world today.
- When the church lives as a colony of heaven in a country of death, sharing life and resources freely, the Lord adds to its number daily those who are being saved.

Closing Prayer

Have someone from your group close your time in prayer, using the words below or your own.

Lord Jesus, thank you for this time together and for the truth of your Word. Thank you that you have called us out of isolation and into a koinonia, a community shaped by your Spirit and marked by your love. As we leave this discussion, we ask that you would make what we have talked about real in our everyday lives. Give us eyes to see the needs around us. Give us courage to open our hands and our homes. Remind us that we are not meant to live this life alone, and that the goal is never self-sufficiency but unity in you. May we be a colony of heaven in a country of death, and may the people around us be drawn to the light they see in us. We trust you to do what only you can do. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, **Amen**.