



The Architecture of a True Church

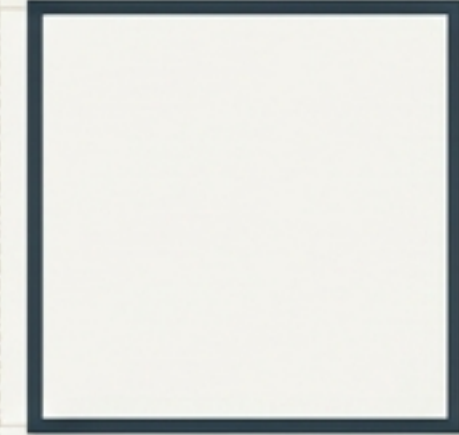
Word, Presence, and the Mystery of Communion.

Defining the Body of Christ

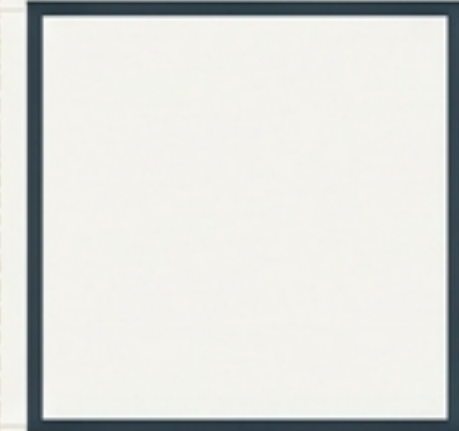
What makes a group of people into God's people?

If you were a new Christian searching for a church home, what would be on your checklist? How do you know if a group is just posing as a church, or if they qualify as a temple of the Holy Spirit?

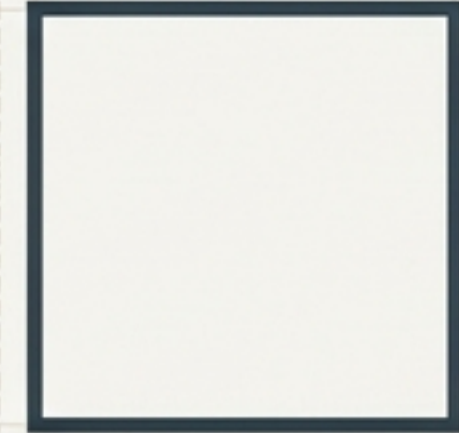
Sign 01



Sign 02



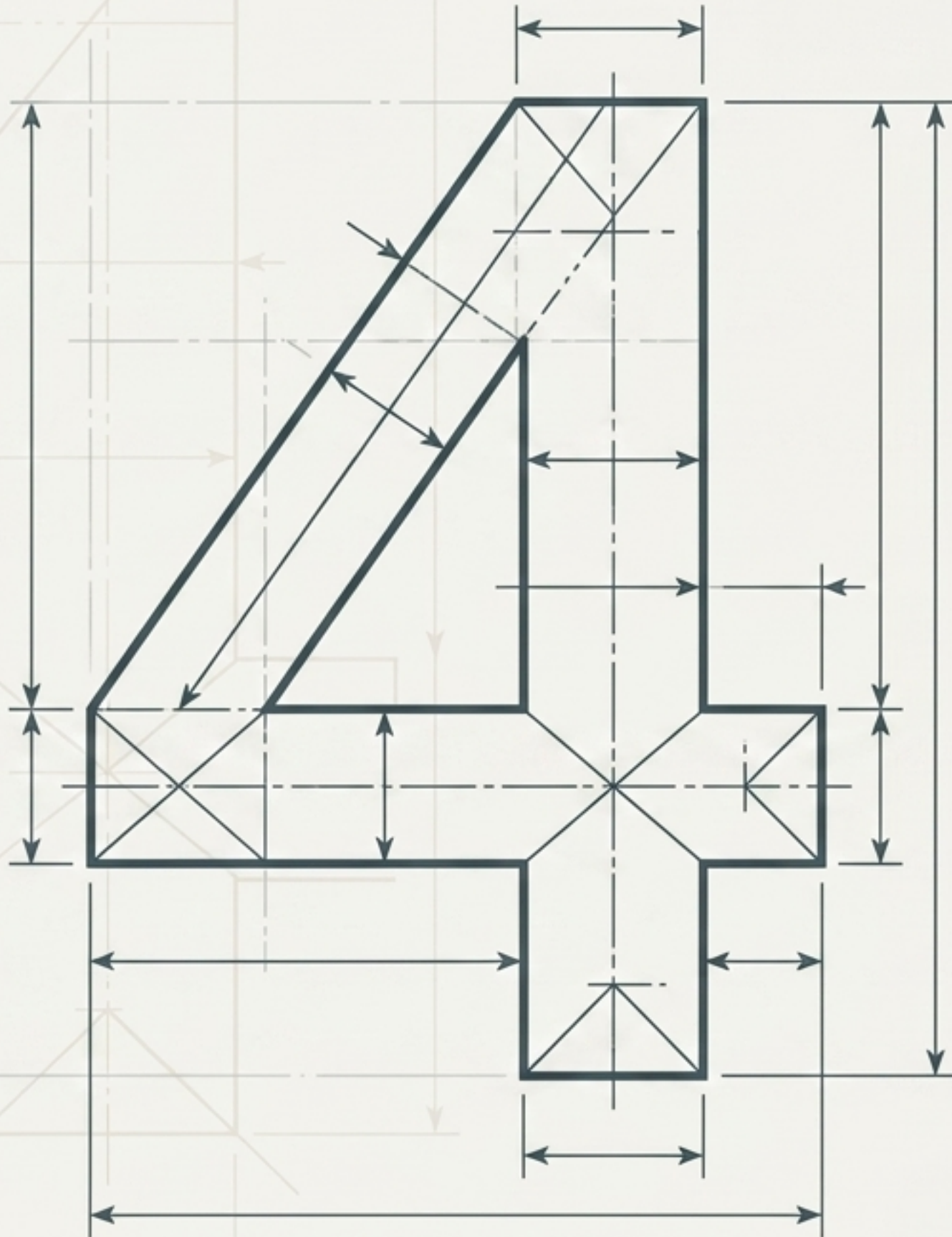
Sign 03



The Preamble to the Constitution

Last week's reading in Deuteronomy 4 provides the foundational answer. Delivered by Moses to the assembled nation in the valley of Moab, it lays the foundation on which Israeli culture was built.

While it addresses the Old Testament nation of Israel, the principles in Chapter 4 point directly to the vital signs of the New Covenant Church.



Pillar 1: A True Church Loves God's Word

God called Israel to himself, binding the nation by covenant words. God's word was their absolute foundation.



Listen
(pay close attention)



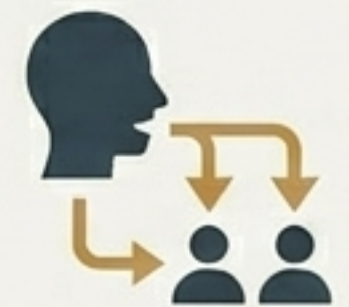
Follow
(carefully)



Keep
(do not add or take away)



Remember
(do not forget)



Teach
(to the next generation)

“God spoke from Mount Sinai... Moses recorded it in statutes, ordinances, and commandments.”

Christ's Words Are the Foundation of Life Together

In the New Covenant, Jesus Christ is the living word, holding the same universal authority as God. The Bible forms us into God's people, saving and transforming us whenever it is read, taught, studied, or obeyed.

Matthew 28:18-20 (The Great Commission): Teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.

Colossians 3:16: Let the word of Christ dwell richly among you.

2 Timothy 3:16-17: All Scripture is inspired by God... so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

The Continuity of the Word

	Old Covenant (Deut 4)	New Covenant (Matt 28)
Speaker	Moses.	Jesus.
Location	Valley of Moab (border of Promised Land).	A mountain in Galilee.
Action	Taught statutes/ordinances to keep and pass down.	Commanded disciples to teach observance of his commands.
Result	Formed the nation of Israel.	Forms the global Church.

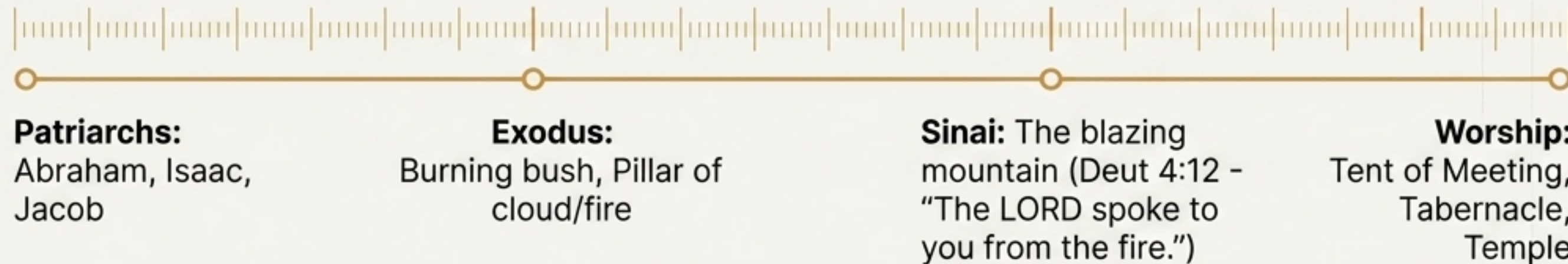


Sign 1: Do the people love God's word?

Pillar 2: A True Church Loves God's Presence



Core Concept: Israel wasn't formed through clever human planning. God called them into existence by His word and His manifest presence.



"For what great nation is there that has a god near to it as the LORD our God is to us whenever we call to him?" (Deut 4:7)

The Temple in Which He Lives

In the New Covenant era, God's presence was manifested visibly in Jesus Christ (God with us).

Today, we depend on God's presence as the very lifeblood of the church.

1 Corinthians 3:16:
Don't you yourselves know that you are God's temple and that the Spirit of God lives in you?

Remember the Great Commission? Jesus promised his continual presence: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).

Spiritual Vital Signs

How do we know a church loves God's presence? Look for these definitive signs:



Spiritual Life
rather than dead religion



Jesus Honored
loved and honored as God



Joyful Worship
engaged and vibrant gatherings



Changing Lives
visible transformation



Pursuing Godliness
cultivating the fruit of the Spirit



Word Treasured
taught and followed diligently



Woven Prayer
integrated into every aspect of community

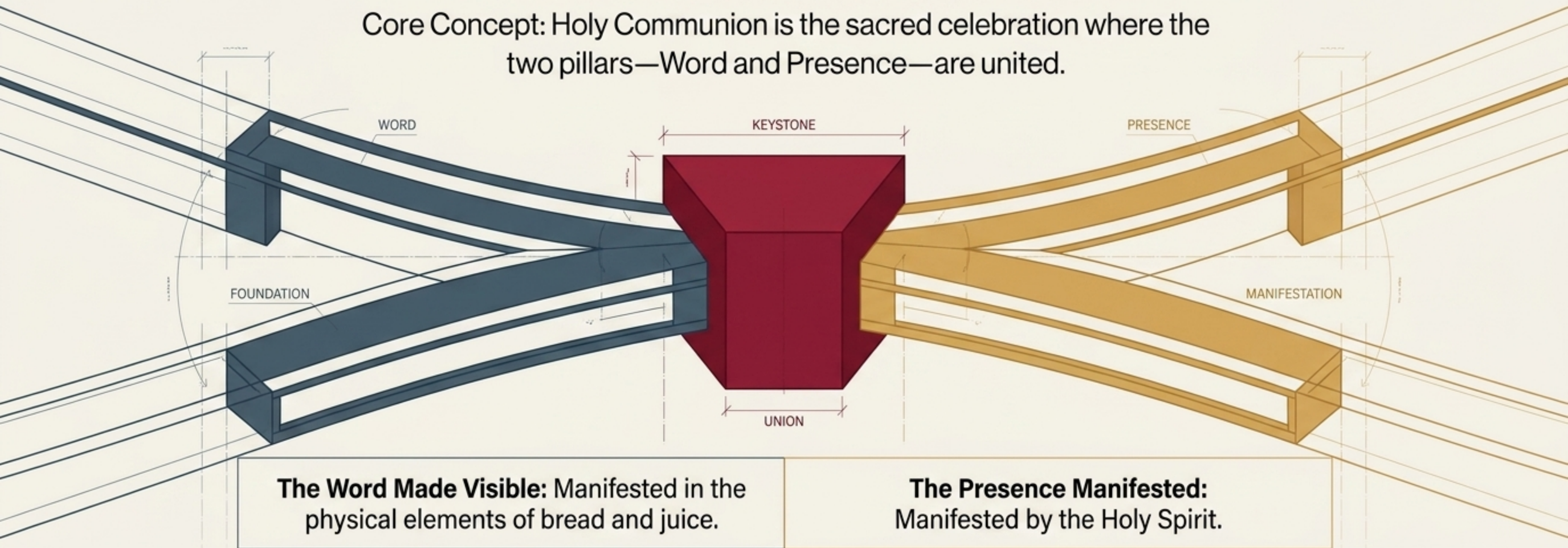


Empowered Service
stepping up with expectation of the Spirit's power

- Sign 1:** Do the people love God's word?
- Sign 2:** Do the people love God's presence?

The Mystery of Holy Communion

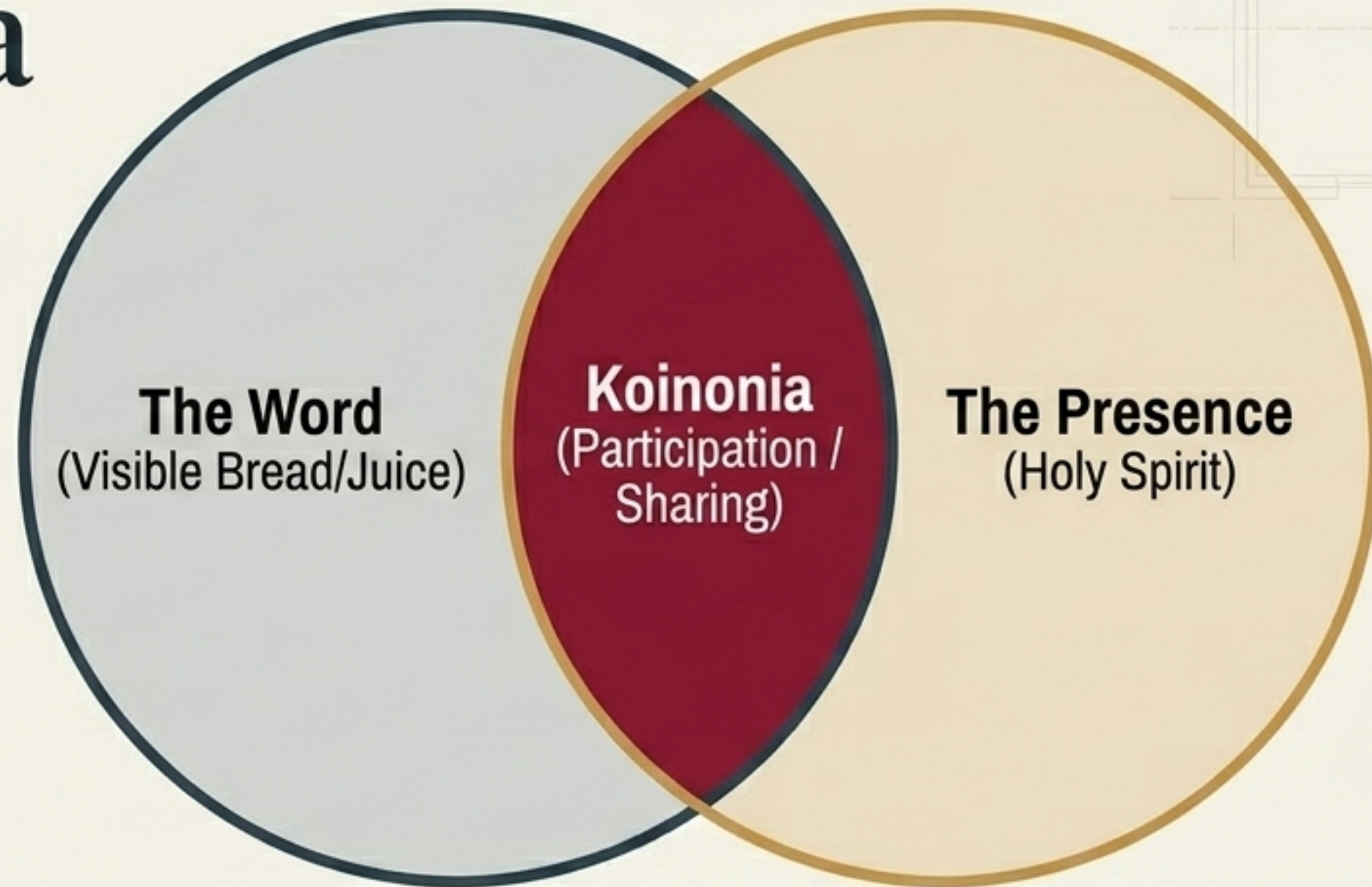
Core Concept: Holy Communion is the sacred celebration where the two pillars—Word and Presence—are united.



Key Insight:

Communion is far more than a simple memorial of Christ's sacrificial death; it is the moment these two foundational elements lock together.

The Anatomy of Koinonia



1 Corinthians 10:16: 'The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing (koinonia) in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?'

Feasting on Christ

The nearest communion with Christ that we have ever known... as close as one gets to heaven in this world.

— **Charles Spurgeon**

Christ's body and blood are really present in the consecrated wine and bread of the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper... **The one who participates worthily...** truly is **feasting** upon Christ and his benefits. This is more than a mere remembrance of Christ; Christ is **active, giving himself** to us in an intimate way in this Sacrament.

— **Theologian Gavin Ortlund**

Christ's physical body remains in heaven,
but his presence is with us by the Holy Spirit.

The Completed Blueprint

What qualifies us as the body of Christ? The signs of a true church are clear, spanning from the assembly at Mount Sinai to the New Covenant table.



Sign 1: A true church loves God's Word.
The structural foundation



Sign 2: A true church loves God's Presence.
The spiritual lifeblood



Sign 3: A true church loves feasting on the spiritual food of the most sacred body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
The unifying mystery