

THE COMMUNITY OF THE CHURCH

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ 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, ⁴⁷ 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 (NIV)

❖ Why does COMMUNITY matter? Because we NEED each other. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: ¹⁰ If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. ¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? ¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (NIV)

1. I need someone who will BELIEVE in me and help me CHANGE. (Acts 9:17)

Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit."

Acts 9:17 (NIV)

2. I need someone who is an EXAMPLE. (1 Corinthians 11:1)

"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ."

1 Corinthians 11:1 (NIV)

3. Somebody needs ME. (1 Corinthians 12:21-24)

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" ²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment."

1 Corinthians 12:21-24 (NIV)

❖ Why does UNITY matter? Because the WORLD needs us. (John 17:20-23)

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they

also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— ²³ I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.”

John 17:20-23 (NIV)

❖ So where do I practice community and unity? In a GROUP.