

COMMUNITY

Don't Do Life Alone

“Leaning INTO Relationship” | CommUNITY: Don't Do Life Alone

Acts 2:42-47

How do we lean into relationship?

Even though I am introverted, I have learned that I need people in my life. And even though people, at least people like me, are messy, I must be willing to enter into the risk of relationship. How do I do that? I must be willing to give up what is my most valuable resource. That resource is not money because we can always make more money. That resource is TIME. Once spent, we will never recover it. And without time, there is NO RELATIONSHIP.

Luke records the history of the early church and gives a beautiful DESCRIPTION of the early community...

Acts 2:42-47: 42 All the believers **devoted** themselves to the **apostles' teaching**, and to **fellowship**, and to **sharing in meals** (including the Lord's Supper), and to **prayer**.

43 A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous **signs and wonders**. 44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. 45 They sold their property and possessions and **shared the money** with those in need. 46 **They worshiped together** at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— 47 all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

The early church had a clear description of their community.

- Their description: **teaching, fellowship, eating together, prayer, generosity, worship, & God's blessing.**
- = **spiritual life TOGETHER.** → There is no such thing as, “I am the church by myself.”
- **Community requires devotion (time, effort, & vulnerability).**

Hanging out and eating together is **SPIRITUAL!**

- **God has built us for community & relationship.**
 - People are **HUNGRY** for community...belonging.
 - **We find it:** in bars, gangs, kids sports leagues, PTA's, HOA's...why we will fall in w/the “wrong crowd.”
 - **SCIENTIFIC PROOF:** Chemicals released in social and eating situations: Oxytocin, Dopamine, Serotonin, Endorphins, Vasopressin → Your not popping pills...you're popping pizza with people you love.
- **What happens when we hang out and eat together?**→Read article from Parents.com link below.
 1. Eating Together **Encourages Healthier Eating Habits.**
 2. Eating Together **Can Help Prevent Mental Health Disorders.**
 3. Eating Together **May Prevent Adulthood Weight Struggles.**
 4. Eating Together **Can Improve Children's Self-Esteem.**
 5. Eating Together **Can Improve Communication Skills.**
 6. Eating Together **May Help Kids With Bullying.**
 7. Eating Together **Can Supplement Family Therapy.**
- **A church (or a family) is only as strong as the relationships that exist within it.**
- **But...spiritual community includes someone besides “us.”**→**God is the CENTER!**
 - κοινωνία = fellowship/participation/communion/SPIRITUAL COMMUNITY (42)→Not Little League community!
 - κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου / μετελάμβανον τροφῆς = breaking of bread (42) / partaking/taking food/meat (46)

How can we **LEAN IN** to relationship within Mesa?→Be led by the Spirit, comfort one another, & stay on mission...

- **Be devoted!**→Be committed.→Be consistent.→Don't give up!

- **Manage your expectations.** → It may take YEARS...
- **Open your life/circle.** → Be OPEN... & KEEP IT OPEN...
 - **Join a small group!** → Don't find your people, find fellowship. → When you find fellowship, you'll find your people.
 - **Eat together outside the church.** → What is YOUR story? → LISTEN! → Can I pray for you?
 - **Eat together inside the church.** → What is YOUR story? → LISTEN! → Do you have a small group?
 - **Hang out together outside the church.** → What do I enjoy doing? → Invite others.
 - **Hang out together inside the church.** → SLOW DOWN. → Why such a rush? → One deeper conversation?
- **WHY:** We are a COMMUNITY... on a mission.

→ Let's **LEAN IN** to community by hanging out, eating together, and building relationship!

TALK ABOUT IT - Questions to GROW through with family, friends, & myself.

1. Describe a time when I felt most connected to a spiritual community? What were the contorting factors?
2. How does Luke's description of community in Acts 2 challenge my understanding of relationship within the church?
3. Why is hanging out and eating together beneficial both scientifically and spiritually to my life?
4. How can I prioritize meaningful connections and relationships in my already "full" life?
5. **PRAYER:** "Father, help me to be devoted to the kind of relationships that will build genuine community."

QUOTES / SONGS:

- "Friends are people who know you really well and like you anyway." - Greg Tamblyn
- "A good friend will help you move. But best friend will help you move a dead body." - Jim Hayes
- "It is more fun to talk with someone who doesn't use long, difficult words but rather short, easy words like 'What about lunch?'" - Winnie-the-Pooh (A.A. Milne)

ARTICLE:

- "7 Science-Based Benefits of Eating Together as a Family": <https://www.parents.com/recipes/tips/unexpected-benefits-of-eating-together-as-a-family-according-to-science/>

SCRIPTURES: New Living Translation unless otherwise noted.

- "17 A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need." - King Solomon, Proverbs 17:17

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