

COMMUNAL LIVING MODEL IN ACTS 4:32–37: A BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO FOOD INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the communal living model in Acts 4:32–37 as a biblical response to food insecurity in Nigeria. Intercultural hermeneutics is the primary method. Structured written interviews with twenty church leaders supplement the analysis. Two theoretical frameworks guide the study. These are the Durkheimian theory of collective consciousness and the Malthusian theory of population and food supply. Critical exegesis of the Greek text yields five transferable principles. These are spiritual unity, voluntary redistribution, kerygmatic witness through welfare, needs-based distribution, and exemplary generosity. Over 100 million Nigerians faced food insecurity by the first quarter of 2024 (Onwe et al., 2024). Findings reveal that ten of the twenty respondents identified greed and selfishness as the primary barrier to communal practice. Findings further reveal that nine respondents affirmed that communal sharing reduces poverty and hunger among the most vulnerable members of the church community. Respondents also spontaneously named Barnabas as the paradigm of Spirit-empowered generosity. Renewed communal consciousness anchored in the Holy Spirit is both biblically mandated and culturally resonant.

KEYWORDS: communal living, Acts 4:32–37, food insecurity, population pressure, Barnabas model, and Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria stands at a critical juncture of demographic and nutritional crisis. Its population exceeded 220 million by 2023. Yet food production has not kept pace. Over 26.5 million citizens faced acute food insecurity in the 2024 lean season (Ajetunmobi, 2024; Onwe et al., 2024). The nation is richly endowed with arable land and human capital. Yet over 100 million of its people went hungry by early 2024.

Nigeria is among the most Christianised nations in Africa. The church commands massive social capital and moral authority. Yet that authority has not produced the radical communal care of the primitive church. This gap is the animating concern of this study. The central question is pastoral, theological, and sociological. Does the communal model of Acts 4:32–37 offer a transferable biblical response to food insecurity in Nigeria?

The thesis is straightforward. The Jerusalem model of one heart and one soul is not first-century utopianism. It is a Spirit-given paradigm with urgent relevance for Nigeria today. Section 2 presents the theoretical framework. Section 3 situates the study in the Nigerian context. Section 4 conducts a critical exegesis of Acts 4:32–37. Section 5 presents the research methodology and empirical findings. Section 6 synthesises the biblical response by drawing together both streams of evidence. Section 7 draws theological and practical implications. Section 8 presents the conclusion and recommendations.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Durkheim's Theory of Collective Consciousness

Durkheim (1984) proposed that societies are held together by shared moral values, which he called the conscience collective. This generates solidarity and motivates members to act for the common good. This framework illuminates Acts 4:32–37 with force. The community was *καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία*, of one heart and one soul. Shared conviction in the resurrection bound them together. Shared experience of the Holy Spirit deepened that bond. Shared commitment to every member's welfare is expressed materially.

Onwuatuegwu (2023) confirms that Igbo communalism rests on the same principle. Personhood is constituted by relationships rather than by isolated individuality. Durkheim's framework also diagnoses failure. Denominational rivalry, ethnic fragmentation, and pastoral greed represent collective consciousness in decay. Respondents in this study confirmed this precisely. They named greed, hypocrisy, and individualism as the primary barriers to communal sharing. The restoration of collective consciousness requires a genuine outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Malthusian Theory of Population and Food Supply

Malthus (1798) argued that population grows geometrically while food production grows arithmetically. This dynamic produces famine and social conflict if unchecked. Onwe et al (2024) confirm that population growth exerts a significant long-run negative effect on food security in Nigeria. Anyanwu (2020) applied this framework to Acts 6:1–6, demonstrating that population pressure on finite resources generated the politics of early church food distribution.

The Acts 4 model constitutes an anti-Malthusian claim. When a community is governed by voluntary redistribution, population growth need not produce a lack. Luke's climactic declaration states this plainly. There was not a needy person among them (v. 34). Spirit-driven communalism can close the gap between population and provision. Historical realism qualifies this claim. Even the Jerusalem church required financial relief within a generation (Witherington, 1998). The call is therefore not to replicate the Jerusalem experiment mechanically. It is to recover its animating principles and apply them contextually in Nigeria.

THE NIGERIAN CONTEXT

The Scale of the Crisis

Food-insecure Nigerians rose from 66.2 million to over 100 million by the first quarter of 2024. Food inflation reached 40.01 percent in March 2024, the highest on record (Akpogheli et al., 2024). Nigeria ranked 107th out of 113 countries on the Global Food Security Index in 2022. Oderinde et al. (2022) document a convergence of climate change, economic volatility, and conflict that has eroded all four pillars of food security. Children, women, and the elderly bear the heaviest burden (Ajetunmbi, 2024). One respondent confirmed the Malthusian dynamic at the community level. She observed that land is not increasing, but population is (Respondent 9, personal communication, February 26, 2026). The church is positioned to respond in ways that government cannot replicate.

Nigeria's Communal Heritage

Nigeria carries a deep indigenous communal heritage. The Igbo philosophy of Igwebuiké holds that personhood is essentially communal (Onwuatuegwu, 2023). The concept of *Idinatu* means living together in unity. It is embedded in Igbo cosmology and expressed through the *Umunna* and *Umuada*. The principle of *nriko bu isi mmeko* affirms that eating together from one dish is the foundation of trust and love. Ayika (2019) documents cooperative labour and mutual aid networks as indigenous expressions of *κατα χρείαν*. Ugwu and Asuquo (2022) confirm that this communalism is threatened by modern individualism but not extinguished. Elomien Ofure et al (2024) demonstrate that Nigerian faith-based organisations are already significant welfare agents. What they need is a theological grounding and organisational investment to sustain that work.

CRITICAL EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF ACTS 4:32–37

The Greek Text

The Greek text of Acts 4:31-37 reads as follows:

³¹ καὶ δεηθέντων αὐτῶν ἐσαλεύθη ὁ τόπος ἐν ᾧ ἦσαν συνηγμένοι, καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν ἅπαντες τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος καὶ ἐλάλουν τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ μετὰ παρρησίας.

³² Τοῦ δὲ πλήθους τῶν πιστευσάντων ἦν καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία, καὶ οὐδὲ εἷς τι τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτῷ ἔλεγεν ἴδιον εἶναι ἀλλ' ἦν αὐτοῖς ἅπαντα κοινά.

³³ καὶ δυνάμει μεγάλῃ ἀπεδίδουν τὸ μαρτύριον οἱ ἀπόστολοι τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, χάρις τε μεγάλη ἦν ἐπὶ πάντας αὐτούς.

³⁴ οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐνδεής τις ἦν ἐν αὐτοῖς· ὅσοι γὰρ κτήτορες χωρίων ἢ οἰκιῶν ὑπῆρχον, πωλοῦντες ἔφερον τὰς τιμὰς τῶν πιπρασκομένων

³⁵ καὶ ἐτίθουν παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τῶν ἀποστόλων, διεδίδετο δὲ ἐκάστῳ καθότι ἂν τις χρείαν εἶχεν.

³⁶ Ἰωσήφ δὲ ὁ ἐπικληθεὶς Βαρναβᾶς ἀπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων, ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνεύμενον υἱὸς παρακλήσεως, Λευίτης, Κύπριος τῷ γένει,

³⁷ ὑπάρχοντος αὐτῷ ἀγροῦ πωλήσας ἤνεγκεν τὸ χρῆμα καὶ ἔθηκεν πρὸς τοὺς πόδας τῶν ἀποστόλων (Act 4:31-1 BGT).

The English translation from the *Revised Standard Version* reads: Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed were his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power, the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made to each as any had need. Thus Joseph, who was surnamed by the apostles Barnabas, which means 'Son of encouragement', a Levite, a native of Cyprus, sold a field which belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet (Acts 4:32–37, RSV).

The literary context of this passage is essential for its interpretation. It is preceded by the corporate prayer for boldness in Acts 4:23–30, a prayer answered by the divine shaking of the place where they were assembled (v. 31). It is followed by the sobering narrative of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1–11. Luke frames the communal ideal with prayer on one side and moral testing on the other, making clear that communal living is not a sociological default. It is a Spirit-enabled achievement that remains vulnerable to the corrosion of deceit and greed.

Witherington (1998) characterises this passage as a programmatic, idealised portrait of the primitive Jerusalem church. Luke has already provided a related summary in Acts 2:42–47, focusing on the spiritual and liturgical dimensions of communal life. Acts 4:32–37 deepens it by adding the economic and material dimensions. Together, the two summaries establish that the apostolic community was constituted by both worship and welfare.

Corporate Character (v. 32)

Verse 32 opens with *τοῦ δὲ πλήθους τῶν πιστευσάντων*, meaning the multitude of those who believed. Luke is describing the corporate whole, not an inner circle. The heart of the verse is *καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία*, one heart and one soul. This repurposes the Greek ideal of friendship in which true friends share one soul. Luke applies it to a Spirit-wrought unanimity penetrating will, affection, and disposition. Not one person claimed that any of his possessions was his own. The key word is *ἴδιον*, denoting absolute private ownership. The believers did not abolish ownership. They voluntarily relativised it. The result, that all things were held in common, derives from the root *κοινά*, from which *koinonia* is formed. This unity was not merely emotional. It expressed itself concretely in the sharing of material goods among the believing community.

Kerygmatic Through Welfare (v. 33)

Verse 33 establishes the link between community integrity and apostolic witness. With great power, the apostles gave testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Luke places this proclamation within the same literary unit as the community's radical economic sharing, preventing food insecurity. The visible unity and welfare of the believers were themselves a form of testimony. Keener (2012) argues that the great grace upon the community attracted goodwill from the broader populace. A community

in which believers helped one another, and none was left in need, proclaimed the resurrection by its social practice.

Compassionate Care (vv. 34–35)

Verses 34–35 constitute the theological and economic core of the passage. There was not a needy person among them. The word *ἐνδεής*, meaning the destitute, echoes Deuteronomy 15:4. Luke presents the early church as the community in which that ancient covenant promise is at last fulfilled. Property owners sold surplus fields and houses and brought the proceeds to the apostles. Walvoord and Zuck (1983) note that the action was voluntary. The participle *πωλοῦντες* with the imperfect *ἔφερον* indicates ongoing practice, not compulsory liquidation. Distribution was made to each according to genuine need. The criterion is *ἔφερον*, real need, not arithmetic equality. Believers who had more consistently shared with those who had less. This continuous, needs-driven giving among community members was the engine of their material transformation.

The Barnabas Paradigm (vv. 36–37)

Luke anchors the communal ideal in a specific named individual. Joseph was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles, meaning Son of Encouragement. He was a Levite and a native of Cyprus. As a Levite, he had no land inheritance under the old covenant (Deuteronomy 18:1–2). Yet here he owns and voluntarily sells a field. The new covenant has transformed old categories of obligation and provision. His name *υἱὸς παρακλήσεως* shares the same root as the *Paraclete* of John 14:16. Barnabas embodies in human form the encouragement the Spirit provides. His contrast with Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5:1–11 is decisive. The covenant community depends on the credibility of exemplary givers. Deception destroys that credibility (Vickers, 2023). Barnabas stands in the text as the paradigm of a believer who gave tangibly and transparently for the good of his fellow community members.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Research Design and Instrument

This study adopted a qualitative research design grounded in the interpretive paradigm. The empirical component employed a structured written interview instrument. The research team from the Department of Religious Studies, Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education, Owerri, designed and administered it on February 26, 2026. The instrument contained five structured open-ended questions. These addressed the replicability of the Acts 4 model, current church welfare practices, the effect of population size on food sharing, the main barriers to practising Acts 4, and the anticipated benefits of the model. Respondents were assured of confidentiality. Purposive sampling selected twenty respondents from multiple denominations across Imo and Abia States (Patton, 2002). The sample represented Pentecostal, Anglican, Catholic, Baptist, Assemblies of God, and independent charismatic traditions. Written responses were subjected to logical analysis of raw data. Recurring themes were identified, categorised, and interpreted in relation to the theoretical and exegetical framework.

Can the Acts 4 Model Work in Nigeria?

Most respondents answered in the negative. Their reasons were diagnostically instructive. Dominant barriers included denominational fragmentation, greed, ethnic division, and doctrinal rivalry. Evangelist Ebere Okere stated that there is no perfect love but greed among Christians, and no unity or sincerity. Udosen Ufon Joshua observed that the proliferation of churches with differing doctrines makes full replication unrealistic. A minority expressed conditional optimism. Ven. Dr. Emma C. Agoha, Archdeacon of the Anglican Church, identified the precise spiritual condition. He affirmed that the model could work if the Holy Spirit truly dwells in the community. He added that it is too difficult if the spirit of selfishness and individualism prevails (personal communication, February 26, 2026). This aligns directly with the exegetical finding. The Acts 4 communal economy was a Spirit-wrought reality, not a sociological strategy.

Current Church Welfare Practices

Despite widespread pessimism, Nigerian churches already practise partial expressions of the Acts 4 model. Pastor Nwaoha Chimaroke of Charismatic Renewal Ministries reported a welfare scheme every second Sunday. Ven. Dr. Agoha reported feeding the hungry once a month (personal communication, February 26, 2026). J. C. Amajuoyi of Blessed Tansi Parish described the Saint Vincent de Paul Society. It gathers resources weekly and shares them across denominational boundaries. Evangelist Ikechukwu Isaac reported feeding programmes, orphanages, and community social initiatives. These findings confirm Elomien Ofure et al. (2024), who found that Nigerian faith-based organisations are active welfare agents when adequately resourced. The gap between what exists and what Acts 4 envisions is measurable. The Acts 4 model operated continuously. The imperfect *ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν* implies ongoing responsiveness. What Nigerian churches practise is episodic and calendar-driven.

Population Growth and Food Sharing Capacity

On population size and food sharing capacity, respondents were nearly unanimous. Larger populations make equitable distribution harder. Ven. Dr. Agoha observed that population increase makes greater demands on available food supply (personal communication, February 26, 2026). Dr. Grace Kokey of the Assemblies of God noted that smaller numbers are better for sharing. She added that insecurity and greed compound the difficulty further. One respondent confirmed the Malthusian dynamic at the community level. He stated that land is not increasing, but population is. He called for urban and rural planning to preserve farming space (Respondent 9, personal communication, February 26, 2026).

Barriers to Practice

The most frequently cited barriers were greed and selfishness, named by ten of the twenty respondents. Lack of genuine love and trust was named by eight respondents. Denominational divisions were named by seven respondents. Ethnic tribalism was named by five respondents. Ven. Dr. Agoha identified the barrier at its deepest level. He cited a lack of genuine faith and love for the gospel, alongside hypocrisy and greed

(personal communication, February 26, 2026). One respondent named the structural inversion precisely. Individual pastors choose to invest in structures rather than in human beings. The prosperity gospel has inverted the Acts 4 model. Resources flow upward toward leadership rather than downward toward the needy.

Anticipated Benefits

Respondents were markedly more positive on anticipated benefits. Fostering love and unity was named by twelve respondents. Reducing poverty and hunger was named by nine respondents. Strengthening witness and evangelism was named by eight respondents. Restoring hope to the vulnerable was named by six respondents. Reducing sickness borne of malnutrition was named by five respondents. Evangelist Ikechukwu Isaac affirmed that the model strengthens community bonds, reduces poverty, and promotes spiritual growth. Ven. Dr. Agoha named Barnabas as the paradigm of how communal living encourages the needy (personal communication, February 26, 2026). Respondents recognised his instructive power without prompting.

THE BIBLICAL RESPONSE TO FOOD INSECURITY IN ACTS 4:32–37

The exegetical analysis in Section 4 and the empirical findings in Section 5 converge here. What the Greek text prescribes, the field data confirms as partially present or diagnoses as absent. This section draws both streams together into five interconnected principles that constitute the biblical response to food insecurity as articulated in Acts 4:32–37.

Spiritual Unity as the Foundation of Material Sharing

Acts 4:32 establishes material sharing on a prior spiritual foundation. Before describing any economic transaction, Luke declares the community's unity. The community was *καρδία καὶ ψυχὴ μία*, of one heart and one soul. Unity of heart preceded the sharing of resources. The Holy Spirit, who filled the community in verse 31, generated the economic solidarity of verses 32–35. Without Pentecost, Acts 4 is structurally impossible. In that community, every believer cared actively for every other believer. No one withheld from a brother or sister in genuine need. The sharing was not incidental. It was the natural outflow of hearts knit together by the Spirit. Ven. Dr. Agoha confirmed this from pastoral experience. He observed that the model works only if the Holy Spirit truly dwells in the community (personal communication, February 26, 2026). The elimination of food insecurity in Jerusalem was a spiritual consequence. Material transformation followed a genuine encounter with the risen Christ.

Voluntary Redistribution of Surplus Resources

Verse 32 records that no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own. Verse 34 specifies the mechanism. Property owners sold surplus lands and houses and brought the proceeds to the apostles. The key word is *ἴδιον*, denoting absolute private ownership. What the community relativised was not property as such but that absolute claim. Walvoord and Zuck (1983) rightly note that this describes voluntary generosity, not compulsory communalisation. The ongoing imperfect tense *ἔφερον* confirms an enduring disposition rather than a single coerced act. Believers helped one another

repeatedly, willingly, and without external compulsion. This voluntary character distinguishes the Acts 4 model from government welfare schemes. It flows from transformed hearts. Ten respondents named greed as the primary barrier. One identified the structural inversion precisely. Pastoral greed redirects resources into structures rather than into people. When *ἰδιον* possessiveness prevails in the Nigerian church, the voluntary *ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν* bringing of resources permanently ceases, and the vulnerable are abandoned.

Kerygmatic Witness Through Welfare

Verse 33 places the apostolic testimony to the resurrection within the same literary unit as the economic sharing of verses 34–35. Luke presents communal care for the poor as inseparable from the proclamation of the risen Christ. The visible unity and welfare of the believers were themselves a form of witness. Every act of sharing between community members was, simultaneously, a declaration that Christ is Lord. Keener (2012) confirms that the great grace upon the community attracted goodwill from the broader populace, facilitating further mission. A community that eliminates hunger among its members enacts the resurrection. Eight respondents identified strengthening witness and evangelism as an anticipated benefit. Evangelist Ikechukwu Isaac affirmed that the model strengthens community bonds, reduces poverty, and promotes spiritual growth. Nigerian church leaders understand that when believers help one another materially, the evangelistic witness of the church is amplified.

Needs-Based Distribution as the Standard of Justice

Verse 35 specifies that distribution was made to each as any had need. The operative term is *χρεῖαν*, genuine need. The criterion is not equal arithmetical division. This is equity, not egalitarianism. The covenant community's obligation is to ensure that every member's genuine need is met. Luke reinforces this by echoing Deuteronomy 15:4, affirming that there should be no poor among the covenant people. The standard is the elimination of lack, not the arithmetic redistribution of surplus. In the Jerusalem community, believers assessed one another's needs and responded continuously. No believer waited until a scheduled welfare day. The empirical findings measure the gap between this standard and current practice. Ven. Dr. Agocha reported monthly feeding. Pastor Nwaoha reported every second Sunday. These are genuine expressions of the kata *χρεῖαν* impulse. But the text's standard is the elimination of lack. The challenge is to move from calendar-driven schedules to continuous needs assessment and responsive, person-to-person welfare within the congregation.

Exemplary Generosity as Community Catalyst

Having described the community's sharing generally, Luke grounds the communal ideal in a specific named person. Joseph was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles, meaning Son of Encouragement. This narrative movement from the general to the specific is deliberate. Luke understands that communal transformation requires exemplary persons. Their concrete, public, named acts of generosity catalyse broader participation. Barnabas crossed ethnic and geographic boundaries as a diaspora Cypriot giving within a Jerusalem community. His apostolically bestowed name identifies his generosity as an

expression of the Spirit's own encouragement. He gave to his community members without reservation or deception. His contrast with Ananias and Sapphira is decisive. Deception destroys the credibility of the covenant community (Vickers, 2023). Ven. Dr. Agoha named Barnabas as the paradigm of how communal living encourages the needy (personal communication, February 26, 2026). His instructive force remains alive in the contemporary African church.

These five principles are mutually reinforcing, not sequential steps. Spiritual unity makes voluntary redistribution possible. Voluntary redistribution enacts the kerygmatic witness. Kerygmatic witness is made credible by needs-based distribution among believers. Needs-based distribution is catalysed by Barnabas figures. Respondents identified the absence of Spirit-wrought unity as the foundational barrier, greed as the inversion of voluntary redistribution, and welfare between believers as the amplifier of evangelism. They described welfare practices that are genuine but episodic rather than needs-driven, and named Barnabas as the catalyst the Nigerian church needs. The biblical response to food insecurity is not a programme to be implemented. It is a community life to be recovered.

THEOLOGICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The Church as Agent of Communal Transformation

The evidence of this study confirms the Nigerian church as an indispensable agent of communal transformation. Ede (2020) documents that Nigerian churches provide food aid, shelter, medical services, and educational support to millions, often filling the vacuum left by ineffective government programmes. However, this contribution remains reactive and episodic. The Acts 4 model calls the church to intentional and systematic engagement with poverty. The most frequently cited barrier was not poverty of resources but greed. Greed is a spiritual failure, not a material one. The recovery of the Acts 4 model, therefore, requires the same outpouring of the Holy Spirit that preceded the communal transformation in Acts 4:31–32.

The Spirit of Barnabas and Nigeria's Communal Heritage

Nigeria needs Barnabas figures. These are wealthy members who voluntarily deploy private wealth for community empowerment. The contrast between Barnabas, Ananias, and Sapphira constitutes a biblical indictment of the corrupt diversion of social resources. Funds diverted from the poor are sins against the covenant community and affronts to the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16–17). The convergence between the Acts 4 model and the Igbo communal heritage is not coincidental. Onwuatuegwu (2023) argues that communalism is embedded in Igbo cosmology. In traditional Igbo society, wealth was a communal resource to be deployed for the welfare of the kindred. This is the indigenous African expression of *κατα χρείαν*. The church's task is to renew these cultural mechanisms through the theological lens of covenant community and Spirit-empowered generosity.

Structural Accountability and Food Security

The Acts 4 model also demands structural accountability. Resources passed through the apostles' feet. This is a concrete image of transparent pastoral stewardship. The Nigerian church needs contemporary equivalents. These include welfare committees with clear terms of reference and documented disbursement processes. Regular reporting to the congregation must accompany these structures. Lack of trust and accountability was identified by respondents as a key institutional barrier alongside greed. Organisational reform must accompany spiritual renewal. Oderinde et al (2022) argue that equitable food distribution requires community-level engagement. Nigerian churches in rural and peri-urban contexts are positioned to become centres of communal food production and distribution when theological conviction and organisational investment are both in place.

CONCLUSION

This paper has examined the communal living model of Acts 4:32–37 as a biblical response to food insecurity in Nigeria. The exegetical analysis demonstrates that the Jerusalem church developed a community of one heart and one soul under the impulsion of the Holy Spirit. Material resources were shared voluntarily among believers, distributed according to genuine need, and stewarded with transparent integrity. Five transferable principles constitute the biblical response. These are spiritual unity, voluntary redistribution among community members, kerygmatic witness through welfare, needs-based distribution, and the Barnabas model of exemplary generosity. With over 100 million food-insecure citizens and a population growing faster than food production, Nigeria needs the communal solidarity that Acts 4 describes.

The empirical findings from twenty church leaders confirm both the appeal and the difficulty of the model. Barriers include lack of genuine faith, greed, hypocrisy, denominational fragmentation, and pastoral self-interest. The anticipated benefits are equally real. They include unity, welfare provision, evangelistic witness, and restored hope for the vulnerable. Five recommendations follow.

First, Nigerian churches must develop systematic year-round welfare structures modelled on the Acts 4 needs-based distribution principle. Every local church should establish a welfare committee with transparent disbursement criteria and documented processes. Second, denominational bodies should prioritise cross-denominational food solidarity initiatives. Ecumenical welfare cooperation is both biblically mandated and practically feasible. The Saint Vincent de Paul Society model demonstrates this. Third, the Nigerian church must recover its communal heritage as a theological resource. The Igbo concepts of *Idinatu*, *Ubuntu*, and *nriko bu isi mmeko* are indigenous expressions of values that Acts 4 affirms. Preachers should draw explicit connections between biblical *koinonia* and African communal philosophy. Fourth, wealthy Nigerian church members must be pastorally challenged to embrace the spirit of Barnabas. Voluntary deployment of private wealth for community empowerment is a Spirit-led obligation of covenant membership. Fifth, theological institutions must equip future ministers with exegetical tools to teach Acts 4 rigorously. They must also equip them with the practical skills to design and administer community welfare systems.

The communal living model of Acts 4:32–37 is not a primitive relic. It is a Spirit-empowered vision of what human community looks like when the risen Christ is truly Lord. Nigeria's food crisis is ultimately a crisis of communal consciousness. Its remedy is a renewal of communal conscience. The Holy Spirit, who shook the place where the disciples prayed, can shake the foundations of Nigerian individualism. In his wake, there will not be one who lacks.

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