

A
TWELVE TRIBES
FREEPAPER

FREE



A Brand New Culture



We are part of an international network of communities known as the Twelve Tribes.



We work together, share our meals together, we worship together, and all the money we earn in our businesses is shared so that there are no poor among us, just as they did.²



We define true religion as caring for orphans and widows and being unstained by the world.³



² "For there was not a needy person among them, for all who were owners of land or houses would sell them and bring the proceeds of the sales and lay them at the apostles' feet, and they would be distributed to each as any had need." Acts 4:34,35

³ "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained from the world." James 1:27

We live just like the first disciples in the book of Acts.



We share all our possessions in common as they did.¹

¹"And the full number of those who had believed were together and had all things in common." Acts 2:44



We gather in our homes every morning and evening to worship God.

We work to maintain our unity as our highest priority.⁴



We make sure our differences are resolved before we lift our hands and pray.⁵

This gives us confidence that our prayers are being heard and accepted.⁶



⁴ "Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Ephesians 4:3

⁵ "Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Corinthians 1:10

⁶ "Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and dissension." 1 Timothy 2:8

Unlike many churches today in which only the pastor speaks, everyone in our communities is encouraged to speak when we gather together.⁷



No one person makes all the decisions. We submit to one another, which means we do everything together. We don't make decisions apart from speaking and listening to one another.⁸



Sadly, many Christian churches today bear no resemblance to that first pattern established by Christ's closest disciples.

Only ordained ministers are allowed to speak, and there are many divisions or "denominations."



⁷What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church. 1 Corinthians 14:26

⁸Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Ephesians 5:21

Their **SHARING of POSSESSIONS**, was meant to fulfill the hope of Deuteronomy 15:4¹⁰

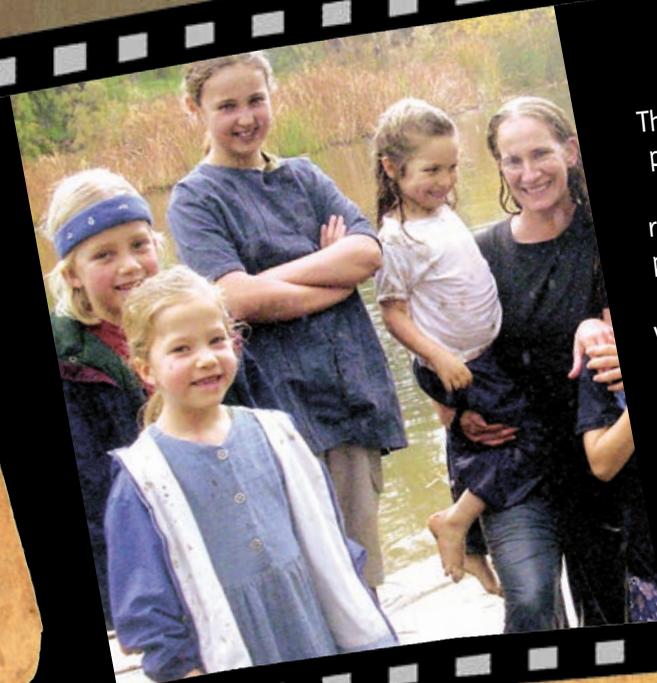
Their **UNITY** was the demonstration of Psalm 133:1,3¹¹

Their **OUTSPOKENNESS** was meant to answer the cry of Moses — that all would speak.¹²

¹⁰"However, there will be no poor among you, since the LORD will surely bless you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess."
— Deuteronomy 15:4

¹¹"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity... for there the LORD commands a blessing— eternal life."
— Psalm 133:1,3

¹²"Would that ALL the LORD's people were prophets, that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!"
— Numbers 11:29



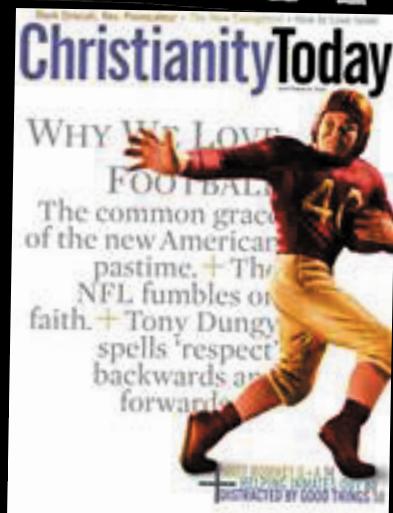
Their care for the poor and needy had also been required of God's people in the Old Testament¹³ but was never fulfilled.



¹³"A father of the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy habitation [His church]. God sets the lonely in families [in the communities of the saints]. He brings out those who are bound into prosperity. But the rebellious dwell in a dry land." Psalm 68:5,6

There are rich and poor in the churches of Christianity today. Since they have no distinctive culture that sets them apart from the world, their children embrace the fashions, music, and immorality of the world.

The pattern of community was established by Christ Himself and His very first apostles.



They had a rich culture and heritage of their own. They had no need to embrace the world's culture.

God's commandments can only be fulfilled in the context of a life together, sharing all things. This is the witness of His love and salvation, which must go to the ends of the earth, in order to bring about the fulfillment of all of God's instruction and His promises.⁹

⁹And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

Matthew 24:14



Our children grow up in a protected environment. Parents work together to teach them the ways of God. Many of our youth are embracing the life of their parents.

It is a place where fathers and sons can turn their hearts towards each other.



Walls are being broken down between old and young

and between men and women.



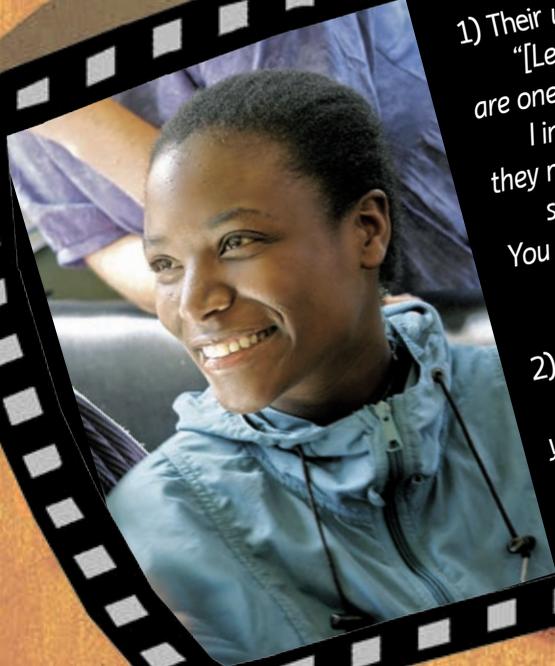
We are not trying to change the world by getting involved in politics or trying to influence modern culture. We are called to be a light or an example.¹⁴



This New and Emerging Culture must be a Contrasting Society so that those who hate the corruption they see in the world will recognize a distinction and come out and be separate.¹⁵

¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden." Matthew 5:14

¹⁵ "Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," 2 Corinthians 6:17



1) Their unity as John 17 reveals:
" [Let them] be one, just as We are one;
I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me."

2) Their love as it says in John 13:35:
"By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."



The word "holy" means separate or "set apart," not for the purpose of being isolated but rather distinct.¹⁶



Christ said his followers would be distinguished, not by their belief system, but by two things you could see. . .

¹⁶ "So you will again distinguish between. . .the one who serves God and one who does not serve Him." Malachi 3:18



Our communities do not exist for mere idealistic purposes. Our purpose is to put an end to the cancer of selfishness that is destroying the human race. This life of sharing all things in common makes it possible to obey the otherwise unreasonable demands of scripture. Living together makes it possible to look out for the needs of others rather than our own.¹⁷ It is where we *can* put an end to selfishness since we no longer *have* to live for ourselves.¹⁸



This life would not be possible apart from our Messiah. If you recognize Him as the pearl of great price, this life makes it possible for you to pay the costs of the gospel. You can freely surrender all that you have for His cause: your own ideas, possessions and aspirations.¹⁹ You can freely give up any *other* cause that would hinder you from drinking the water of life. Come and see for yourself. The Spirit *and* the Bride say "come!"²⁰

¹⁷ "Do not look out for your own personal interests, but rather for the interests of others." Philippians 2:4

¹⁸ ". . .He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf."
2 Corinthians 5:15

¹⁹ "So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all that he has." Luke 14:33

²⁰ "The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes drink of the water of life freely."
Revelation 22:17



If God lived on my street, I'm sure the house would be big. It would have lots of rooms for all the widows and orphans who live there. It would be their home, not some institutional orphanage with bars on the windows. I'm sure the rooms would have windows to let lots of light in. The house would probably be old and fixed-up, not new and plastic.

There would be a nice white fence around the house, so that the children are safe inside. It would have a gate that is easy to open, so that guests could come in. No mean dog would bark and scare people.

Lots of people would live in God's house, I'm sure, because God doesn't want to be alone. He's not a lonely God. Nobody would cry alone in their rooms at night, or at the dinner table over a bowl of reheated canned soup. No, all the people would eat together, and some would cook, and some would clean up, but they would all be together.

They would invite everyone on my street to a special dinner. They would invite the poor couple in the small apartment, and the crippled woman, and the lame boy with the funny legs that curved inwards. And the blind man, yes, everybody knew his name, and he came all the time. There was a place for everyone at the table, but not everyone came. The important people never came, because they were too busy doing important things. They could have come, but they didn't.

God's house would be clean. God's yard would be clean. In fact, all the trash on the street would get picked up. You could tell someone cared.

God is love, and love is God. I think – if I lived where Love lived, that I could change my bad habits. I could even be honest about the bad things I had done, and then I could change. I bet everybody who lived at God's house says "I'm sorry" a lot and "I forgive you" even more.

If you wanted to come over, you'd be welcome. All the people inside would stop and talk to you. If it was getting late, God would invite you to spend the night and give you His room. He'd even let you move in to His house. And you could bring home another person, too.

It would be a place to belong, a place to be for a long time, a place where the people belong to God, and He belongs to them.

I would move in and live with Love, if God lived on my street. ♦



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