



CONNECT

with

GOD

COMMUNITY

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VIDEO NOTES

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

John 13:34–35

Group: People who have agreed to meet with one another on a regular basis

Community: People who share close relationships through shared experiences

*Churches can create a group by putting people together, but only the people in the group can create **community**.*

The two building blocks of authentic community are:

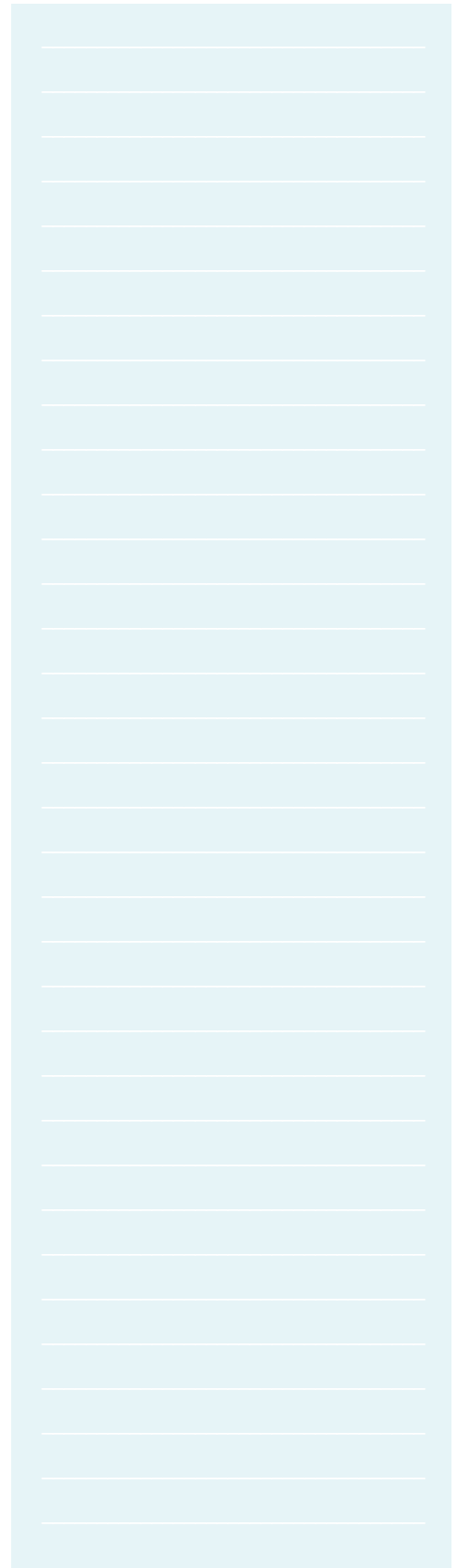
Acceptance

1. Allow others to feel differently than you.
2. Allow their growth journeys to look different than yours.
3. Suspend judgment.
4. Avoid comparisons.

Appreciation

1. Recognize the risks others take.
2. Celebrate change.

*"Acceptance leads to influence."
—Andy Stanley*



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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

If you're in a group, use these questions to have a conversation about how you can grow and deepen your sense of community. If you're not in a group, reflect on these questions to help you work through what it would look like for you to pursue Christian community.

1. What do you think of the idea of community as a spiritual practice? Prior to watching this video, had you viewed community this way?
2. Have you ever been in a community where you felt accepted and appreciated? If so,
 - How did you grow or benefit as a result of that community?
 - What did the members of that community do to make you feel accepted and appreciated?
3. How do you know when to accept someone's current perspective or experiences and when to challenge unhealthy behavior?
4. Do some acts of appreciation or celebration make you uncomfortable or embarrassed?
5. What are some changes you've seen in other members of your group that are worth celebrating?

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CREATE AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY

As you talk about the community you're currently experiencing in group, keep in mind that this isn't about assigning blame. Community is something you create and contribute to as a group. It's not up to the leader to create authentic community on their own. And no individual group member is to blame if there's room for improvement.

To begin with, everyone in the group should take some time to reflect on how accepted and appreciated they feel by the group. Do you feel like your views are welcomed? Do you experience judgment or unhealthy comparisons? Do you feel like you are risking anything by offering divergent feedback to the group? Bring these reflections to the group and talk about ways you can improve connection.

Acceptance and appreciation don't necessarily happen automatically. But you can take action. You can commit to building authentic community together moving forward.

Use the resources at groupleaders.org/community to help you take action:

- If you need to dial up the acceptance in your group, consider starting with one of the assessments provided on the page. It will help you see one another in a new light—and that can build empathy and increase acceptance.
- If you need to increase the appreciation in your group, consider starting with the [Celebrate Change](#) activity found on the page.

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THIS WEEK, THINK ABOUT . . .

As you begin building or growing community with other Jesus followers, take some time over the next week to reflect on these Bible verses:

Day 1

How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe. It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.

Psalms 133

Day 2

"Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Matthew 18:19-20

Day 3

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2:42

Day 4

For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:4-5

Day 5

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Romans 12:6-8

Day 6

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Colossians 3:12-14

Day 7

Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. 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.

Hebrews 10:23-25