

COMMUNITY (LARGE GROUP)

Lesson 2: God designed Community

Objective: To understand the theology and intention of community



TIME: 90-120 minutes

ICEBREAKER: The family game. Depending on the size of your group, you may have to divide the room up into smaller groups of 10-25. It will take too long to do it as a big group of 26-50.

Set up the groups in a big circle. Pass out pieces of paper and pencils. Tell everyone to write on their paper the name of a celebrity or fictional character. Then you put all the pieces in a hat or bucket and assign a reader. The reader will read through the names 1-3 times, and then they are done. Going around the circle to the left of the reader each person gets to guess which of the people in the circle are which celebrity or fictional character. If they guess correctly, that person moves over to sit by them and joins their "family." Once they are in a family, they can help each other strategize and guess again. Each person or family can keep guessing until they get it wrong, and then they move on around the circle! The only person in the family who is guessed after that, is the family leader. The game keeps going until everyone is in one big family!

If time, at the end do a wrap up debriefing of the game. Ask the students how that process was? Ask them about the benefits and challenges of being in a "family" were, etc. Give time for 3-5 different voices to be heard.

LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION:

Time: 15-20 minutes

Supplies: PowerPoint or whiteboard for writing down verses and peoples feedback.

Recap: spend a few minutes asking the students what they remember about last week's talk. You can even have a few small prizes to encourage participation. If they don't hit on them, you can wrap up with a few reminders of the significant points from last week. It's always best to have the students interact and remember first though.

Facilitator can say: Did you know that God Himself created community? Ask if they can guess what you mean by that?

*Share that God is 3 in 1: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is confusing. But still true much like an egg (shell, yoke, white) or a fruit (seed, meat, peel), etc.

*God created people to be different (men, women, different skills) so that they would need each other and work together in community.

*God also gave instructions for how his people were supposed to live in community. The books Leviticus, Deuteronomy, a passage in the books of Acts and much of the New Testament (the back of the Bible) are dedicated to teaching people why and how they are supposed to live in community!

Here are a few passages about God's design for community...

***Have a student read out loud Acts 4:32-35 (if possible have on a PowerPoint too):**

"All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need."

Ask: what did you hear in this passage?

NOTE: when students give answers, practice active listening by repeating back to them what you heard them say. This helps them feel heard, understood, and models healthy interpersonal communication skills for them!

Facilitator wraps up:

So God is community, created community with purpose, and told us how to live in community.

The Bible is filled with thousands of verses that talk about how to deal with conflict, fairness, equality, etc. too.

From the Bible we learn that our communities are healthiest when we put God first, care for others in the way we care for ourselves, and when we participate in caring for others in our community. This could be on our street, in our family, at our school, in our neighborhood, etc.



TESTIMONY:

Time: 15-30 Minutes

Invite a leader or person of faith from your community (or a leader from your group) to come and share their personal testimony of faith and how their experience in your community has gone. This could be a pastor, a single mom, a community leader, a local business owner, etc. Have share the following:

Who are they and what do they do?

How they came to faith?

How they are involved in the community you live in and why?

How have they experienced community in a way that God didn't create to be?

How have they experienced community in a way that God did create it to be?

What is their hope and prayer for your students as they understand the purpose and importance of a healthy, "God centered," community?

QUESTIONS:

Invite the students and leaders to ask the guest questions about their life, work, faith, etc.

PRAY:

Invite a student or leader (or a group of them) to come and pray over the guest! Thank them for coming and sharing.

REFLECTION:

Invite the students to share 1 thing they learned or that stood out to them from the talk tonight. If the group is small, go around the room, but if it is large, have only 3-5 share!

