

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the 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.

(Acts 2:42-47)

Making the Case for Community **LESSON 3: A Church of Community**

Leaders in Community

Neglecting the care of those for whom you are responsible is unacceptable – *Jeremiah 23:1-2*

Everyone needs connection, but no one person can connect with everyone. Not even Moses – *Exodus 18:14-22* – or the twelve apostles – *Acts 6:1-4* – or Paul – *Titus 1:5*

Responsibility for care should be distributed in order to make it manageable. Like Moses and his leaders, no one should be expected to care for more than ten people for any length of time. We call this “Span of Care.”

Individuals in Community

While leaders in the church are responsible to provide care, all those under their care have specific, God-given roles as well – *I Corinthians 12:12-27*

But these distinct roles must come together in order for the whole body to function – *Ephesians 4:3-7, 11-16*

These two passages emphasize two important dynamics of community – the role of each member and the importance of the relationships between them.

The Case for Community: The Verdict

God is a God of community.

The nature of the Trinity and the ministry of Jesus are the perfect models of community.

We are a people of community.

God designed man for community, and through community, we can receive strength, wisdom, accountability, and acceptance.

The church requires community to function properly.

Even the greatest leaders in the Bible couldn't go it alone. God desires us to share our burdens and find our place of service within the body of believers.

DISCUSSION:

Share an example where you have seen “Span of Care” violated and the results.

Do you agree with the 20-80 rule (20% of the people do 80% of the work)? Why or why not?

Do you feel empowered to serve in the church? If so, explain. If not, what would help you feel empowered?

Do you think your unsaved friends would appreciate this kind of meeting? Why or why not?