

Dwelling Place of God

EXODUS 40:34-35

Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and **the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle**. **35** Moses could not enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and **the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle**.

JOHN 1:14

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. **We have seen his glory**, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

ACTS 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. **43 Everyone was filled with awe** at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. **44** All the believers were together and had everything in common. **45** They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. **46** Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, **47 praising God** and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

REVELATION 21:1-7

Then I saw "a new heaven and a new earth," for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. **2** I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. **3** And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Look! **God's dwelling place is now among the people**, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. **4** 'He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death' or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." **5** He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true." **6** He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. **7** Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children."



In creation we see God and humankind in close relationship (Gen 1:26-27) and close proximity (Gen 3:8). However, humankind's rebellion (sin) drastically changed this close relationship with God and with each other. (Gen 3:7)

What was the purpose of the tabernacle and later the temple?

What does it mean for God to "dwell among us"?

How did Jesus' incarnation and work on the cross lay groundwork for the early church to develop such a relational community?

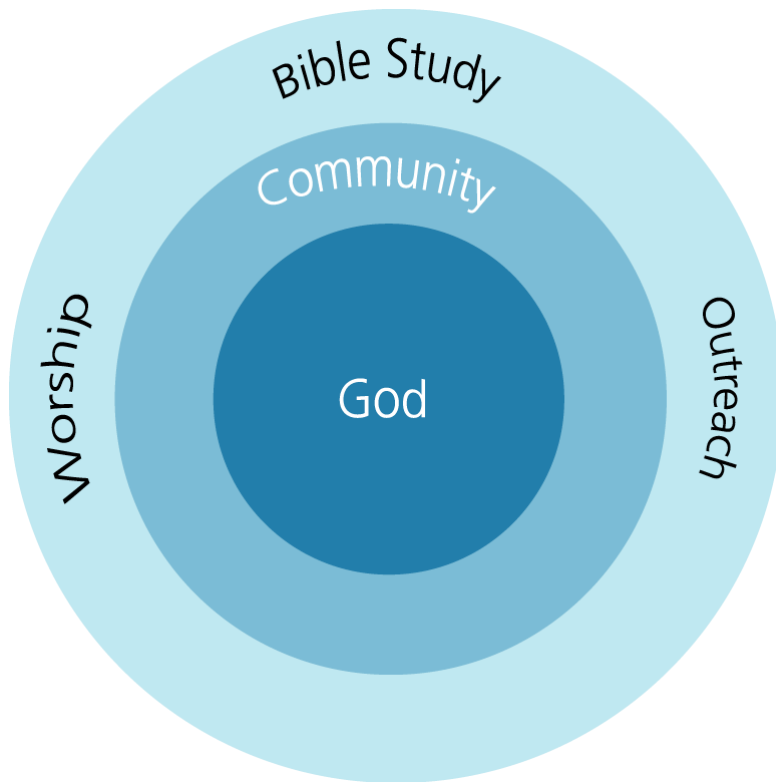
What are some of the characteristics and values of this early church community?

Describe the scene that John paints in Revelation 21? What does it say about the type of community God desires for the present and the future?

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Components of a Small Group



Community: The Foundation of Small Groups

PREMISE #1:

Since we were created to live in community with God and each other community needs to be the of our small groups.

QUESTION #1:

What would they look like if our small groups were to be places of rich community?

PREMISE #2:

People organizations but do not leave

QUESTION #2:

What would it take to develop long-lasting community in small groups?

PREMISE #3:

People are looking for a before they are looking for a

QUESTION #3:

What attitudes and actions would need to change for our small groups to become a vital witnessing community?

Application

Turning Small Groups into Multi Year Communities

- ▶ How are your small group members presently placed in small groups? What is the positive impact of the present process? Negative impact?
- ▶ What are the advantages of changing to multi year small groups? Disadvantages?
- ▶ What are the costs of making such a move? The benefits?
- ▶ What are the various ways you can set up small groups to enable them to be multi year?
- ▶ How can you set up these multi year small groups so they can become witnessing communities and not just ingrown?
- ▶ What are the steps you will need to take to make this change to multiyear small groups?

Dwelling Place of God

"How did these two places limit the relationship between God and humans?"

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What was the effect of the fall on how God related to humankind? One of the effects of the fall was to bring about a separation between God and humans as well as humans with each other. All because of sin.

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What was the purpose of the tabernacle and later the temple?

Hebrew tabernacle means dwelling tent. These two structures provided a buffer between God and humans. Because of this buffer the relationship was not as personal as before the fall.

What does it mean for God to "dwell among us"?

For the Word to become flesh means for Jesus to be a whole person, with all our frailties. He literally pitched his tent among us in a close intimate relationship.

How did Jesus' incarnation and work on the cross lay groundwork for the early church to develop such a relational community?

Jesus = incarnation of God; Church = body of Christ = incarnation of Jesus.

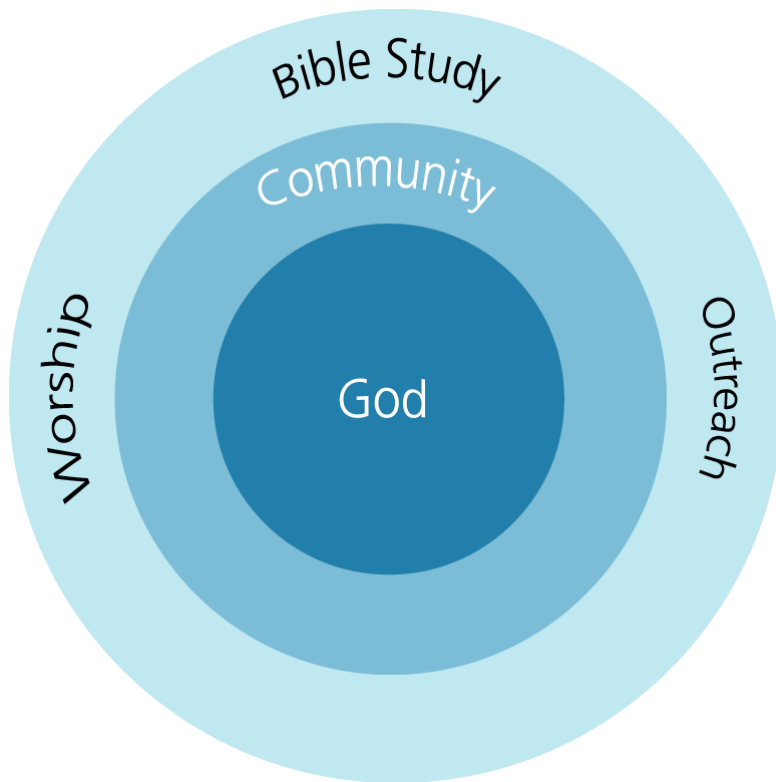
Jesus' death restores our ability to be reconciled to one another, to forgive. The dividing wall is down.

What are some of the characteristics and values of this early church community?

Devoted, faithful to teaching, prayer, regular gatherings, community of goods.

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