

The Table of Fellowship

Acts 2:42-47

Recently I learned of a fascinating discovery in Megiddo, Israel—a mosaic floor that dates back to the early third century, decades before Christianity was legal under the Roman Empire.

An inscription on this mosaic indicates that it came from a house church, where a believer named Akeptous donated a table for the faith community. It reads: “The god-loving Akeptous has offered the table to God Jesus Christ as a memorial.”

Last year, this remarkable mosaic was put on public display for the first time at the Museum of the Bible in Washington, D.C.

This mosaic is remarkable for two reasons. First, it highlights the central place of the Table in early Christian worship. Second, and even more significant, this is one of the earliest known extra-biblical references to the **deity of Christ**—calling Jesus “God Jesus Christ.”

This confession does not point to more than one God. Rather, it points to the glorious reality of the Trinity: three distinct persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) who are one in essence, existing in a perfect, eternal love relationship within the Godhead.

Now just as the Father, Son, and Spirit have always loved and delighted in one another, the church is called to reflect that same love in our life together.

This is what the New Testament calls **Koinonia**, which is the Greek word for the deep, committed fellowship we see in the early church. It means more than casual friendship. It speaks of partnership, sharing, and intimate communion. The Table of Fellowship is where this koinonia is lived out. It is where the love of the Trinity is displayed in real time among God’s people.

That table wasn’t decorative. It was where early Christians gathered to remember the broken body and shed blood of Jesus, to share meals, to pray, and to live out their new life together in koinonia. Even in a

time of persecution, when meeting as Christians could cost them everything, the Table was at the very heart of their worship and fellowship.

Main Idea

The grace we receive at the King's Table naturally flows into the Table of Fellowship where we are transformed, disciplined, and display Christ to the world.

To unfold this theme, we will consider three marks of the Table of Fellowship and why it's at the heart of our Christian faith and witness.

1. The Table of Fellowship Is the Outflow of Being Transformed by Grace

First, the Table of Fellowship Is the Outflow of Being Transformed by Grace. The early church did not create community through clever programs, marketing strategies, or exciting events. Their fellowship was the natural, powerful outflow of the transforming grace they had received at the King's Table. Right after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, Acts 2:42 tells us:

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

This devotion was not casual or occasional. The word “devoted” carries the idea of perseverance and priority. They made fellowship and the breaking of bread a non-negotiable part of their new life in Christ. It's important to note also that the entire list in verse 42 is describing **corporate practices** of the whole believing community.

Notice also the beautiful progression in that verse. The apostles' teaching about the finished work of Jesus Christ led directly to fellowship and the breaking of bread. The vertical relationship with God at the King's Table immediately produced a horizontal relationship with one another at the Lord's Table. Grace received created grace shared.

This is why the Lord's Supper is far more than a religious ritual we perform once a month. When we come to the Table and remember Christ's body broken for us and His blood poured out for us, we are reminded again that we are not saved as isolated individuals. We are saved into a new family. The same grace that seats us with Christ also seats us with one another in covenant love.

When we observe communion today, we usually do so with small symbolic elements rather than as part of a full meal. This is not wrong — it is a meaningful, historic adaptation that helps us remember the Lord's death and what it has accomplished: reconciliation with God and with one another. The broken bread and the cup proclaim that the barrier between us and God has been torn down, and the barrier between us and each other has been removed by the same blood.

Yet the original setting of the Lord's Supper was part of a real meal, shared around an actual table in homes. Jesus instituted it during the Passover meal. The early church continued that pattern by breaking bread in their homes with glad and sincere hearts (Acts 2:46).

So, while our symbolic observance on Sunday is good and right, it should also point us to something more. It should remind us and compel us to move beyond the symbolic to the real—to join tables of fellowship throughout the week. The Table on Sunday is meant to send us to tables on Monday through Saturday. The grace we receive at the King's Table is not meant to stay symbolic. It is meant to flow into real relationships, real meals, and real koinonia in our homes.

The Table of Fellowship is therefore not optional or secondary. It is the direct result of being transformed by grace. When we truly grasp what God has done for us in Christ, we cannot stay isolated. Grace always moves us toward relationship — first with God, and then with His people.

This is the outflow of being transformed by grace. If we have truly tasted the kindness of God, it will show up in how we relate to one another throughout the week, not just on Sunday morning.

2. The Table of Fellowship Is Where the Deepest Discipleship Is Developed

Secondly, the Table of Fellowship Is Where the Deepest Discipleship Is Developed. Real discipleship does not happen primarily in large crowds, through listening to sermons alone, or by consuming Christian content online. It happens in the context of committed, everyday relationships around the Table.

Luke tells us in Acts 2:47, *“And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.”* Notice that the Lord was not simply adding names to a membership roll. He was adding people to a vibrant, living community — to the **koinonia** — where real discipleship was lived out day by day in homes and around tables.

When the church was at its best, they shared life. They shared meals. They shared resources. They prayed together. They carried one another’s burdens. This is where character is shaped, where sin is gently confronted in love, where faith is modeled day by day, and where we learn to walk with Jesus in the real stuff of life — in marriage, parenting, work, suffering, conflict, and joy.

In our modern, distracted, screen-driven age, this kind of Table fellowship feels increasingly rare. Social media can be a cheap and even dangerous substitute for real presence and real friendship. We can find good teaching online, but there are teachers online who are not in fellowship themselves. Because of a lack of character and accountability, some would not qualify to teach in a local church or hold office (James 3:1). Yet people chase content or platforms online or jump from one church to another looking for something, but they never stay long enough for people to really know them and for them to really know others.

Sadly, when the real person is revealed and correction or accountability comes, rather than welcoming it, they resent it and jump ship. Churches are filled with people like this. They may know a lot of Bible, but it’s not sticking because they’re not living it out in real community, which is not found on Facebook or Instagram, but in real face-to-face community where it matters most.

Proverbs offers rich wisdom here:

“Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy” (Proverbs 27:6)

True friends know the real you. They speak truth in love. They hold you accountable. They don’t slander you behind your back on social media — they meet with you face-to-face (or correspond privately) when concerned or hurt. They pursue your good, not their own image or validation.

You may be thinking, “Well, I don’t have friends like that. The truth is, to have friends like that, **you must also become a friend like that**. Real koinonia begins when we stop waiting for others to pursue us and start opening our lives and our tables.

Social media can be a helpful tool, but it is no substitute for real presence. The social media counterfeit “friends” see only a highlight reel. They cannot truly know you or sharpen you. There is no algorithm for accountability, no filter for genuine love.

Beloved, we are easily deceived by these counterfeits. The algorithms often feed the selfish nature already inside us—the part that wants self-rule, self-gratification, and self-protection. We all have this selfish bent that must daily be put to death (Romans 8:13, Colossians 3:5). But when fed, it grows into actions that uses people and platforms for our own pleasure while ignoring the interests of others (Philippians 2:3-4).

Smartphones and social media often keep us isolated even when we are physically in the same room. We scroll instead of listening. We consume instead of commune. We attend services but rarely share life. Tablets have replaced tables. Tablets can be helpful. But the Table calls us back to something far richer—embodied, attentive, devoted life together. This is where the deepest discipleship happens.

3. The Table of Fellowship Is Where We Best Display the Love of Christ in a Way That Draws Others to Him

Lastly, the Table of Fellowship Is Where We Best Display the Love of Christ in a Way That Draws Others to Him. The early church grew not because it offered the best programs that satisfied the consumer-driven Christian, but because they were transformed by a gospel that compels you to grow in community and give generously.

I recently came across this insight from James Bell that captures it so well:

“The early church grew not because Christians consumed ‘worship’ experiences, but because they embodied an entirely different way of life together. They forgave radically. Shared generously. Welcomed outsiders. Honored the poor. Cared for widows. Endured suffering. Lived with hope. The Gospel became visible through the community itself.”

Churches, especially larger ones, can devote a lot of time and energy to developing systems and strategies — creating a well-oiled machine for growth, programs, and efficiency. Strategy matters. Systems can be helpful. But more than that, the church needs to develop a **gospel culture**—a culture shaped by grace, where people are known, loved, corrected, and sent out from the Table.

Look at the early church in Acts 4:32-37. Luke tells us, “*Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common... There was not a needy person among them.*”

John Piper, reflecting on this passage, put it powerfully: “If a church doesn’t display this otherworldly unity and sacrificial love, it is not a church — it is a social club.”

That statement lands hard because it’s true. The gospel does not merely save individuals and leave them in isolation. It creates a new

people who are visibly, sacrificially, and joyfully bound together in Christ. When that kind of love is missing, no matter how big the crowd or how good the singing, we have something less than the church Jesus is building.

Dan Steel put it this way: “The church isn’t just a vehicle for mission; it’s the message made visible, grace incarnate. Every part matters. Every part is needed. And every part must be cared for. Culture is what people remember. It’s what we carry with us when the excitement fades. And for some, it shapes whether they continue walking with Jesus at all. So, yeah: strategy matters... But how you love, lead, repent, forgive, serve, and endure together matters even more.”

This is exactly what Jesus promised in John 13:35:

“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The Table of Fellowship makes that love visible and believable to a watching world.

Some in our day are tempted to throw out the baby with the bathwater. They see problems in large gatherings and want to abandon the corporate assembly altogether. But that misses the biblical pattern. The early church met **both** in the temple courts for large, public gatherings and from house to house for intimate fellowship (Acts 2:46).

Why did they continue meeting in the temple courts daily? Because it was a place of public worship, corporate prayer, teaching, and bold witness to the crowds. It allowed the whole community to gather, hear the apostles’ teaching, praise God together, and declare the gospel openly. The large assembly magnified the presence of God and gave the early believers a visible, unified testimony in Jerusalem.

Of course, after the destruction of the temple in 70AD, that option was no longer available. The early believers then relied primarily on house

churches. But that doesn't mean that there was no longer any value in gathering as the whole body when possible.

In America today, we are blessed to experience the best of both worlds. We can gather as the whole local church for corporate worship, preaching, prayer, and the public declaration of the gospel — and we can also meet from house to house for meals, discipleship, accountability, and deep koinonia.

This is both a blessing and a danger. It is a blessing because we have freedom and resources the early church did not always enjoy. It is a danger when we allow the large gathering to become mere entertainment or consumerism, or when we allow the small groups to become optional or shallow.

Recently I heard a pastor of a large mega-church responding to criticism about the size of his congregation. He acknowledged that the church gathers in a large facility on Sunday mornings, but he also pointed out that they have many smaller groups that meet throughout the week in homes. He referenced the early church in Acts, which met both in the temple courts for large, public gatherings and from house to house for intimate fellowship.

This is a challenging reminder for me and for all of us. Whether a church is large or small — and most churches in America are smaller, averaging 65–70 people on a typical Sunday — the real issue is not the size of the Sunday gathering. **The real issue is whether we are living out the full New Testament pattern through both the larger assembly and the house-to-house life together in a way that actually produces genuine koinonia (Acts 2:46).**

A mega-church can have vibrant small groups that foster real fellowship, and a small church can still be relationally shallow and isolated. Again, the problem is not the building or the size of the Sunday service. The real question is: Are we devoted not only to gathering as the whole church on Sunday or for corporate prayer, but also to genuine fellowship, meals, and discipleship from house to house throughout the week?

True biblical fellowship—the kind that displays the love of Christ and draws others to Him — can thrive with both the larger gathering and the smaller, everyday tables. Let's make sure we're not neglecting either.

So, what does this mean for us practically?

Showing up on Sunday morning is better than staying home—it honors the importance of the gathered church. But it is not what being the church is all about. Sunday morning should never be the ceiling of our fellowship; it should be the launching pad for the gospel mission and deeper koinonia throughout the week.

So here is my heartfelt challenge to every one of us: **Don't just come to church — embody the church Jesus died for.**

Would you prayerfully consider taking one concrete step this month to strengthen the Table of Fellowship in our church family? Maybe it's joining a Life Group for the first time. Maybe it's stepping up to host one in your home. Or perhaps it's simply opening your table this week — inviting someone for a meal, a cup of coffee, or real conversation.

Some of the most powerful discipleship and gospel conversations happen not in a building, but in homes where people feel known, loved, and safe enough to be real. This is how the early church lived — from house to house. This is how we can live too.

The grace we receive at the King's Table is never meant to stay private. It flows into the Table of Fellowship — where we are deeply transformed, where discipleship takes root in real relationships, and where the love of Christ becomes visible and attractive to a watching world.

So don't just come to the King's Table — stay for the Table of Fellowship. Fight the distractions. Put down the phone. Open your home. Share meals. Bear burdens. Forgive quickly. Love sincerely. This is where the gospel becomes believable.

As we do this, we not only grow in Christ ourselves — we become a living invitation for others to come and find their place at the King's Table.

Let this truth settle deep in your heart: The Table of Fellowship is not optional. It is one of the primary ways God transforms us and displays His glory in a broken and lonely world.

May the same grace that not only saves us but brings us into the family of God make our Table of Fellowship a place of real transformation and visible love.

May our life together reflect the perfect, eternal love that exists within the Trinity — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — so that others are drawn to Christ for their eternal good and the glory of His name.
Amen.