

What's The Meaning of This?  
Understanding God's Purpose for the Church

But build one another up every day. Do it as long as there is still time. Then none of you will become stubborn. You won't be fooled by sin's tricks. (Heb 3:13 NIRV)

I. Various metaphors to convey the **complexity** of the church:

- A. **Body**
- B. **Army**
- C. **Temple**
- D. **Bride**
- E. **Vineyard**
- F. **City**
- G. **Family**

II. Familial Terms

- A. **New Birth**
- B. **Children of God**
- C. **Sons of God**
- D. **Brethren**
- E. **Fathers**
- F. **Household**
- G. Paul's usage – "**brethren**" addressing all members (male/female) **130 times**.

III. Functioning as a Family

A. **Taking Care** of one another

1. Dear friends, do you think you'll get anywhere in this if you learn all the right words but never do anything? Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it? For instance, you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved and say, "Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!" and walk off without providing so much as a coat or a cup of soup—where does that get you? Isn't it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense? (James 2:14-17 Message)

2. Real faith expresses itself **through love**

B. **Spending Time Together**

1. The believers studied what the apostles taught. They shared life together. They broke bread and ate together. And they prayed....Every day they met together in the temple courtyard. In their homes they broke bread and ate together. Their hearts were glad and honest and true. (Acts 2:42,46 NIRV)

C. Show **Affection**

1. Greet one another with **a Holy Kiss**

D. The Family **Grows**

1. **Divide & Multiply**
2. **Spiritual & Numerical** growth

E. Share **Responsibility**

F. Reflect **Trinity**

1. **Image of God**—"Perichoresis"

-Peri = **Around**  
-Choresis = **Dancing**

2. Truly human when we **live in community**

John 13:35 "If you love one another, everyone will know you are my disciples."