



THE COMPELLING COMMUNITY
A COMMUNITY GIVEN BY GOD | JANUARY 18, 2026

WHAT WE LOSE WHEN COMMUNITY ISN'T EVIDENTLY SUPERNATURAL

When we cultivate local church community that is not evidently supernatural, we compromise both thrusts of the _____ (Matthew 28:18-20):

1. We compromise evangelism.

Jesus' words describe our _____ in evangelism (John 13:34-35). The love that will mark believers as followers of Jesus is the same kind of costly, God-exalting, supernatural love that Jesus shows us (1 John 4:19).

Of course, love exists in communities formed around things _____ than the gospel. But this is not the inexplicable-without-God love that Jesus describes in John 13. When community in the local church defies natural explanation, it confirms the supernatural power of the gospel.

In the book of Acts, when the gospel first goes to a region, it's accompanied by what Luke calls miraculous _____ (Acts 2:43). This pattern occurs in Samaria (8:6), Lydda and Joppa (9:35, 42), Cyprus (13:12), Iconium (14:3), and Lystra (14:11).

When the narrative revisits these cities, however, and local churches exist, the reports of miraculous signs _____. Instead, Luke limits his writing to two topics: the further preaching of the gospel and the strengthening of the church (Acts 8:25; 9:31; 14:22; 16:4; 18:23; 20:2).

These miraculous signs were a temporary means of confirming the truth of the gospel until the permanent miraculous means of confirmation was up and running: the local church. When the gospel first enters a region, the Spirit enables miraculous signs. Once the gospel takes root, the Spirit enables miraculous _____. This is John 13:35 in practice.

2. We compromise discipleship.

In Matthew 28:20, Jesus commanded us to teach His disciples "to observe all that I have commanded you." We are to stay faithful to Jesus' teaching ourselves, and then _____ it to those who come after us (2 Timothy 2:2).

Ephesians 4:11-16 displays discipleship in action: stability in _____, resistance to false teaching, and perseverance to observe all that Jesus commanded us, no matter what comes.

Christ gives us leaders, they prepare the congregation for service, and as a result, the congregation grows in unity and maturity. And it is through this congregational _____ that we will resist being "carried about by every wind of doctrine" (v. 14).

Nothing _____ the gospel quite like the supernatural community of faith that gospel preaching produces. Lose what is supernatural about that community, and in a generation or so, you lose the gospel.

When we are tempted to believe this world's lies, community helps us to remember that God's truth is perfect. We are to "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering (Hebrews 10:23) as we "stir up one another to love and good works" (v. 24), which is why we must never neglect to _____ together (v. 25).

The local church is God's mechanism for _____ an unadulterated gospel. That's why Paul can call the church "a pillar and buttress of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15).

WHAT MAKES COMMUNITY SUPERNATURAL?

Supernatural is the biblical idea of God working in space and time to do what confounds the _____ laws of our world.

Our love is proportional to our _____ of forgiveness. And because our forgiveness is supernatural, we have ability as Christians to love God supernaturally (Luke 7:36-47).

1. Supernatural Forgiveness

Our voluntary rebellion against a good and holy God has offended His perfect justice and provokes His just _____ against us.

Our problem is sin. And our salvation is not conceivable by any human imagination. If we have transgressed against the justice of an infinitely good and holy God, what are we to do? If God overlooks our sin, He ceases to be good. If He judges us, we are condemned to _____.

The miracle of the atonement is that there is a way for God to be both _____ and the one who justifies sinners (Romans 3:26). Our forgiveness as Christians is profoundly supernatural.

2. Supernatural Love

We can never be _____ more than we are at the moment of our salvation. Yet as we better understand our sin, and as we better understand the cross, we better understand our forgiveness — which flows out as more love.

Supernatural community in a local church is this principle being worked out hundreds of times each week. People in our churches _____ their sin, the seeming absurdity (and yet reality) of forgiveness in Christ, and that spark burns into love for God, which creates love for others. So they love not in their own human strength, but in the supernatural strength of the one who loved them first.

Our love isn't proportional to our forgiveness; it's proportional to our _____ of forgiveness. If someone is into theology and not into loving others, the problem isn't that he's spent too much time learning about God; it's that he never took to heart what he learned. Supernatural community begins with sound theology.