

July Development Guide

SUBJECT: CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY



We were created to have **connection** and **community**.

The enemy wants us to be isolated and alone. If he can isolate us, he can disconnect us from God and others.

But God said in **Genesis 2:18**, *"It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."*

From the beginning of creation, God knew the importance of having community and not being alone.

The Importance of Community

We see the importance of community throughout the Bible.

Acts 2:46-47 – *"Every day they continued to meet together in temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."*

In Acts, we see the early church meeting together for **fellowship** and **worship** in their homes. They not only gathered in the temple, but they had small groups in their homes.

Something special happens when you and a group of people come together and meet on a regular basis. Even Jesus had a community, or should I say, a small group of twelve.

In **Mark 3:13-15** it says, *"Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons."*

Jesus modeled selfless service and challenged His followers to serve one another in a similar fashion (John 13). If Jesus thought community was important, we should too!

What Community Offers

1. A place to **connect**.

Living in community helps you not only to connect with others who are going through similar life experiences but also to better connect with God.

Hebrews 10:24-25 – *"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 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."*

Those who surround themselves with the right people in their lives not only grow and develop spiritually but also have better mental and physical health.

2. A place for **care**.

Being a part of community means that people do not just know your name, but care about what is happening in your life and support you in your spiritual journey.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 – *"Two are better than one, because they have good return for their labor: If either of*

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them falls down, one can help the other up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

In the early church, you can see in the Bible how often they ministered and cared for one another:

- Meet together and encourage one another (Hebrews 10:25)
- Encourage each other (1 Thessalonians 4:18)
- Love each other like brothers and sisters (Romans 12:10)
- Care the same for each other (1 Corinthians 12:25)
- Pray for each other (James 5:16)
- Serve each other with love (Galatians 5:13)
- Forgive each other (Colossians 3:13)

"We're not here to see through you, but we are here to see you through." – Pastor John Nuzzo

Living in a community is how people can see you through your struggles, failures, and disappointments.

3. **A place to grow.**

Proverbs 27:17 says, *"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."*

Community helps us grow in three ways:

1. Being a part of a community provides us with accountability and encouragement.
2. Helps us discover our God-given gifts (Ephesians 4:11-13).
3. Reach others and make an impact (Matthew 28:19-20).

Being a part of a community can help you grow with others to become more like Jesus and reach the potential God has placed inside you.

Ways you can find community at Victory:

1. Serve on a Dream Team
2. Serve your Community through Outreach Projects
3. Small Groups

As you read the Bible you will see we were not meant to do life alone. The church will never grow without community. Be a part of a community and invite others to come along, too!

Discussion Questions:

1. Have the past few years caused you to feel distant from others or closer to others than ever before? How so?
2. Of the three areas community provides (connection, care, growth), which do you need the most right now?
3. What is God currently calling you to do to help others find community?