

Rows or Circles

“Let us not stop..” Whoever it was that wrote the letter to Hebrew Christians clearly wanted to encourage them. Encourage them that the story of God’s people was not over, that the covenant God made with Moses was still important. Encourage them that Jesus is greater than Moses and through faith in him their future is secure. So don’t stop. Now is not the time to stop.

Read Hebrews 10:19-25

In the sermon I talked about vertical and horizontal faith. Vertical faith it's all about our relationship with God. Horizontal faith is expressing our love of God to those around us.

Read John 13:34-36

1. How will they know you are a Disciple of Jesus?
2. Who is it that receives it?
3. Why is it not our love for God that would do this?

Christians were first called Christians in Philippines because they were little Christ's. It was meant to be a term of abuse, but to followers of Jesus it is the greatest compliment.

- What are the benefits of meeting together?
- What are the things that stop us?
- What has been your experience?

In Deeper

The idea of all neatly sitting in rows worshipping and listening to a sermon is not in the Bible. Meetings in the New Testament, even in the Temple, were people gathering together in small groups. Praise and adoration was offered up to God (vertical) and demonstrated to those around them (horizontally).

Read Matthew 6:5-15

This is such a well known passage and there are dozens of ways to understand this prayer. Notice Jesus says in verse 9, “This is how you should pray”, not “This is what to say”. It is a model of how to pray.

It starts and ends with adoration in the longer form that we use. In the middle is a list of requests.

- How many requests can you find?

There is a prayer that every Jew, including Jesus, would have prayed every day, *the Kaddish*. This is the first part:

*May the great Name of God be exalted and sanctified, throughout the world,
which he has created according to his will.*

*May his Kingship be established in your lifetime and in your days,
and in the lifetime of the entire household of Israel, swiftly and in the near future; and say, Amen.*

- Is it vertical or horizontal?

Jesus takes the man made prayer, *the Kaddish*, and adds to it the words of God and the first word is inclusive and corporate. He is **Our father**. It draws everyone around us, in. This prayer has everyone in mind.

Our Father is horizontal faith

Hallowed be your name is vertical

- Work out the rest for yourself.

Jesus commanded that we love one another, that we pray with one another in mind and that we demonstrate our faith by caring for one another. That is why the writer to the Hebrews said:

Let us not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:25