

## Grow Series: Community

### Welcome Question

“What is Community?”

**Recap From Last Week** *Only use this section if teaching as part of the series.*

This is our fourth week of our Grow Series, where we learn how to grow as a follower of Jesus. We’ve talked about worship, the Lord’s Supper and last week we talked about Baptism. Baptism is a very important act of obedience for a believer of Jesus Christ. It is a visual picture, or symbol, of person’s relationship with Christ by going through his death (going under the water) and his resurrection (being pulled out of the water). It shows others that our old way of life is gone and now we are a new creation in Christ. Can anyone say the memory verse from last week? *(let a few kids try to recite it)* “If anyone belongs to Christ, then he is made new. The old things have gone; everything is made new!” 2 Corinthians 5:17.

### Large Group Lesson

This week we are talking about community! Today our welcome question asked, “What is Community?” *(Go over the answers written)* Sometimes we hear the word community and think of it in terms of the place we live. Today we’re going to talk about the church being a community of believers.

### What is the Church?

Before we talk about community we need to talk about the church. What is the church? *(allow kids to answer)*. The church isn’t just a building...What is our building? *(for us its as school building, but if you meet in a regular church building explain that people make the church)*It’s a school, not a church building. But we meet here to “have” church. The truth is, people are the church. The church is a community of people that follow Jesus. We come together every week to help one another live like Jesus. Let’s watch this short video about the church:

**What is the Church? Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rms6KePjIZ8>

The point of the church is to help one another live like Jesus. Our mission is to to live like Jesus and put others first. Matthew 22:37-40 says, “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*”

That's exactly what the people in the early church, the very first churches after Jesus came, were doing. They were loving Jesus and loving others. Let's read what they did in Acts 4:32-37.

*32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. 33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. 34 There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold 35 and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need. 36 Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus, 37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.*

There was not a needy person among them...wow. Does it sound like the church is doing there job today? Not always. There are lots of needy people out there that the church sometimes misses. As followers of Jesus we have to be on the lookout to help those in need. That's why we need community!

### **Why do we need community?**

What is the mission of our church? (*state your church's "mission"*). That sounds just like the mission of the early church--to love Jesus and love others.

Community is sharing a common life in Jesus--sharing the things we do every day! It's making a choice to do life together as people of God. We saw in Acts how good that was for the church. Let's look at another passage in Acts 2: 42-47.

*42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

Breaking bread? What does that mean? They were eating dinner together! They were talking about life. They loved one another and cared for each other. The New Testament talks a lot about the "others": love one another, forgive each other, teach each other, pray for each other, encourage each other, be friends with each other. That list could go on and

on. But is about one thing: OTHERS. Not Yourself or me. Community is about other people. It's about caring, thinking about and loving other people.

From the very, very, very beginning when God created the World, was Adam just all alone? Nope. He created Eve, because God didn't want Him all alone. God doesn't want any of us all alone. In fact, Jesus even had His own community. Who were they? The disciples.

Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12 says, "*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. 10 For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!*" We need one another. God designed us that way. That's why we need community, to help us live like Jesus and love others. Community helps us grow and be more like Jesus.

### **What do we do with community?**

There's one more part of community we need to go back to, helping the needy. The mission of our church is "to be a community of people loving our city because of the person of Jesus Christ". We've got community of people and we've got Jesus, but we need to "love our city". We can love our city in lots of ways and our church does, but there is a very real way that we, as a KidMin community, can love our city.

*Below is the activity we used for our service project (provide toiletries for hygiene packs), but feel free to do another community outreach activity.*

Does anyone know about the (*insert Outreach Group Name*)? It's a place where people in need come to get food. They don't have money to get food, so they can go to (*Name of place*) and get it for free. They need small toiletries (shampoo, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, etc.) to put in packs to give to people. They also need gently used coats and brand new blankets since the weather is getting colder. This is a very important and real way we can be a community and help others in need. Today we'll send you home with a flyer to start collecting these items. There might even be a prize for the grade that brings the most!

### **Conclusion**

We are very blessed to have a church and a community of Christ followers that love Jesus and want to be more like him. We need to be in community with other people to help us grow and learn more about who Jesus is and how He wants us to live.

**Close in prayer.**

## Community: Small Group Questions

### Discussion:

Introduce yourself and learn the kids names. Then use the following questions to lead a discussion.

- What is the church? *A group of people who love Jesus and want to live like Him.*
- What did the early church do? *They met together and helped one another. No one was needy among them.*
- What is community? *A group of people who help each other live like Jesus and love others.*
- Why do we need community? *It's how God designed us*
- When did God decide we needed community? *At Creation, when he didn't want Adam to be alone.*
- Did Jesus have community? With who? *Yes, with the disciples.*
- How do we live life in community? *We do life together: meals, prayer, caring, encouraging.*
- How can we have more community in KidMin?
- How can our community help our city?
- What's the mission of our Church? *(insert your church's mission here)*

### Bible Challenge:

**This week's Memory Verse:** *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* Matthew 22:37-40

**Last Week's Verse:** *"If anyone belongs to Christ, then he is made new. The old things have gone; everything is made new!"* 2 Corinthians 5:17

Ask if anyone remembers the first from last week. Give each child (who wants to) a chance to say it. Go over the verse for this week. Practice it together several times. After your group has practiced the verse, each group (grade) will decorate a box to collect supplies for the collection drive. We will provide markers, scissors, tape, and other supplies for the group to begin the collection drive to help the people in our city.

**Prayer:** Get the kids to each put a hand on the box. Allow them to take turns praying for the people who need the items they will collect. Pray that they will know Jesus and what He did on the cross for them. Pray that they will collect all they need to help these people.