



THE POWER — OF — CHURCH

Pastors Tim Nalley and Jon Sibug THE POWER OF CHURCH Part 5: The Power of Community

There is a recipient for a powerful church; There is a plan in place, a structure laid out for us, as to what the ingredients are to a church that God wants representing His Name.

[Acts 2.42-47, NLT]

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. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. 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 — 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.

[Acts 2.42, NLT]

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fellowship / koinonia (κοινωνία) = “community”

Two Different Aspects to Koinonia...

- 1. *Koinonia* means Sharing and Participation.**
- 2. *Koinonia* means Intimacy.**

The power of community comes not in a crowd of disconnected lives; it comes through authentic, deep-rooted relationships.

[Genesis 2.18, NIV]

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone..."

[John 17.11, NIV]

I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.

[John 17.20-21, NIV]

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 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."

In Peter's story, like our own lives, we find connection points. He was a part of a lot of pockets of people, but those relationships were limited by culture, by commonalities, and at times, even by competition. He had glimpses of progress but the full potential and power was found in the context of community.

In community, I can be who God created me to be in safety.

The events of Acts 3:

- On the way to The Gathering (to the Temple)
- Peter and John encounter a cripple (a man lame from birth)
- This beggar is expecting only money at the Temple Gate.
- Without skipping a beat, Peter turns to him, extends his hands to him, and in a release of Holy Spirit power, picks him up and heals him.
- The beggar's whole life is transformed. He begins to praise God and joins them in the Temple.
- This beggar went from Spectator to Speaker, from sidelined to the main event, from all eyes averted to all eyes focused in on Him.
- His response: I'm holding on tightly to Peter and John..."I'm clinging to community."

Disclaimer: We're going to identify three results of biblical community, but the measure to which you are able to draw these out is directly related to how much you are willing to invest in your community, your koinonia!

Results of Biblical Community:

1. Help

Sharing support in times of need.

- + calling friends for help moving
- + taking a meal to someone who just had surgery
- + needing a ride to school
- + *For the lame man at the Temple Gate, the request was for money.*

Results of Biblical Community:

2. Healing

Praying with intimacy and vulnerability.

- + sharing your story: "this is what's going on"
- + asking for prayer with specificity
- + most of the time, you don't open up to complete strangers about the status of your marriage, the struggles with your children, or your sense of fulfillment and purpose
- + *The beggar never knew any other life, until Peter spoke out a new reality.*

Results of Biblical Community:

3. Hope

[Proverbs 13.12, NLT]

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a dream fulfilled is a tree of life.

Jointly-contributing to the vision.

- + not only listening to what someone is sharing**
- + speaking the truth in love**
- + provoking thought that otherwise might not have come on its own**
- + having a level of relationship where you connect the dots of importance, where you agree, and where you remind THEM of THEIR OWN vision**

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. How important are patterns and recipes to the final product? How does that apply to the New Testament Church?**
- 2. What are examples of *koinonia* fellowship that you've experienced?**
- 3. If we're made in the image of God, how does the relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit set an example for community for us today?**
- 4. Which character can you relate to the most in the Acts 3 story, and what response do you think God is calling you to do in order to fully experience the power of community?**
- 5. Who are some folks that represent biblical community to you? How would you describe your level of vulnerability?**
- 6. What do you feel you need the most in this season: help, healing, or hope?**