

# I Am, Because We Are

The fellowship of believers detailed in Acts sounds like the perfect relationship. Acts 2:44 tells us: “All the Lord’s followers often met together, and they shared everything they had.” If we follow this biblical blueprint for how to be ideal Christians, we face high expectations. Often, we only see our church family at church. We are so busy with working different jobs and juggling social lives. Being together with our church family more than once or twice a week may be difficult, and sharing all our physical possessions seems impossible. So, how are we called to be a strong fellowship of believers despite all the challenges of modern life?

There is a South African philosophy known as *ubuntu*, which is often translated as “I am, because we are.” It is best explained with the story of a social scientist who had been working in an African village. He obtained a basket of fruit and proposed a game with the children. He put the basket near a tree and asked them to race toward it. The person who reached it first would get all the fruit. To his amazement, they all joined hands and reached the basket at the same time, sharing it with one another. In explanation, they replied: “How can one of us be happy if all the other ones are sad?” South African theologian Desmond Tutu described *ubuntu* this way: “When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself.”

Perhaps our calling today is not to follow the example of Christian community found in the book of Acts so literally. Instead, we are called to be family *in Christ*—brothers and sisters who love each other no matter what, and are united through empathy. Rather than live together and share every possession, we are called to be believers held together by a common spirit. In Christ, we seek to respect and understand one another.

—Audriana Sway  
Silver Lake, Indiana

**Text for today:** “They spent their time learning from the apostles, and *they were like family to each other*. They also broke bread and prayed together. Everyone was amazed by the many miracles and wonders that the apostles worked. All the Lord’s followers often met together, and they shared everything they had. They would sell their property and possessions and give the money to whoever needed it. Day after day they met together in the temple. They broke bread together in different homes and shared their food happily and freely, while praising God” (Acts 2:42-47a, CEV).  
**Bible readings for today:** Acts 2:42-47 (42); Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10.