

[Week 1 – Welcome back, Community \(Relationships\), Kinship's purpose](#)



Leader's Note

By yourself you're unprotected.
With a friend you can face the worst.
Can you round up a third?
A three-stranded rope isn't easily snapped.
Ecclesiastes 4:12

They followed a daily discipline of worship in the Temple followed by meals at home, every meal a celebration, exuberant and joyful, as they praised God...every day their number grew as God added those who were saved.
Acts 2:46-47

Believing & Belonging

Many people today find it difficult to grasp a sense of corporate Christian identity. We have been so soaked in the individualism of modern Western culture that we feel threatened by the idea of our primary identity being that of the family we belong to — especially when the family in question is so large, stretching across space and time. The church isn't simply a collection of isolated individuals, all following their own pathways of spiritual growth without much reference to one another. It may sometimes look like that, and even feel like that. And it's gloriously true that each of us is called to respond to God's call at a personal level. You can hide in the shadows at the back of the church for a while, but sooner or later you have to decide whether this is for you or not. But we need to learn again the lesson that a hand is no less a hand for being part of a larger whole, an entire body. The foot is not diminished in its freedom to be a foot by being part of a body that also contains eyes and ears. In fact, hands and feet are most free to be themselves when they coordinate properly with eyes, ears, and everything else. Cutting them off in an effort to make them truly free, truly themselves, would be truly disastrous.



Learning Session

Read John 1:1-13

Split up into smaller groups (3 or 4 people per group works well for discussion purposes, as everyone gets a chance to share or remain as one if that dynamic suits you) and get the groups to discuss the following questions that arise from this passage:

- If God is one and lives in community, held together by Love and mutual submission, what does this mean in terms of our relationships and attitudes to one another?
- If God invites into this community, by making us sons and daughters, how should we the church act towards those who are outsiders?

Give the groups a good 10-15 minutes to discuss. Then bring everyone back in for a time of feedback (beware, this can take a lot longer than you think). The following points that you want to highlight in the feedback time are:

- Our life together on earth is meant to reflect the Trinity. Kinships are designed to help this happen.
- One of the Vineyard values is for our people to form genuine loving relationships with one another and to always be open to new people joining our community.
- We should remember, 'our brother is never our enemy.' Or sister for that matter.
- We don't just want people at church on a Sunday. We want people to do life together.
- This is the main reason why we want everyone checked in to a Kinship group. Kinships are set up so that we to help us form a living community so that we can try to do life together and be there for one another.

Discussion Questions

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